

DIRECTOR'S LESSON PACKAGE OVERVIEW

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

K–2 Literacy Package — Informed by 4-H STEM Reading Connections 2025

Created by Helix Education in partnership with Beyond School Bells

FOR

Program directors, site coordinators, and lead educators

USE

Background knowledge, standards alignment, materials planning, and reporting data to implement this 3-lesson unit

FRONTLINE EDUCATORS

Should use the Grab & Go Lesson Package

Unit Overview

This three-lesson unit uses ***Maybe Something Beautiful*** by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell as the anchor text for an integrated K–2 literacy and STEAM experience. The book tells the story of Mira, a girl whose small drawing inspires her entire neighborhood to pick up paintbrushes and transform their gray community into something beautiful. This theme of **community, creativity, and transformation** runs through every lesson.

Lesson-at-a-Glance

#	Lesson Focus	Lesson Overview	SOR Skill	STEAM Activity
1	Introducing the Story & Phonological Awareness	Students are introduced to Mira and her gray neighborhood. They explore how creativity can transform a community. The lesson builds foundational literacy through phonological awareness using community and art words from the book.	Phonemic Awareness (syllable clapping, Elkonin Boxes, phoneme substitution)	Students plan and build a collaborative “joyful city” using blocks and loose parts, applying math concepts of shapes and structure.
2	Shared Reading & Vocabulary Exploration	Students use the 4-Step Vocabulary Routine to explore five key words (mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate). They participate in a shared reading with vocabulary stops, then go outside to create sidewalk chalk murals as a community.	Vocabulary in context (4-step vocabulary routine)	Students collaborate to create sidewalk chalk murals outside (or on large paper indoors), transforming shared space just as Mira’s community did.
3	Fluency & Reading with Expression	Students retell the story and practice reading with expression matching the book’s emotional arc from gray to joyful. They build recycled musical instruments and participate in a community music parade, connecting the theme of collaborative transformation to sound science.	Fluency: expression, echo reading, partner reading, color-rating scale	Students retell the story; practice expressive reading using the 1–3 color-rating scale; build recycled musical instruments; perform a community music parade.

Nebraska ELA Standards Alignment

Grade	Literary Text (Reading)	Science of Reading Focus
K	LA.K.RP With adult help, retell stories with details and identify the main message.	LA.K.F.2.c Count, make, and segment words into syllables. (L1) LA.K.F.4 Read smoothly and correctly with purpose and understanding. (L3)
1st	LA.1.RP.1 Retell a story using important details.	LA.1.F.2.a Segment and blend phonemes in words. (L1) LA.1.F.3 Read grade-level text accurately and fluently with expression. (L3)
2nd	LA.2.RP.1 Retell stories and explain the important lessons within them.	LA.2.F.2.a Manipulate phonemes (substitution) to build new words. (L1) LA.2.F.3 Read grade-level text accurately, fluently, and with expression that shows understanding. (L3)

Lesson Structure

Each lesson is designed for **60 minutes** in an out-of-school time (OST) setting. The timing below is flexible and can be adjusted based on your group's needs. The full lesson includes welcome and closing time, which can be removed if already included in your programming. For programs that prefer to divide lessons into literacy and project days, see the recommended split structure on the right.

Standard 60-Minute Lesson	Time
Welcome & Check-In	5 min
Activate Prior Knowledge	5 min
Science of Reading Mini Lesson	10 min
Read Aloud or Shared Reading	15 min
STEAM Activity	20 min
Closing & Celebration	5 min

Divided Lesson Structure

Day 1 – Literacy Focus

Lesson Component	Time
Welcome & Check-In	5 min
Activate Prior Knowledge	5 min
Science of Reading Mini Lesson	10+ min
Read Aloud or Shared Reading	15 min

Day 2 – STEAM Project

Lesson Component	Time
Welcome & Check-In	5 min
Activate Prior Knowledge	5 min
STEAM Activity	30+ min
Closing & Celebration	5 min

Lesson Modifications

Each lesson contains modifications throughout for grade-level specific modifications (Kindergarten, First, and Second), along with modifications for Emerging and Advanced students.

Emerging	Emerging Learner An emerging learner is just beginning to develop foundational literacy or numeracy skills and relies heavily on hands-on manipulatives, visual cues, and direct adult support.
Advanced	Advanced Learner An advanced learner quickly grasps new concepts and can independently apply them to different tasks or creative projects without needing step-by-step instructions. They often show curiosity beyond the basic lesson, using more descriptive language or complex logic to solve problems and explain their thinking.

Literacy Background & Staff Preparation Guide

This unit integrates three Science of Reading skills across three lessons — phonemic awareness, vocabulary in context, and fluency. The sections below give you the background knowledge to understand each skill, run the activity yourself, and prepare your staff. **You do not need a teaching degree to facilitate these lessons effectively.**

Lesson 1 — Phonological Awareness

What it is	Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and work with the sound structure of spoken language—including syllables, rhymes, and individual phonemes. Phonemic awareness is a subset focused specifically on individual sounds (phonemes), entirely by ear, not by sight. It is one of the strongest early predictors of reading success. It is not about letters or spelling; it is purely about sound.
Why it matters	Students who can hear the building blocks of words—from syllables down to phonemes—are better able to decode unfamiliar words and spell. Phonological awareness is a critical foundation for phonics. Research shows it is best taught explicitly and playfully.
Skills in this unit	Kindergarten: Syllable Clapping: Clapping the syllables in community and art words. Activity: Clap and count syllables in mu-ral, neigh-bor-hood, col-ors, beau-ti-ful, com-mu-ni-ty. 1st Grade: Elkonin Boxes: Segmenting a word into its individual sounds by pushing a counter into a box for each phoneme heard. The word "paint" has 4 letters but 3 sounds: /l/-/ē/-/f/ = 3 boxes. 2nd Grade: Phoneme Substitution: Swapping one sound for another to build a new word. Example: Change /gr/ in "gray" to /pl/ → "play." Change /w/ in "wall" to /h/ → "hall."
How to run Elkonin Boxes	1. Draw or print 3–4 connected boxes on paper (one row per word). Laminated sheets can be reused. 2. Place small objects (coins, chips, beans) above the boxes, one per box. 3. Say the word slowly. As you say each sound out loud, push one object down into a box from left to right. 4. Count the objects in the boxes to confirm the number of sounds. Key rule: Count sounds, not letters. "Art" = /ā/ /r/ /t/ = 3 sounds, 3 boxes. "Paint" = /p/ /ā/ /n/ /t/ = 4 sounds, 4 boxes.
Director try-it	Practice segmenting these words before the lesson, say each sound aloud as you push a counter: • "art" → /ā/ /r/ /t/ = 3 sounds (ah - r - t) • "gray" → /g/ /r/ /ā/ = 3 sounds (g - r - ay) • "paint" → /p/ /ā/ /n/ /t/ = 4 sounds (p - ay - n - t)
What to tell staff	"For K, tap a paintbrush on the table for each beat — just like Mira painting the wall. For 1st grade, model Elkonin Boxes yourself first and always say sounds aloud as you push. Never spell the word — sounds only. For 2nd grade, notice that sound-swap words like play, hall, and faint connect to the story themes."

Lesson 2 — Vocabulary in Context

What it is	Vocabulary in context means using surrounding text and pictures to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word, rather than giving students a definition before they encounter it. This mirrors how skilled readers naturally build vocabulary. This is completed in lesson 2, so students have encountered the story and its emotional arc in lesson 1.
Why it matters	Vocabulary is the bridge between decoding (sounding out words) and comprehension (understanding what you read). OST settings are uniquely positioned for vocabulary development because conversation and exploration are less restricted than during the school day.
Words in this unit	Mural — A large work of art painted directly on a wall or other surface in a public place for everyone to see. Connect: Have you ever seen a mural in your community? What was on it? Community — A group of people who live, work, and play together in the same place, sharing spaces and a sense of belonging. Transform — To completely change from one thing into something very different. Also includes: Inspire — to fill someone with excitement or motivation to do something creative. Collaborate — to work together toward a shared goal.
Teaching strategy	Model the 4-Step Vocabulary Routine (Say It → Define It → Connect It → Use It) aloud before students try: 1. SAY IT: Say the word aloud together with expression. USE IT: Students respond at their grade level (act it out, complete a sentence frame, or write). 2. DEFINE IT: Give a student-friendly definition. Connect to the story. 3. CONNECT IT: Ask students to connect the word to their own community or experience. 4. Make a reasonable guess. Try it in the sentence — does it make sense?
Grade-level practice	K: Teacher points to the picture + word. Students say it aloud and draw what it means. 1st: Sentence frame: "The word [___] means ___ because in the book it says/shows ___." 2nd: Students write an original sentence using the vocabulary word in their own context.
What to tell staff	"Don't give students the definition first, let them be word detectives. "Give every word a gesture. Mural — sweep arms wide. Community — wrap arms around the group. Transform — spin around. Inspire — take a big breath in. Collaborate — reach hands to neighbors. Movement anchors vocabulary."

