Congratulations on your purchase of the Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag™ Making Connections Using Illustrations, an engaging literacy center activity that builds students’ ability to effectively use illustrations to understand story elements.

Meeting Common Core State Standards
The Really Good Stuff Making Connections Using Illustrations aligns with the following Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
RL.2.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.
RL.3.7 Explain how specific aspects of a text’s illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

This Really Good Stuff product includes:
• 6 Text Cards
• 12 Answer Key Cards
• 12 Game Markers
• 2 Game Mats
• 1 Center Task Card
• This Really Good Stuff Teaching Guide

Being able to effectively analyze and extract information from an illustration is key to understanding how text and illustrations work together to tell a story. Making Connections Using Illustrations lets students demonstrate their understanding of key story elements by focusing primarily on details of illustrations that accompany in six folktales. The content of this activity is at the second- and third-grade level; however, the Text Cards and game mats can be used to practice this skill with students at any grade level.

Managing the Center-in-a-Bag
• Visit our Web site www.reallygoodstuff.com to download Really Good Stuff Teaching Guides.
• Display the Center Task Card.
• Make copies of the Making Connections Using Illustrations Record Sheet Reproducible and store them with the other center components.
• Demonstrate how to tidy the center when the activity is complete.
• Store the center materials in the bag, and hang it alongside other Centers-in-a-Bag.

Introducing Making Connections Using Illustrations
This verbal and written activity provides a fun setting for students to practice using illustrations to understand key elements in stories. Working in pairs, students read a short piece of text, analyze the details of its illustration, and demonstrate understanding of four key areas found on the game mats. They explain their reasoning to a partner, check their work using the Answer Key Cards, and write down their observations on record sheets.

Each game mat can be used with three different two-sided Text Cards—all color-coded for easy management. The game mats are divided into four areas—setting (place), setting (time), character feeling, and mood. Within each area, students choose one of six spaces to represent that area. For example, under Mood, students can choose joyful, scary, gloomy, suspenseful, silly, or other to represent the mood of the story. The space for other encourages students to give and justify answers other than those on the game mat. This flexibility allows for usage with any text. If students use their game marker to mark the other space, they must tell what other refers to and point out the detail of the illustration or text that led them to that conclusion.

Students study an illustration for its key details, mark their responses on the game mat, and check their answers using the corresponding answer key.

All teaching guides can be found online.
Making Connections Using Illustrations

The color-coded Text Cards have illustrations and a short piece of text on each side. The illustrations come from six folktales, each represented by two different back-to-back illustrations with varied details that require students to look closely to extract important information about the story. For the complete set of folktales used in this activity, see the Related Products at the end of this teaching guide.

Each Text Card has a corresponding Answer Key Card. Use the number in the top right corner of the Text Card to find its corresponding Answer Key Card. For example, Answer Key Card 1 is used to check the responses for Text Card 1.

Model the Making Connections Using Illustrations Activity

Begin by modeling the activity, discussing every step with students. Place the orange game mat, an orange Text Card, and six orange game markers in front of the group. Place the Answer Key Card that corresponds to the selected Text Card face down for later use. Read each game marker pointing to its column on the game mat. Explain to students that they can demonstrate understanding of those four elements by using the game marker.

Turn the game markers face down and mix them up on the table. Place the Text Card in front of the first student, and ask him or her to read the text aloud. That student takes a game marker, turns it over, and places it on the appropriate space on the game mat. Students must then explain what they noticed about the illustration that made them select that space. This is the most important part of the activity, as it gives students the opportunity to call out details and explain their thinking. For some areas, such as determining setting, there is little room for disagreement; however, character feeling and mood can have multiple answers, depending on the details called out and the explanation given. For example, on Text Card 1, the boy is smiling, which indicates that he may be either happy or proud. Students must explain their answers well enough to convince the group.

Note: if a student turns over a Character Feeling Marker, the student must first announce which character he or she will be describing, as there are often multiple characters in each illustration.

Have students take turns placing the game markers on the game mat and explaining their reasoning. If they do not find an answer that reflects their thinking, they can place their token on the other space and state their answer and explanation. Answer Key Cards that correspond to each Text Card are provided; however, as noted before, some answers will vary based on individual explanations.

Demonstrate how to complete the Making Connections Using Illustrations Record Sheet Reproducible. In the first column, write in a detail from the illustration. For example, if looking at Card 1, under Illustration, write green hills and trees, and under Setting (Place), write in the country. Encourage students to notice and list as many details as possible from the illustrations. To show place, you could also list details such as sheep are grazing and the boy is barefoot. Continue listing details from the illustration in the first column and what those details indicate in the subsequent columns.

Students call out details in the illustration and explain their thinking.
Center Task Card
Post this at the literacy center in a visible position.
A student or a helper can refer to the Center Task Card for instructions. Refer to the shaded section at the top of the card for center preparation, including needed materials.

Really Good Literacy Center-in-a-Bag
Making Connections Using Illustrations Activity

2 students
Object: Use illustrations to understand story elements
Materials: 1 Text Card, 1 Answer Key Card, 1 Game Mat, 6 Game Markers, 2 Record Sheets

Directions:
1. Place the game mat and Text Card in reach of students. Place the answer key and game markers face down. Decide on the order of play.
2. Students read the text on the card and look closely at its illustration.
3. Taking turns, students take a game marker, turn it over, and locate that column on the mat. They place the game marker on the space they believe to be correct and explain why they chose that space. If students select a Character Feeling Marker, they must first identify which character they will describe and then place their game marker on the mat.
4. Students check their selections using the answer key.
5. Students record their work on their record sheets.

Variation: The first student places a game marker on the game mat and then both students immediately record their observations on their record sheets, listing as many details as possible to support their response. They compare their lists and move on to the next game marker.

Related Really Good Stuff Products
Readers’ Theater Folktales Set 1 and 2 (#304996)
Before-, During-, and After-Reading Strategies, Level 1 (#305999)
Inference Fun! Level 1 (#305969)
Plot’s Peak Story Structure, Level 1 (#305983)
Main Idea Markup, Level 1 (#306002)
Character Puzzles, (#306016)
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