

## Missing Items

**Companion Text:** I Lost My Sock, by Lin Jakary & Ryan Olson

**Subject Area & Grade Level:** Language Arts, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

**Materials:** Coloring supplies

### **Objectives**

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Deduce appropriate word choice and style for text written for a specific purpose
- Reflect on the association between audience and language style
- Create an advertisement for a missing item

### **Pre-Reading**

Ask students to describe situations in which they have lost something. Prompt them with questions such as: “How did you notice your item was missing?”; “What did you think must have happened to it?”; and “What did you do to try to find it?” Tell them that we are going to read a story about a boy who loses a sock, and the things he imagines about his situation.

### **During Reading**

Read the story once through without stopping. Then, ask students if they can remember any points in the story where the boy asked for help to find his missing sock. Have students offer suggestions for who might have been able to help the boy find the sock. Ask them to evaluate the effectiveness of putting up the “Missing” sign on page 21, prompting them with questions such as: Is it likely that the sign will lead to the discovery of the sock? Who is likely to see the sign? Do you notice anything missing from the sign? (i.e. contact information for the boy, when the sock went missing, etc.)

### **Post-Reading**

Have students imagine an item they could lose at school. It could be one of their personal school supplies (such as a pencil, eraser, or calculator), a piece of clothing (such as a coat, shoe, sweater), an accessory (such as a backpack, umbrella, or piece of jewelry), or anything else they might have brought to school (such as a bag lunch, show-and-tell item, or field trip money). Try to have each student end up with a different item.

Tell students for this activity to imagine that the school does not have a “Lost and Found” bin, and that the lost item they are thinking of does not have any identifying features, such as a name or classroom number on it. Then, tell them that they will be making a sign that can be copied and put up around the school to alert everyone that the item is missing, in the hopes that someone who sees the sign will have found the item. Have students brainstorm elements that need to be included on the sign, and write those on the board; prompt them if necessary to include: name and picture of missing item, when it went missing, where it was last seen, any unique qualities of the item that would help it be noticed, and the contact information of the student owner. Have students consider the possible benefits and disadvantages of including their home phone number



versus a classroom phone number or classroom door number. Ask them if how they feel about the idea of offering a reward for safe return of the item, and when a reward could be helpful (i.e. if they believe an item was stolen, not just misplaced).

Lastly, ask students what they think about how their Missing signs should look in terms of style, and where they should be located in the school. Prompt them to realize that the signs need to be easy to read, with just the right amount of information on them. Too much information could make the signs so hard to read that people don't bother. The same is true for neatness; if a sign is messy, people might not stop to take the time to look at it. Pass out coloring supplies, and have each student create a unique sign for a potential missing item. On the back of the sign, have students list the places in the school where the sign should be posted for maximum effectiveness.