Lesson 3 — Reading Fluency

What it is	Reading fluency is the ability to read text accurately, at an appropriate pace, and with expression (prosody). It is the bridge between decoding individual words and understanding the full meaning of a passage.
Why it matters	When students read word by word, their working memory is consumed by decoding, and comprehension suffers. Fluent reading frees the brain to focus on meaning. OST settings are ideal for fluency practice because the stakes feel lower and repetition feels natural and fun.
Strategies in this unit	Echo Reading (K): Educator reads a sentence with expression; students immediately repeat it, matching the tone and pacing. Partner Reading (1st): Student pairs take turns reading one page each. Partners give a fluency rating if their partner reads with expression. Independent Re-Read (2nd): Students self-rate their reading on a 1–2–3 scale for expression and re-read until they reach a 3.
Director try-it	Read this robotically: <i>"Na-ture-paints-with-sun-sets."</i> Now read it with expression: <i>"Nature paints with sunsets!"</i> That contrast is exactly what students should practice. Model it clearly for staff before the lesson.
Story retelling cards	The retelling picture cards (one per nature-art type from the book: wind, water, ice, animals, plants) help students sequence the story before partner reading. Students arrange them in order from memory, then use the cards as a reference while reading their section with a partner.

What to tell staff

"Model fluent reading first — big expression, clear pauses, awe and wonder. Then have students try. If a student reads flatly, say 'Let's try that again like a nature documentary narrator!' Fluency is not about perfection — it's about bringing the story to life. Keep it playful and low-pressure."

Grant & Reporting Data

This unit supports the following reporting categories for **21st CCLC and similar OST grant programs**:

- **21st CCLC Program Quality:** Literacy enrichment aligned to Nebraska ELA standards (K–2). Each lesson targets grade-level reading standards in literary text, phonological awareness, vocabulary, and fluency.
- **STEAM Integration:** Engineering + Math + Collaboration (L1: Beautiful City Block Play), Visual Art + Math + Creative Expression (L2: Sidewalk Chalk Murals), Music + Engineering + Creative Expression (L3: Beautiful Music & Movement). All activities align to ELG Standard M.02.
- **School-Day Alignment:** Phonological awareness, vocabulary, and fluency instruction mirrors the Nebraska Science of Reading framework at each grade level. This unit reinforces, not replaces, school-day instruction.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Grade-level modifications are built into every lesson for K, 1st, and 2nd grade learners in a multi-grade OST setting, supporting both emerging and advanced learners.

Recommended Documentation

If your program is collecting impact and student data, the following options are recommended:

- Photograph completed STEAM projects (Square Sculptures, Nature Observation Drawings, Beautiful City Block Play)
- Collect student Check-In Forms to document character development and behavioral tiered data
- Note which grade-level Science of Reading activities were implemented
- Record attendance for each of the 3 sessions
- Optional: Have students write one sentence about what they learned for a portfolio artifact

Materials & Budget Planning

All materials for this unit are intentionally chosen to be **low-cost and easy to source**. Most items are everyday classroom or household supplies. Where a standard item may not be available, substitutions are listed — nearly every material in this unit has a free or no-cost alternative. The **Student Materials and Printables** package includes all printable items needed per student.

Material	Quantity	Lesson	Substitution / Notes
Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell	1 per class	All	Free library copy or YouTube read-aloud
Helix K-2 Check-In Forms	1 per student	L1, L2	Draw simple faces on sticky notes; post feelings chart on board
Building blocks (unit blocks, LEGO, or cardboard bricks) + loose parts	1 set per group	L1	For Beautiful City Block Play (L1)
Sidewalk chalk (variety of colors)	1 per student	L1	1 set per group for Sidewalk Chalk Murals (L2)
White paper	1 per student	L1, L3	Any available white paper
Scissors, glue, crayons/markers	1 per student or shared	L1, L3	Share supplies across groups

Elkonin Box sheets (1st grade)	1 per student	L1	Draw 3 boxes on any paper
Counters/coins (1st grade)	Set per student	L1	Bingo chips, buttons, beans, or ripped paper
Recyclables for instrument building (boxes, cans, bottles, rubber bands)	1 per student	L2	Fillers: dry beans, coins, small pebbles, rice (L3)
Clipboards	1 per student	L2	Use any notebook or binder; draw on any paper
Story retelling cards (Mon–Sun)	1 per student pair	L3	Displayed for reference during L3 fluency practice
Vocabulary word cards (mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate)	1 per student	L3	Print large for whole-group display or one set per student
Watering can / small cups + portable fan (L3)	1 set per student	L3	For city block play — loose parts details (L1)
Whiteboards (optional)	1 per student	L1	Use for SOR whiteboard activities
Open space for music parade (L3)	1 set per group	L2	Clear a pathway or area at the end of the STEAM activity

Director's Prep Guide

The following provides an overview of prep for the full unit and itemized prep for each day. This can be completed by a director or site coordinator, or assigned to a staff member who receives prep time.

BEFORE THE UNIT BEGINS (ALL 3 LESSONS)

- Obtain a copy of *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell.
- **Print required items:** Helix Daily Check-In Form (2 copies per student — L1 and L2), Vocabulary Word Cards (1 set for display, L2). Optional: photos of colorful community murals for L1; images of instruments from world music traditions for L3 (1–4 per class, L1).
- **Organize grade-specific Science of Reading materials.** Determine whether students will be grouped by grade or whole group for SOR activities. K: Print Rhyming Picture Cards (L1). 1st: Print Elkonin Boxes and review instructions. 2nd: Prepare whiteboards and markers or paper.
- Collect building blocks and loose parts for L1 city-building. Identify outdoor sidewalk space for L2 murals (or prepare large paper rolls for indoor alternative).
- **Secure supplies for each lesson:** L1 – Natural materials (rocks, leaves, sticks, pinecones, grass), camera/tablet for photos, optional community mural photos. L2 – Sidewalk chalk (shared sets), optional planning paper. L3 – Recyclables (boxes, cans, bottles, rubber bands), small cups, water, mixing sticks, brushes/Q-tips, observation sheets. L3 – Baking pans with layered gravel/sand/soil, small cups/watering cans, portable fan, tablecloths/trays; optional clay or playdough.
- Pre-sort recyclable instrument materials into bins or trays (one per table). Clear a pathway or open space in the room for the music parade.
- Optional: Create teacher examples of STEAM projects.

LESSON 1 CLASSROOM PREP – DAY OF

- Write “*Maybe Something Beautiful*” on the board. Below it write: “What would you add to make your neighborhood more beautiful?” Optional: Display photos of colorful community murals.
- Set out Check-In Forms per student.
- Set out building blocks and loose parts at a central area for the city-building activity.
- Write today’s syllable target words on the board: mu-ral, neigh-bor-hood, col-ors, beau-ti-ful, com-mu-ni-ty.
- 1st grade: Review Elkonin Boxes instructions to familiarize with the concept.

LESSON 2 CLASSROOM PREP – DAY OF

- Identify the outdoor sidewalk area. If indoor: tape large paper rolls to the floor or tables as alternate mural surface. Set out sidewalk chalk sets.
- Write the 5 vocabulary words on the board: Mural, Community, Transform, Inspire, Collaborate.
- Print or pre-write sentence frame strips for 1st grade: “A mural is _____. I would paint a mural of _____.”
- Set out mini whiteboards and dry-erase markers at each table for 2nd grade vocabulary responses. Pre-label paint cups with color name for emerging learners.
- Bookmark specific pages in *Maybe Something Beautiful* for shared reading stops.

LESSON 3 CLASSROOM PREP – DAY OF

- Write the fluency sentence strip on the board: “Maybe something beautiful. Just start.” Display the vocabulary anchor chart from Lesson 2.
- Pre-sort recyclable instrument materials into bins or trays — one per table — so students can survey options quickly.
- Clear a pathway or open space for the community music parade at the end of the activity.
- Optional: Display images of instruments from world music traditions as a visual anchor for the introduction.
- Optional: Set out markers or paint so students can decorate instruments with mural-inspired designs.
- Option: Pre-fill a simple shaker container (sealed bottle with beans) for emerging students so they can focus on decorating and playing.

FOR SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP

Maybe Something Beautiful — K–2 Literacy & STEAM Unit

A share-out for principals, superintendents, and school-based partners

Developed by: Helix Education in partnership with Beyond School Bells, informed by 4-H STEM Reading Connections 2025. Designed for K–2 students in out-of-school time (OST) settings.

Purpose: This 3-lesson unit uses *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell as an anchor text for integrated literacy and STEAM instruction.

What Students Are Doing

Over three 60-minute sessions, students engage with *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell, a story about Mira, a girl whose small drawing inspires her entire neighborhood to transform a gray community into something beautiful. This theme of **community, creativity, and transformation** connects literacy, engineering, art, and music into a cohesive three-lesson unit.

#	Literacy Skill	STEAM Project	What Students Learn & Do
1	Phonological Awareness — syllable clapping, Elkonin Boxes, phoneme substitution	Beautiful City Block Play (Engineering + Math + Collaboration)	Clap syllables and segment/substitute phonemes; retell key ideas; plan and build a collaborative joyful city using blocks and loose parts
2	Vocabulary in Context — 4-step vocabulary routine	Sidewalk Chalk Murals (Visual Art + Math + Creative Expression)	Define vocabulary (mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate) using 4-Step Routine; collaborate to create sidewalk chalk murals and use it to paint a nature scene
3	Fluency — expression, echo reading, color-rating scale	Fluency & Reading with Expression (Fluency + Music + Engineering)	Retell the story; practice expressive reading using 1–3 color-rating scale; build recycled instruments; perform a community music parade; parade as a community

Alignment to School-Day Standards

This program directly reinforces Nebraska ELA standards being taught during the school day. OST staff are often not certified teachers, so this unit is specifically designed with scripted lesson plans so non-credentialed facilitators can implement high-quality, standards-aligned activities.

Grade	Nebraska ELA Standards	Connection to School Day
K	LA.K.RP.1 · LA.K.F.2.c · LA.K.F.4	Retelling stories, syllable clapping, smooth and correct reading with expression
1st	LA.1.RP.1 · LA.1.F.2.a · LA.1.F.4.a	Retelling with details, phoneme segmentation and blending, expressive reading
2nd	LA.2.RP.1 · LA.2.F.2.a · LA.2.F.4.a	Story retelling with lesson identification; phoneme substitution; expressive oral reading

Grant & Reporting Category Alignment

This unit supports the following reporting categories for **21st CCLC and similar OST grant programs**:

- **21st CCLC Program Quality:** Literacy enrichment aligned to Nebraska ELA standards (K–2) across literary text, phonological awareness, vocabulary, and fluency.
- **STEAM Integration:** Art + Math + Engineering (L1), Science + Math + Nature (L2), Visual Art + Math + Creative Expression (L3). Aligns to ELG Standard M.02.
- **School-Day Alignment:** Mirrors the Nebraska Science of Reading framework at each grade level. Reinforces, not replaces, school-day instruction.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Grade-level modifications built into every lesson for K, 1st, and 2nd grade learners in a multi-grade OST setting, with Emerging and Advanced learner supports.
- **Attendance & Engagement:** 3-session unit with structured check-in forms and portfolio artifacts for impact documentation.

Additional Notes

Extra space to provide additional context and notes for school-based leadership.

SCRIPTED LESSON PACKAGE

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

Lesson 1 of 3 — Introducing the Story & Phonological Awareness

⌚ 60 minutes • STEAM Focus: Beautiful City Block Play — Engineering + Math + Collaboration

Standards

Reading Prose & Poetry / Literary Text:

- K: LA.K.RP. With adult help, I can retell stories with details and show understanding of the main message or lesson.
- 1st: LA.1.RP.1 I can retell a story I know using important details.
- 2nd: LA.2.RP.1 I can retell stories and explain the important lessons within them.

Science of Reading: Phonological Awareness Focus:

- K: LA.K.F.2.c I can count, make, and segment words into syllables.
- 1st: LA.1.F.2.a I can break down short words and say each sound by itself. I can put sounds together to speak words.
- 2nd: LA.2.F.2.a I can break down short words and say each sound by itself. I can put sounds together to speak words.

Objectives

Adult Language (SWBAT):

- Students will be able to retell key events in Maybe Something Beautiful and identify the central message that one person's creativity can inspire an entire community.
- Students will be able to count and clap syllables in community and art words (K), segment phonemes using Elkonin Boxes (1st), or substitute phonemes to build new words (2nd).

Student-Friendly Language:

- I can tell what happens in the story and explain how Mira changed her neighborhood.
- I can hear and work with the sounds and syllables in words.

Reading & Check-In	STEAM Activity: Beautiful City Block Play (from 4-H STEAM Imagination Guide)
• Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell • Helix K-2 Daily Check-In Form (student copies) • Whiteboard or chart paper + markers • Feeling words cards / emoji visuals Science of Reading Mini Lesson: • Whiteboard + markers (teacher modeling) • K: Syllable picture cards (community images: mu-ral, neigh-bor-hood, col-ors, beau-ti-ful, com-mu-ni-ty) • 1st: Printed Elkonin Box sheets (3–4 boxes per row) • 2nd: Mini whiteboards + dry-erase markers OR lined paper	• Building blocks (unit blocks, LEGO, or cardboard bricks) • Variety of loose parts: natural materials, recycled objects, craft supplies • Scratch paper and pencils for planning • Optional: photos or illustrations of buildings for reference • Optional: small people figurines or craft stick characters Optional / Additional Materials: • Counters, coins, or bingo chips — 3–4 per student (1st grade Elkonin Boxes) • Small mirrors to watch mouth movements while producing sounds • Sentence strips pre-written with target words: art, paint, wall, bright, gray

Before Students Arrive

- Write "Maybe Something Beautiful" on the board. Below it write: "What would you add to make your neighborhood more beautiful?"
- Set out Helix Check-In Forms and emoji/feeling word cards at each student's spot.
- Write today's syllable target words on the board: mu-ral, neigh-bor-hood, col-ors, beau-ti-ful, com-mu-ni-ty.
- 1st grade only: Draw 3–4 Elkonin boxes on chart paper. Practice pushing a counter per sound for "art" (/ā/-r/-t/) and "paint" (/p/-ā/-n/-t/).
- Set out building blocks and loose parts at a central area or under tables for the STEAM activity.
- Optional: Display photos of colorful community murals or buildings as a visual anchor for conversation.

Welcome & Student Check-In (8–10 min)

Educator Script

Greet students warmly as they arrive and invite them to pick up their Check-In Form.

"Good [morning/afternoon], friends! Before we start today, I want to know, how are you feeling right now? Take a look at the feeling words and emoji on your form and circle or cut and paste the one that shows how you feel inside today."

Give students 2–3 minutes. Then invite 3–4 volunteers to share.

"Who would like to share? Tell us: 'I am feeling ____ today because ____.' All feelings are welcome here!"

Say It Game: Hopeful

"Our feeling word today is hopeful. Say it together, hopeful! Now whisper it. Now say it like you just saw something gray and sad, and you have an idea that could make it beautiful. Turn and say 'I am feeling hopeful!' to a friend."

"When you feel hopeful, it means you believe that something good is possible — even when things look plain, gray, or hard. In today's story, a girl named Mira lives in a gray city. But she has hope. She has art. And what she does with that hope changes everything. Let's find out more!"

Modifications:

- Emerging: Provide printed emoji chart. Allow students to point to their feeling instead of writing or cutting.
- Advanced: Ask students to share two feelings and explain what caused each one.

Activate Prior Knowledge (7 min)

Educator Script

"Think about the place where you live — your neighborhood, your street, your community. Close your eyes for just a moment. What do you see? What colors? What sounds? What do you love about it?"

Give students 10 seconds to think, then:

"Open your eyes! Turn and tell a partner: what is one thing that makes your neighborhood feel special — or one thing you wish you could change about it?"

Take 4–5 responses. Then:

"Today's book, *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell, is about a girl named Mira who loves to draw. She lives in a gray, quiet neighborhood. But Mira has an idea — and it starts with one small drawing. As I read, think about: How does one person's creativity change an entire community? And how does color change the way a place feels?"

Modifications:

- Emerging: Show 2–3 pictures of gray vs. colorful neighborhoods and let students describe what they notice before the story.
- Advanced: Ask students to predict what might happen in the story based on the title and cover illustration before reading.

Science of Reading Mini Lesson: Phonological Awareness (10 min)

Teacher-Led Instruction

Step 1 — Introduce (All Grades):

"Good readers listen carefully to the sounds and parts of words. Just like Mira adds one small drawing at a time to transform her neighborhood, words are built one sound at a time. Today we're going to explore those building blocks!"

Step 2 — Kindergarten (Syllable Clapping):

"We're going to clap the BEATS in our community and art words! Watch me: 'mu-ral' — [clap clap] — 2 beats! Now try with me: 'col-ors' [clap clap]. 'beau-ti-ful' [clap clap clap]. 'com-mu-ni-ty' [clap clap clap clap]. How many beats in 'art'? [clap — 1!]"

Teacher tip: After clapping, hold up fingers for each syllable. For a fun twist, use a paintbrush tap on a surface for each beat — like Mira painting the wall!

Step 2 — 1st Grade (Elkonin Box Segmentation):

What are Elkonin Boxes? (Educator Background) Elkonin Boxes (also called Sound Boxes) are a research-based phonemic awareness tool. Each box represents ONE phoneme (sound), not one letter. The word 'paint' has 5 letters but only 4 sounds (/p/-/ā/-/n/-/t/), so it uses 4 boxes. Students push one counter per sound as they say it aloud — the physical motion anchors the auditory learning.

"Watch me. The word is 'art.' /ā/ [push] — /r/ [push] — /t/ [push]. Three sounds, three boxes! Now let's try 'bright' together. Say it slowly..."

Practice words from the book: art (/ā/-/r/-/t/ = 3), gray (/g/-/r/-/ā/ = 3), wall (/w/-/ö/-/l/ = 3), paint (/p/-/ā/-/n/-/t/ = 4), brush (/b/-/r/-/ü/-/sh/ = 4)

Step 2 — 2nd Grade (Phoneme Substitution):

"We're going to change one sound in a word to make a brand new word! Start with 'gray.' Change the /gr/ to /pl/... you get PLAY! Now try: change the /w/ in 'wall' to /h/. [hall!] Change the /p/ in 'paint' to /f/. [faint!] Change the /b/ in 'bright' to /fr/. [fright!]"

Modifications:

- Emerging: For syllables, use a mirror — each jaw drop = one syllable. For Elkonin Boxes, pre-draw the boxes and start with 2-sound words (e.g., 'art').
- Advanced: Challenge students to sort their sound-swap words into art-related vs. non-art categories and explain why.

Kindergarten	1st Grade	2nd Grade
• Syllable counting & clapping — counting beats in community and art words	• Phoneme segmentation using Elkonin Boxes with words from the book	• Phoneme substitution — changing one sound to make a new word

Read Aloud (15 min)

Educator Script

"Let's look at this cover together. The title is Maybe Something Beautiful, and the authors are F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell. The illustrator is Rafael López. What do you notice about the cover? [So much color! A girl with a paintbrush! The world seems to be coming alive around her!]"

"As I read, I want you to notice two things: How does Mira's neighborhood change from the beginning to the end? And who helps make that change happen?"

During reading, pause at these moments:

- "At the beginning, the story tells us the neighborhood is gray. How does that make YOU feel when you look at these pages? What does gray feel like?"
- "Mira draws a small girl dancing and tapes it to the wall. Look at the muralist's face when he sees it. What do you think he is feeling? [Wonder, excitement, hope.]"
- "Now the whole community is painting together! Who is helping? [Neighbors, the baker, the cobbler, old people, children...] What does it feel like when a whole community works together on something beautiful?"
- "At the end, the neighborhood is transformed. What word from our story describes a place full of color and life? [Beautiful! Vibrant!] What did it take to make that happen? [One small idea. One person's courage to start.]"

After reading, quick phonological awareness connection:

"Let's clap the syllables in 'mu-ral' — [clap clap] — 2 beats! What about 'neigh-bor-hood'? [clap clap clap]. And 'beau-ti-ful'? [clap clap clap]."

Modifications:

- Emerging: Seat near the book; use finger pointing to track. Offer the sentence frame: 'Mira changed her neighborhood by ____.'
- Advanced: Ask 2nd grade students to identify the central message and support it with two specific details from the text and illustrations.

STEAM Activity: Beautiful City Block Play — Engineering + Math + Collaboration (20 min)

Educator Script

Part 1 — Introduce the City (3 min):

"In our story, Mira and her community transform their gray city into something beautiful. Today, YOU are going to create your own city — a city full of joy. This is a group project, just like in the story!"

"Before you start building, let's think like city planners. What do people need to feel joy in a community? [Parks, music, color, places to gather, gardens, playgrounds.] What buildings or spaces will YOUR city have? Does everyone in your group agree on what feels joyful? Discuss!"

Part 2 — Plan & Build (14 min):

Guide students through the design process:

- DISCUSS: "What do you want to include? Houses? A park? A mural wall? A community garden? A market? Think about your story — what made the community feel beautiful?"
- RESEARCH: If available, display photos or illustrations of buildings. "What details do real buildings have? Doors, windows, roofs, arches — what will YOU include?"
- BUILD: Students work together to construct their city using blocks and loose parts. Encourage them to add details — doors, windows, decorations, green spaces.

Circulate and ask:

"What does each part of your city do? How does it spread joy? What shapes did you use? [Rectangles for walls, triangles for roofs, squares for windows.] How did you decide who builds what? How are you working together, just like the community in our story?"

Part 3 — Gallery & Share (3 min):

"Let's walk around and look at each group's city! As you walk, notice: what did other groups add that makes their city feel beautiful? What is similar across all of our cities?"

Bring students back together:

"In our story, the muralist told Mira: 'Maybe something beautiful.' He didn't say definitely or certainly — he said maybe. Why do you think he used that word? What does that tell us about making something beautiful? [It takes courage to try. Beautiful things start with a small, hopeful idea.]"

Modifications & Extensions:

- Emerging: Provide a simple 3-step planning template (draw → label → build). Pair with a stronger builder and give pre-sorted materials in a small tray.
- Advanced: Challenge students to add a community mural wall to their city using paper and markers. Write 1–2 sentences explaining what their mural shows and why they chose that design.
- Time: This activity can be extended based on students' interest and available programming time.

Closing & Celebration (5 min)

Educator Script

"Look at the cities we built today! Just like Mira's neighborhood, each one is different — full of details that reflect what YOUR group finds beautiful and joyful."

"Before we go, let's all say our feeling word one more time: hopeful! Because today you read about a girl who hoped she could change her neighborhood — and she did. You are hopeful too. I can see it in what you built."

"Next time, we'll read *Maybe Something Beautiful* again — this time as vocabulary detectives — and we'll take our creativity outside to make sidewalk chalk murals. Get excited!"

SCRIPTED LESSON PACKAGE

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

Lesson 2 of 3 — Shared Reading & Vocabulary Exploration

⌚ 60 minutes • STEAM Focus: Sidewalk Chalk Murals — Visual Art + Math + Creative Expression

Standards

Reading Prose & Poetry / Literary Text:

- K: LA.K.RP.2 With adult help, I can tell the main character, setting, and important events in a story.
- 1st: LA.1.RP.2 I can tell the characters, setting, and what happens in stories.
- 2nd: LA.2.RP.4 I can describe how a story is written, including how the problem is solved.

Science of Reading: Vocabulary Focus:

- K: LA.K.RP.6 With adult help, I can ask and answer questions about important details in stories. I can use words and pictures to understand new words.
- 1st: LA.1.RP.6 I can ask and answer questions about important details in stories. I can figure out the meaning of unknown words using clues from the story.
- 2nd: LA.2.RP.6 I can ask and answer different kinds of questions about stories I have read. I can use context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Objectives

Adult Language (SWBAT):

- Students will be able to identify and explain key vocabulary words (mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate) using the 4-Step Vocabulary Routine — including student-friendly definitions, story connections, real-life connections, and grade-differentiated practice.
- Students will be able to apply vocabulary words in context during shared reading, identifying them in the text and using them in oral and written responses.

Student-Friendly Language:

- I can learn what important words in our story mean — and use them in my own talking and writing.
- I can be a Word Detective and find clues that help me understand new words.

Reading & Vocabulary	STEAM: Sidewalk Chalk Murals (from 4-H STEAM Imagination Guide)
• Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell • Vocabulary word cards: mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate (one set per student or printed large for whole-group display) • Chart paper for class vocabulary anchor chart • Helix K-2 Daily Check-In Form (student copies) • Emoji Faces / Feeling word cards Optional: • Images of famous murals or street art from communities around the world • Images of Rafael López's illustration style for discussion of how art conveys emotion	• Outdoor access with sidewalk or pavement space • Sidewalk chalk in a variety of colors (shared sets — one set per small group) • Optional: printed images of famous sidewalk chalk art or community murals for inspiration • Optional: planning paper and pencils for sketching designs before going outside • Optional: camera or tablet to photograph completed murals before they fade

Before Students Arrive

- Print or write vocabulary word cards large enough for whole-group display — one word visible at a time.

- Set out Check-In Forms and emoji/feeling word cards at each student's spot.
- 1st grade: Pre-write sentence frame strips and place at each student's spot.
- 2nd grade: Set out mini whiteboards and dry-erase markers at each table.
- Bookmark key vocabulary pages in *Maybe Something Beautiful* for shared reading stops.
- Identify outdoor sidewalk area in advance. If indoor only: prepare large paper rolls taped to the floor or table as an alternative mural surface.

Welcome & Student Check-In (5 min)

Educator Script

Greet students warmly as they arrive.

"Welcome back, friends! Before we dive in, let's check in. Show me with your emoji, or tell me with words, how you're feeling today."

Take 2–3 brief responses. Connect to the story theme:

"Think about Mira from our story. She had a small idea — just a little drawing — and it grew into something that changed her whole neighborhood. Has something small ever made a big difference in your life or in someone else's? Show me with your face how it feels when a small act of kindness or creativity ripples out and reaches lots of people!"

"Today we're going to look closely at the words that tell that story — the words that describe what Mira did and how her community responded."

Modifications:

- Emerging: Offer sentence frame: 'Something small that made a big difference was ____.'
- Advanced: Ask: 'Do you think one person can really change a whole community? What would it take?'

Activate Prior Knowledge (5 min)

Educator Script

"Yesterday, we read *Maybe Something Beautiful* together. Who can remember — how did the neighborhood look at the beginning? How did it look at the end? Turn and tell a partner before sharing out!"

Take 2–3 shares. Then:

"Today, we're going to read the story again — but this time, we're zooming in on five powerful words that capture exactly what Mira and her community did. These are words you might use to describe artists, leaders, changemakers — and yourselves!"

Science of Reading: Vocabulary Word Detective (10 min)

Educator Script

Educator Background: 4-Step Vocabulary Routine. The 4-Step Vocabulary Routine (Say It → Define It → Connect It → Use It) gives students a consistent, repeatable structure for learning new words deeply. Each word takes approximately 2 minutes and can be extended for learners to more deeply understand new words.

Introduce the Routine:

"Today we're going to learn 5 powerful words from *Maybe Something Beautiful* using our Word Detective Routine. Every time I show you a new word, we'll do 4 things together: SAY IT — DEFINE IT — CONNECT IT — USE IT. Ready? Let's go!"

Word 1: MURAL

"SAY IT: Mural. Say it with me, mural. Whisper it. Now say it like you're pointing to the most magnificent painting you've ever seen on the side of a building!"

"DEFINE IT: A mural is a large work of art that is painted directly onto a wall, ceiling, or other large surface — usually in a public place for everyone to see and enjoy."

"CONNECT IT: In our story, Mira's small drawing inspires the muralist, and together with the community they paint murals all over their neighborhood. Have you ever seen a mural in your community? What was on it? How did it make the space feel?"

Grade-level USE IT: K: Show me where you would paint a mural in this room! Point to your wall. What would you paint? 1st: Complete your sentence frame: 'A mural is _____. I would paint a mural of _____.' 2nd: On your whiteboard, write one sentence: 'A mural in our school would show _____ because _____.'

Word 2: COMMUNITY

"SAY IT: Community. Together, community. Say it warmly, like you're surrounded by the people who make you feel at home!"

"DEFINE IT: A community is a group of people who live, work, and play together in the same place. A community shares spaces, resources, and often a sense of belonging."

"CONNECT IT: In our story, the community starts out going about their separate days — but Mira's art brings them together. Who is part of YOUR community? [Classmates, neighbors, people at your library, your church or mosque, your sports team.] How do you know you belong to a community?"

Grade-level USE IT: K: Point to a friend and say: 'You are part of my community!' 1st: Complete: 'My community includes _____ and _____. My community makes me feel _____.' 2nd: Write: 'One way I contribute to my community is _____ because _____.'

Word 3: TRANSFORM

"SAY IT: Transform. Together, transform. Say it like something is completely changing right before your eyes!"

"DEFINE IT: Transform means to completely change from one thing into something very different — not just a little change, but a BIG one."

"CONNECT IT: In our story, Mira and the muralist transform the gray neighborhood into something colorful and alive. Can you think of something in nature that transforms? [A caterpillar transforms into a butterfly! A seed transforms into a flower!] What in YOUR life has ever transformed?"

Grade-level USE IT: K: Stand up and transform your body into something colorful — an animal, a flower, a piece of art! 1st: Complete: 'Mira transforms her neighborhood by _____.' 2nd: Write a sentence using both 'community' AND 'transform.'

Word 4: INSPIRE

"SAY IT: Inspire. Together, inspire. Say it like a big breath of air is filling you with a new idea!"

"DEFINE IT: Inspire means to fill someone with the excitement or motivation to do something creative, brave, or good."

"CONNECT IT: Mira's drawing inspires the muralist. The muralist's enthusiasm inspires the neighbors. And the neighbors inspire each other! Inspiration spreads — just like color in the story. Has anyone or anything ever inspired you? A book? A person? A piece of music?"

USE IT (all grades): Tell a partner: 'Something that inspires me is _____ because _____.' Listen to what they say — tell them: 'You inspire me too!'

Word 5: COLLABORATE

"SAY IT: Collaborate. Together, col-lab-o-rate. Say it slowly, feeling every syllable — col-lab-o-rate!"

"DEFINE IT: Collaborate means to work together with others toward a shared goal. When you collaborate, everyone brings something different to make something greater than any one person could alone."

"CONNECT IT: The whole neighborhood collaborates to paint the murals — the baker, the children, the elderly neighbors, the muralist. They all bring different skills and energy. Have you ever collaborated with someone on a project or a game? What did each person bring to it?"

USE IT (all grades): Look at your table group. Point to each person and say one thing they might contribute if you collaborated on a mural together: "You could paint ___ because you are good at ___!"

Wrap-Up — Draw It:

"Let's add a quick sketch next to each word on our anchor chart. Who wants to draw 'mural'? 'Community'?"

Invite 1–2 students to sketch beside each word. Keep the chart visible throughout the unit.

Modifications:

- Emerging: Focus on SAY IT and DEFINE IT only for each word. Use picture response cards — students hold up a card that matches each word's feeling or meaning instead of writing.
- Advanced: After the routine, challenge students to use all 5 words in one connected sentence or mini story: 'Mira inspired the community to collaborate on a mural that would transform their gray neighborhood into something beautiful.'

Shared Reading with Vocabulary Stops (15 min)

Educator Script

"Now that we know our 5 powerful words, let's put them to work! As I read, every time you see or hear one of our words — mural, community, transform, inspire, or collaborate — give me a quiet thumbs up. Let's see how many we can spot!"

During reading, pause at these moments:

- "Look at how the illustrator Rafael López uses color. On the gray pages at the beginning, how do the colors make you feel? What changes about the color as the community starts to transform the neighborhood?"
- "When the muralist sees Mira's drawing, something happens to him. What vocabulary word describes what Mira's art does to the muralist? [Inspire!] Find the evidence in his face and body language."
- "Look at who is painting now. The baker, the children, the elderly man. What vocabulary word describes what they are all doing together? [Collaborate!]"
- "By the end, the narrator says 'maybe something beautiful.' But at the end of the story — IS it beautiful? Is it just maybe anymore? What changed?"

After Reading Discussion:

"Turn and tell your partner: What is the BIG message of this story? Use at least one vocabulary word in your answer. [Example: 'One person can inspire a whole community to collaborate and transform a place into something beautiful.']"

Modifications:

- Emerging: Provide a simple before/after T-chart — students draw the neighborhood at the beginning and at the end, and label one vocabulary word for each.
- Advanced: Ask students to identify how the illustrator's use of color tells the story. How does the art style change across the book? What does that convey that the words alone don't?

STEAM Activity: Sidewalk Chalk Murals — Visual Art + Math + Creative Expression (22 min)

Educator Script

Part 1 — Introduce Murals (4 min):

"In our story, Mira and her community transform their gray neighborhood by painting murals on walls and sidewalks. Today, YOU are going to do the same thing — you're going to collaborate to transform our plain gray sidewalk into a vibrant mural, one section at a time."

"Before we go outside, let's look at a few examples of sidewalk chalk art and community murals. What do you notice? [Colors, patterns, shapes, stories, messages of hope.] What makes a mural a mural — versus just a drawing? [It's big! It's for everyone! It transforms a public space!]"

Optional: Show 1–2 printed or displayed images of chalk art murals.

Part 2 — Plan & Create (15 min):

"Just like Mira didn't plan every detail before she started — she just started with what she loved — you can begin with an idea and let it grow. Each person has their own section of sidewalk, but our sections will connect together to make one big community mural!"

Guide students outside. Assign or let students choose their section of sidewalk.

"Think about: What is something beautiful you want the world to see? What colors will you use? What shapes, patterns, or images? Your section is YOUR contribution to our community mural — what will you bring?"

Circulate and prompt:

"What is your section showing? What vocabulary word describes what we're all doing right now? [Collaborate!] How does your section connect to your neighbor's? What math do you see — what shapes, patterns, lines?"

Part 3 — Gallery Walk & Reflection (3 min):

"Step back and look at our whole mural together! Each of you contributed something different. Together you transformed this space — just like Mira and her neighbors transformed their neighborhood."

"Before we go back inside: stand next to the part of the mural that you're most proud of. If someone's section amazes you, point to it and tell them: 'This inspires me because ____.'"

Indoor alternative: If outdoor access is unavailable, tape large paper rolls to the floor or tables. Students create their mural sections on paper using markers or paint sticks.

Modifications & Extensions:

- Emerging: Offer a simple starting prompt: 'Draw something that makes you happy.' Pair with a buddy who can help extend the design with patterns and color.
- Advanced: Challenge students to incorporate a geometry connection — use only shapes (triangles, squares, circles, hexagons) to fill their section, making a geometric mural. Label each shape and count how many they used.

Closing & Reflection (5 min)

Educator Script

"Artists, word detectives, and community builders — look at what you made! You learned five powerful words and you used them. You collaborated to make a mural that transformed this space, even if just for today."

Do a quick vocabulary review:

"I'll say a definition, you say the word! 'A large painting on a wall for everyone to see.' [mural!] 'People who live and work together in the same place.' [community!] 'To completely change from one thing into something very different.' [transform!] 'To fill someone with excitement and motivation to create.' [inspire!] 'To work together toward a shared goal.' [collaborate!]"

"In our next lesson, we're going to bring music and movement into Mira's world — and use it to celebrate everything we've learned. See you next time!"

SCRIPTED LESSON PACKAGE

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

Lesson 3 of 3 — Fluency & Reading with Expression

⌚ 60 minutes • STEAM Focus: Beautiful Music & Movement — Music + Engineering + Creative Expression

Standards

Reading Prose & Poetry / Literary Text:

- K: LA.K.RP.2 With adult help, I can tell the main character, setting, and important events in a story.
- 1st: LA.1.RP.2 I can tell the characters, setting, and what happens in stories.
- 2nd: LA.2.RP.4 I can describe how a story is written, including how the problem is solved.

Science of Reading: Fluency Focus:

- K: LA.K.F.4 I can read smoothly and correctly with purpose and understanding.
- 1st: LA.1.F.3 I can read grade-level text accurately and fluently. I can read with expression to help listeners understand the meaning.
- 2nd: LA.2.F.3 I can read grade-level text accurately, fluently, and with expression that shows I understand the meaning.

Objectives

Adult Language (SWBAT):

- Students will be able to read selected text from Maybe Something Beautiful with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expressive phrasing that conveys the mood and meaning of the story.
- Students will be able to design and build a simple musical instrument from recycled materials and use it to participate in a community music parade — connecting the story's theme of collaborative transformation to a hands-on creative science experience.

Student-Friendly Language:

- I can read part of our story with my best expression voice — using my voice to show how the story feels.
- I can build my own instrument and make music with my community, just like Mira made art with hers!

Reading & Fluency

- Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell
- Helix K-2 Daily Check-In Form (student copies)
- Emoji Faces / Feeling word cards
- Vocabulary anchor chart from Lesson 2 (displayed for reference)
- Whiteboard or chart paper for fluency sentence strip
- Mini whiteboards OR lined paper for echo/partner reading practice
- Optional: simple Reader's Theater script adapted from key pages of the book

Optional:

- Examples of recycled instruments from world music traditions (photos or video clips)
- A simple drum or tambourine to demonstrate sound vibration before building

STEAM: Beautiful Music & Movement (from 4-H STEAM Imagination Guide)

- Recyclables for instrument building: cardboard boxes, empty cans or containers, rubber bands, plastic bottles
- Fillers for shakers: dry beans, coins, small pebbles, rice
- Tape, scissors, craft supplies for decorating instruments
- Optional: markers or paint for decorating instruments with mural-inspired designs
- Open space for a music parade at the end

Before Students Arrive

- Write the fluency sentence strip on the board: "Maybe something beautiful. Just start."
- Set out Check-In Forms and emoji/feeling word cards at each student's spot.
- Pre-sort recyclable materials into bins or trays — one per table — so students can survey options quickly.
- Display the vocabulary anchor chart from Lesson 2 for ongoing reference.
- Clear a pathway or open space in the room for the music parade at the end of the STEAM activity.
- Optional: Display images of instruments from world music traditions as a visual anchor for the introduction.

Welcome & Student Check-In (8 min)

Educator Script

Greet students warmly as they arrive.

"Good [morning/afternoon], friends! Today is our last lesson with Maybe Something Beautiful — and we're going to go out with a celebration! Before we dive in, let's check in."

Have students complete their Check-In Form. After 2–3 minutes, invite sharing.

"Who would like to share how they're feeling? Tell us: 'I am feeling ___ today because ___.'"

Say It Game: Joyful

"Our feeling word today is joyful. Say it together, joyful! What does joyful mean? [A deep feeling of happiness that comes from the inside — not just a smile, but a whole-body feeling of everything being right.] Now say it quietly. Joyful."

"Mira felt joyful when she made art. The neighbors felt joyful when they painted together. And today, I hope you feel joyful too — because you are going to make music, and music has a way of doing exactly what Mira's art did: it brings people together and transforms a space."

"Say 'I feel joyful!' to a friend. Now show me your most joyful face — the one where your whole body is smiling!"

Modifications:

- Emerging: Emoji chart for pointing. Invite students to show their joyful face.
- Advanced: Ask: 'Can you think of a time when music changed how you were feeling? What happened?'

Activate Prior Knowledge: Story Retelling (8 min)

Educator Script

Before reading again, activate what students know:

"We've spent three lessons with Maybe Something Beautiful. Before we read one more time, I want to see what YOU remember. With your partner, retell the story — beginning, middle, and end. Go!"

Give partners 2–3 minutes to retell. Then check together:

"Let's check together. What happened at the beginning? [The neighborhood was gray. Mira made a small drawing.] What happened in the middle? [The muralist saw it. The community joined in. They painted murals everywhere.] And the end? [The neighborhood was transformed. Beautiful. Full of color and community.] You know this story so well!"

"Now here's the big thinking question: What is the ONE most important idea in this book — the idea you want to carry with you? Tell your partner in one sentence. Go!"

Call on 3–4 students to share. Validate all responses that connect to community, transformation, creativity, and hope.

Science of Reading Mini Lesson: Reading Fluency with Expression (12 min)

Teacher-Led Instruction

What is Reading Fluency? (Educator Background) Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, at an appropriate rate, and with expression (prosody). Research consistently shows that fluency is a bridge between decoding and comprehension — when students read fluently, they can focus their attention on meaning. Repeated reading of familiar texts is one of the most effective fluency-building strategies for K–2 learners. Maybe Something Beautiful, with its emotional arc from gray to joyful, gives students rich opportunities to match their voice to the feeling of the text.

Step 1 — Introduce the Concept (All Grades):

"Fluent readers don't just say the words — they make the words FEEL like the story. Imagine reading like a robot: 'May. Be. Some. Thing. Beau. Ti. Ful.' [read flatly]. Boring! Now watch: 'Maybe something beautiful!' [with wonder and hope]. Which one felt like Mira's story? THAT is what fluency sounds like."

Choral Read the Sentence Strip (All Grades):

"Let's all read the sentence on the board together with our best expression: 'Maybe something beautiful. Just start.' Say it first like you're not sure it's possible... [flat, quiet]. Now say it like you believe it with your whole heart! [Big, hopeful voice]. One more time — this time, show me with your face AND your voice!"

Step 2 — Gradual Release by Grade:

- Kindergarten — Echo Reading: Read 1–2 sentences aloud with strong expression. Students echo back the same sentence with the same voice and feeling. Model the full range — the quiet gray beginning and the bright joyful ending. Focus: matching voice to the feeling of the page (gray + flat at the start; warm + bright at the end).
- 1st Grade — Partner Reading: Partners take turns reading one page each. The listening partner gives a 'color rating' — hold up one finger for gray (flat reading), two for colorful (some expression), three for vibrant (full expression, matched to the feeling). Switch roles and try again. Goal: get to vibrant!
- 2nd Grade — Independent Re-Read & Self-Rating: Students independently re-read 2 pages. They self-rate on the 1–3 color scale. Then they practice until their rating reaches 3. Optional: students record a voice memo on a device and listen back to hear their own expression.

Discussion Questions After Fluency Practice:

- Which part of the book was the hardest to read with expression? Why?
- Which part felt the most joyful to read aloud?
- How did reading with expression change the way the story felt?
- Which vocabulary word from our anchor chart describes how we want our reading to sound? [vibrant!]

Modifications:

- Emerging: Allow the student to listen to 1–2 pages read aloud first, then echo just one sentence at a time. Use a pointer on each word to support tracking.
- Advanced: Challenge students to read a key page twice — once as the narrator describing the gray beginning, and once as Mira herself, full of joy and color. How does the voice shift? What changes?

Kindergarten	1st Grade	2nd Grade
• Echo reading — repeat each sentence after teacher with the same expression. • Focus: matching voice to the mood of the page.	• Partner reading — one page each. Partner gives a 'color rating' (gray / colorful / vibrant). • Switch and improve.	• Independent re-read of 2 pages. • Self-rate on 1–3 color scale. • Practice until rating = 3.

Read Aloud / Partner Reading (8 min)

Educator Script

"Now we're going to experience Maybe Something Beautiful one final time, and this time, YOU are the voices. I'll read the first few pages with big expression to get us started..."

Read the first 3–4 pages aloud with strong prosody, quiet and flat for the gray beginning, then building to warmth and wonder as Mira starts drawing. Then transition to echo or partner reading based on grade.

"As you read, listen for our vocabulary words from this week. When you hear or read one, tap your shoulder! And notice how the feeling of the story changes from the first page to the last."

Comprehension Check:

"What is the most important thing you will carry with you from Maybe Something Beautiful? Tell your partner in one sentence. Go!"

Call on 3–4 students to share. Celebrate any response that connects to the book's central themes.

STEAM Activity: Beautiful Music & Movement — Music + Engineering + Creative Expression (20 min)

Educator Script

Part 1 — Introduce the Activity (4 min):

"In our story, Mira uses art to bring her community together. Today, we're going to use MUSIC to do the same thing! Music has been bringing communities together for thousands of years — every culture around the world has its own musical traditions and instruments."

"Here's something cool: many of the world's instruments were first made from simple, everyday materials — hollow logs, dried gourds, stretched animal skins, strips of bamboo. Today you're going to do the same thing: build your own instrument from recycled materials."

Optional: Show a brief picture or video of instruments from a world music tradition.

"Your instrument can make any kind of sound — shaking, tapping, strumming, blowing. The question is: how will you design it? What materials will you use? And most importantly — can you make it beautiful, like Mira's murals? Decorate it with mural-inspired designs!"

Part 2 — Design & Build (12 min):

"Survey the materials at your table. Think about: What kind of sound do you want to make? Shaking? Tapping? Plucking? How will you build it to make that sound? What will make it structurally strong enough to play?"

Students select materials and build. Circulate and ask:

"What type of instrument is yours — percussion, string, or wind? What causes the sound? [Vibration! When materials shake or are struck, they vibrate and make sound.] How did you decide what to put inside your shaker, or how tight to stretch your rubber band?"

"Now decorate! What colors and designs will you add? Remember Mira's murals — bold, colorful, full of community spirit. Let your instrument reflect that!"

Part 3 — Practice & Music Parade (4 min):

"Let's practice together! I'll set a beat, and we'll all find our rhythm. [Clap a simple pattern.] Now join in with your instruments!"

Try a simple call-and-response pattern, or just let students explore rhythm together for 60–90 seconds.

"Now — community parade! We're going to walk through the space, playing our instruments together, just like a neighborhood coming to life. This is our community. This is our music. And MAYBE something beautiful just happened."

Science Connection — Sound Vibration:

After the parade, gather students:

"Put your hand lightly on your instrument while you play it. What do you feel? [Vibration!] Sound is made by vibration — when an object moves back and forth very quickly, it pushes the air and creates sound waves that travel to our ears. Your instrument makes sound because something is vibrating. What part vibrates in yours?"

Modifications & Extensions:

- Emerging: Pre-fill a simple shaker container (sealed bottle with beans inside) for students who find construction challenging. Let them focus on decorating and playing.
- Advanced: Challenge students to experiment with how their instrument's sound changes: 'What happens if you put more filling in your shaker? If you stretch your rubber band tighter? Can you make a higher pitch? A lower one?' Record their experiment and findings on paper.

Closing & Celebration (5 min)

Educator Script

"Look at everything this community made over these three lessons! You read a story about a girl who changed her neighborhood with one small drawing. You built your own city, painted a mural, read with expression, and made music together."

"At the beginning of our story, the neighborhood was gray. At the beginning of our lessons, you were just meeting Mira. Now look — you've built, painted, played, and celebrated. You have transformed this space, just like she transformed hers."

"The book says: 'Maybe something beautiful.' And I have a feeling — it's not maybe anymore. I am looking at something beautiful right now. You."

"Let's say our feeling word one last time: joyful. Because joy is what happens when a community — like this one — comes together with creativity, courage, and color. That is what you did. That is what Mira did. And that is what beautiful sounds like."

GRAB AND GO LESSON PACKAGE

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

Lesson 1 of 3 — Introducing the Story & Phonological Awareness

🕒 60 minutes • 🌱 Beautiful City Block Play (Engineering + Math + Collaboration)

BOOK

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

BIG IDEA

One person's creativity can inspire an entire community to transform their world.

VOCAB WORD

Hopeful: believing that something good is possible, even when things look plain or hard

Materials

SUPPLIES

- Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell
- Whiteboard or chart paper + markers
- Helix K-2 Daily Check-In Form (student copies)
- Feeling word cards / emoji visuals
- Building blocks (unit blocks, LEGO, or cardboard bricks)
- Variety of loose parts: natural materials, recycled objects, craft supplies
- Scratch paper and pencils for planning
- **TO PRINT:** Helix Daily Check-In Form

OPTIONAL / GRADE LEVEL SPECIFIC

- **K:** Syllable picture cards (mu-ral, neigh-bor-hood, col-ors, beau-ti-ful, com-mu-ni-ty)
- **1st:** Printed Elkonin Box sheets (3–4 boxes per row); counters or bingo chips — 3–4 per student
- **2nd:** Mini whiteboards + dry-erase markers OR lined paper
- Small mirrors to watch mouth movements while producing sounds
- Optional: photos or illustrations of buildings and colorful community murals for visual reference
- Optional: small people figurines or craft stick characters for city building

Pre-Lesson Set-Up

1. Write 'Maybe Something Beautiful' on the board. Below it write: "What would you add to make your neighborhood more beautiful?"
2. Set out Helix Check-In Forms and emoji/feeling word cards at each student's spot.
3. Write today's syllable target words on the board: mu-ral, neigh-bor-hood, col-ors, beau-ti-ful, com-mu-ni-ty.
4. **1st grade only:** Draw 3–4 Elkonin boxes on chart paper. Practice pushing a counter per sound for 'art' (/ā/-/r/-/t/) and 'paint' (/p/-/ā/-/n/-/t/).
5. Set out building blocks and loose parts at a central area for the STEAM activity.
6. Optional: Display photos of colorful community murals as a visual anchor.

Welcome & Student Check-In (8–10 min)

1. Greet students warmly and invite them to pick up a Check-In Form.
2. Give students 2–3 minutes to complete the "How am I feeling?" section. Invite 3–4 volunteers to share.
3. Play the Say It Game with the word Hopeful.
 - Say it together, whisper it, say it like you just saw something gray and sad and have an idea that could make it beautiful!
 - **Define:** "When you feel hopeful, it means you believe that something good is possible — even when things look plain, gray, or hard."
 - Turn and say 'I am feeling hopeful!' to a friend.
4. Introduce the book: "In today's story, a girl named Mira lives in a gray city. She has hope, she has art, and what she does with that hope changes everything. Let's find out more!"

Modifications:

Emerging: Provide a printed emoji chart. Allow students to point to their feeling instead of writing or cutting.

Advanced: Ask students to share two feelings and explain what caused each one.

Activate Prior Knowledge (7 min)

1. Guide students through a neighborhood visualization: "Think about the place where you live — your neighborhood, your street, your community. Close your eyes for a moment. What do you see? What colors? What sounds? What do you love about it?" Give 10 seconds to think.
2. "Turn and tell a partner: what is one thing that makes your neighborhood feel special or one thing you wish you could change about it?" Take 4–5 whole group responses.
3. Introduce the book: "Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell is about a girl named Mira who loves to draw. She lives in a gray, quiet neighborhood. But Mira has an idea, and it starts with one small drawing."

Modifications:

Emerging: Show 2–3 pictures of gray vs. colorful neighborhoods and let students describe what they notice before the story.

Advanced: Ask students to predict what might happen in the story based on the title and cover illustration before reading.

Science of Reading Mini Lesson: Phonological Awareness (10 min)

Before Starting: Determine your grade-level structure. Options:

- Separate students into grade levels with an adult or student leader
 - Complete each activity per grade level as a whole group
 - Complete one main activity with the whole group
1. "Just like Mira adds one small drawing at a time to transform her neighborhood, words are built one sound at a time. Today we're going to explore those building blocks!"
 2. Model the activity for your grade level (see the leveled table below).
 3. Complete the grade-level or whole-group activity.

Modifications:

Emerging: For syllables, use a mirror — each jaw drop = one syllable. For Elkonin Boxes, pre-draw the boxes and start with 2-sound words (e.g., 'art').

Advanced: Challenge students to sort their sound-swap words into art-related vs. non-art categories and explain why.

Kindergarten	Syllable Clapping • Clap the BEATS in community and art words. Model: 'mu-ral' [clap clap] = 2 beats! • Try: 'col-ors' • 'beau-ti-ful' • 'com-mu-ni-ty' • Ask: 'How many beats in 'art'?' [clap — 1!] • Fun twist: tap a paintbrush on a surface for each beat — like Mira painting the wall! • After clapping, hold up fingers for each syllable as a visual + tactile anchor.
1st Grade	Elkonin Box Push • Model pushing one counter per sound. • 'The word is art. /ā/ [push] — /r/ [push] — /t/ [push]. 3 sounds, 3 boxes!' • Practice: art (/ā/-/r/-/t/ = 3), gray (/g/-/r/-/ā/ = 3), wall (/w/-/ō/-/l/ = 3), paint (/p/-/ā/-/n/-/t/ = 4), brush (/b/-/r/-/ə/-/sh/ = 4). Always say sounds aloud as you push.
2nd Grade	Phoneme Substitution • Change one sound in a word to make a new word! • Change /gr/ in GRAY to /pl/ → PLAY! • Change /w/ in WALL to /h/ → hall! • Change /p/ in PAINT to /f/ → faint! • Students write two 'before → after' word pairs and share with the class.

Read Aloud (15 min)

1. Preview the cover. Identify the authors (F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell) and illustrator (Rafael López). Ask what students notice about the cover.
2. Introduce comprehension focus: "As I read, notice two things: How does Mira's neighborhood change from beginning to end? And who helps make that change happen?"
3. Read the book aloud. Pause at these moments:
 - "The neighborhood is gray. How does that make you feel when you look at these pages? What does gray feel like?"
 - "Mira draws a small girl dancing and tapes it to the wall. Look at the muralist's face when he sees it. What do you think he is feeling?"
 - "Now the whole community is painting together! Who is helping? [Neighbors, the baker, the cobbler, old people, children...] What does it feel like when a whole community works together?"
 - "At the end, what word from our story describes a place full of color and life? What did it take to make that happen?"
4. After reading — quick phonological awareness connection: "Let's clap the syllables in 'mu-ral' [clap clap] — 2 beats! 'neigh-bor-hood'? [clap clap clap]. 'beau-ti-ful'? [clap clap clap]."

Modifications:

Emerging: Seat near the book; use finger pointing to track. Offer the sentence frame: 'Mira changed her neighborhood by ____.'

Advanced: Ask students to identify the central message and support it with two specific details from the text and illustrations.

STEAM Activity: Beautiful City Block Play — Engineering + Math + Collaboration (20 min)

Part 1: Introduce the City & Brainstorm

1. "In our story, Mira and her community transform their gray city into something beautiful. Today YOU are going to create your own joyful city, just like in the story!"
2. "Before you start building, think like city planners. What do people need to feel joy in a community? [Parks, music, color, places to gather, gardens, playgrounds.] What buildings or spaces will your city have?" Make a list of places it could have.
3. Divide students into small groups.

Part 2: Plan & Build

1. "What do you want to include? Houses? A park? A mural wall? A community garden? A market? Think about what made the community in our story feel beautiful." Students should create a list of the parts of a city they want to build.
2. BUILD: Students work together using blocks and loose parts. Encourage adding details — doors, windows, green spaces, and decorations. Circulate and ask:
 - What does each part of your city do? How does it make people feel?
 - What shapes did you use? [Rectangles for walls, triangles for roofs, squares for windows.]
 - How did you decide who builds what? How are you collaborating, just like the community in our story?

Part 3: Gallery & Share

1. Walk around to look at each group's city. Ask: What did other groups add that makes their city feel beautiful? What is similar across all of our cities?

Example City



Modifications:

Emerging: Provide a simple 3-step planning template (draw → label → build). Pair with a stronger builder and give pre-sorted materials in a small tray.

Advanced: Add a community mural wall to the city using paper and markers. Write 1–2 sentences explaining what the mural shows and why they chose that design.

Closing & Celebration (5 min)

1. Have students walk around and observe another group's city. Ask them to point to one detail that makes it feel joyful and tell the group: 'I like this because ____.'
2. Ask students to share one way they were hopeful or creative today.

GRAB AND GO LESSON PACKAGE

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

Lesson 2 of 3 — Shared Reading & Vocabulary Exploration

⌚ 60 minutes • 🌱 Sidewalk Chalk Murals (Visual Art + Math + Creative Expression)

BOOK

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

BIG IDEA

One small idea, shared with courage, can transform an entire community.

VOCAB WORD

Mural, Community, Transform, Inspire, Collaborate

Materials

SUPPLIES

- Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell
- Vocabulary word cards: mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate
- Chart paper for class vocabulary anchor chart
- Helix K-2 Daily Check-In Form (student copies)
- Emoji Faces / Feeling word cards
- Sidewalk chalk in a variety of colors — one shared set per small group
- **TO PRINT:** Helix Daily Check-In Form

OPTIONAL / GRADE LEVEL SPECIFIC

- **K:** Printed picture response cards for acting out vocabulary words
- **1st:** Sentence frame strips: 'A mural is ____.' / 'I felt inspired when ____.'
- **2nd:** Mini whiteboards + dry-erase markers OR lined paper
- Optional: printed images of community murals or famous sidewalk chalk art for inspiration
- Optional: planning paper and pencils for sketching designs before going outside
- Optional: camera or tablet to photograph completed murals before they fade
- If outdoor access is unavailable: Tape large paper rolls to the floor or tables. Students create mural sections using markers or paint sticks.

Pre-Lesson Set-Up

1. Print or write vocabulary word cards large enough for whole-group display: mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate.
2. Set out Check-In Forms and emoji/feeling word cards at each student's spot.
3. **1st grade:** Pre-write sentence frame strips and place at each student's spot.
4. **2nd grade:** Set out mini whiteboards and dry-erase markers at each table.
5. Bookmark key vocabulary pages in Maybe Something Beautiful for shared reading stops.
6. Identify outdoor sidewalk area in advance and check that chalk is ready.

Welcome & Student Check-In (5 min)

1. Greet students warmly. Ask students to show or share how they're feeling using emoji or words. Take 2–3 brief responses.
2. "Think about Mira from our story. She had a small idea, just one little drawing, and it grew into something that changed her whole neighborhood. Have you ever seen something small make a big difference? [Take 2–3 responses.]"

Modifications:

Emerging: Sentence frame: 'Something small that made a big difference was ____.'

Advanced: Do you think one person can really change a whole community? What would it take?

Activate Prior Knowledge (5 min)

1. Recall the story. Ask students to turn and tell a partner how the neighborhood looked at the beginning and at the end, then have 2–3 whole-class shares.
2. Share that today students will read the story again as word detectives, focusing in on five powerful words that describe what Mira and her community did.

Science of Reading: Vocabulary Word Detective (10 min)

Use the 4-Step Vocabulary Routine for each word: SAY IT → DEFINE IT → CONNECT IT → USE IT

MURAL

- **Say It:** "mural" — say it together, whisper it, say it like you're pointing to the most magnificent painting you've ever seen on the side of a building!
- **Define It:** A large work of art painted directly onto a wall, ceiling, or other large surface, usually in a public place for everyone to see.
- **Connect It:** In our story, Mira's small drawing inspires the muralist, and together the community paints murals all over the neighborhood. Have you ever seen a mural in your community? What was on it?
- **Use It:** K: Show where you would paint a mural in this room! Point to your wall. | 1st: 'A mural is _____. I would paint a mural of _____.' | 2nd: 'A mural in our school would show _____ because _____.'

COMMUNITY

- **Say It:** "community" — say it warmly, like you're surrounded by the people who make you feel at home!
- **Define It:** A group of people who live, work, and play together in the same place, sharing spaces, resources, and a sense of belonging.
- **Connect It:** In our story, Mira's art brings the community together. Who is part of your community? [Classmates, neighbors, people at your library, your sports team.] How do you know you belong?
- **Use It:** K: Point to a friend and say: 'You are part of my community!' | 1st: 'My community includes _____ and _____. My community makes me feel _____.' | 2nd: 'One way I contribute to my community is _____ because _____.'

TRANSFORM

- **Say It:** "transform" — say it like something is completely changing right before your eyes!
- **Define It:** To completely change from one thing into something very different — not just a little change, but a BIG one.
- **Connect It:** Mira and the muralist transform the gray neighborhood into something colorful and alive. Can you think of something in nature that transforms? [A caterpillar into a butterfly! A seed into a flower!]
- **Use It:** K: Stand up and transform your body into something colorful! | 1st: 'Mira transforms her neighborhood by _____.' | 2nd: Write a sentence using both 'community' AND 'transform.'

INSPIRE

- **Say It:** "inspire" — say it like a big breath of air is filling you with a brand new idea!
- **Define It:** To fill someone with the excitement or motivation to do something creative, brave, or good.
- **Connect It:** Mira's drawing inspires the muralist. The muralist inspires the neighbors. Inspiration spreads just like color in the story. Has anyone or anything ever inspired you?
- **Use It:** All grades: Tell a partner: 'Something that inspires me is _____ because _____.' Then tell them: 'You inspire me too!'

COLLABORATE

- **Say It:** "collaborate" — say it slowly, feeling every syllable: col-lab-o-rate!
- **Define It:** To work together with others toward a shared goal, where everyone brings something different to make something greater than any one person could alone.
- **Connect It:** The whole neighborhood collaborates — the baker, the children, the elderly neighbors, the muralist. They all bring different skills and energy. Have you ever collaborated on a project?
- **Use It:** All grades: Look at your table group. Point to each person and say one thing they could contribute to a mural: 'You could paint _____ because you are good at _____.'

Wrap-Up — Draw It: Invite 1–2 students to sketch beside each word on the class anchor chart to help everyone remember the meaning.

Modifications:

Emerging: Focus on SAY IT and DEFINE IT only for each word. Use picture response cards.

Advanced: Use all 5 words in one connected sentence or mini story: 'Mira inspired the community to collaborate on a mural that would transform their gray neighborhood into something beautiful.'

Shared Reading with Vocabulary Stops (15 min)

1. Complete the read-aloud. As you read, ask students to give a quiet thumbs up when they see or hear a vocabulary word.
2. Pause at these moments:
 - "Look at how the illustrator uses color. On the gray pages at the beginning, how do the colors make you feel? What changes as the community starts to transform the neighborhood?"
 - "When the muralist sees Mira's drawing, something happens to him. What vocabulary word describes what Mira's art does to the muralist? [Inspire!] Find the evidence in his face and body language."
 - "Look at who is painting now — the baker, the children, the elderly man. What vocabulary word describes what they are all doing together? [Collaborate!]"
 - "By the end, the narrator says, 'maybe something beautiful.' But at the end — IS it beautiful? Is it still just maybe? What changed?"
3. After reading discussion: "Turn and tell your partner: What is the BIG message of this story? Use at least one vocabulary word in your answer."

Modifications:

Emerging: Provide a simple before/after T-chart — students draw the neighborhood at the beginning and at the end, and label one vocabulary word for each.

Advanced: Ask students to identify how the illustrator's use of color tells the story. How does the art style change across the book?

STEAM Activity: Sidewalk Chalk Murals — Visual Art + Math + Creative Expression (22 min)

Part 1: Introduce Murals

1. "In our story, Mira and her community transform their gray neighborhood by painting murals. Today you are going to do the same — collaborate to transform our sidewalk into a vibrant mural, one section at a time!"
2. Show pictures of community murals and sidewalk chalk art. Ask: What do you notice? [Colors, patterns, shapes, stories, messages of hope.] What makes a mural a mural? [It's big! It's for everyone! It transforms a public space!]

Part 2: Plan & Create

1. Guide students outside. Assign or let students choose their section. Provide students with chalk to start creating.
2. Circulate and ask:
 - What is your section showing? What colors and shapes will you use?
 - What vocabulary word describes what we're all doing right now? [Collaborate!]
 - How does your section connect to your neighbor's? What math do you see — what shapes, patterns, lines?

Part 3: Gallery Walk & Reflection

1. Step back and look at the whole mural together. "Each of you contributed something different. Together you transformed this space, just like Mira and her neighbors transformed their neighborhood."
2. Have students stand next to the part of the mural they're most proud of. Invite them to point to a neighbor's section and say: 'This inspires me because ____.'
3. Take photos of the students with their mural sections.

Mural Example



Modifications:

Emerging: Offer a simple starting prompt: 'Draw something that makes you happy.' Pair with a buddy who can help extend the design with patterns and color.

Advanced: Use only geometric shapes (triangles, squares, circles, hexagons) to fill their section, making a geometric mural. Label each shape and count how many they used.

Closing & Reflection (5 min)

1. Have students hold up an imaginary paintbrush and tell a friend: 'You helped transform this space!'
2. Quick vocabulary review: "I'll say a definition — you say the word!"
 - 'A large painting on a wall for everyone to see.' → [mural!]
 - 'People who live and work together in the same place.' → [community!]
 - 'To completely change from one thing into something very different.' → [transform!]
 - 'To fill someone with excitement and motivation to create.' → [inspire!]
 - 'To work together toward a shared goal.' → [collaborate!]

GRAB AND GO LESSON PACKAGE

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

Lesson 3 of 3 — Fluency & Reading with Expression

🕒 60 minutes • 🌱 Beautiful Music & Movement (Music + Engineering + Creative Expression)

BOOK

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell

BIG IDEA

We can read with expression and make music together — just like Mira made art with her community.

VOCAB WORD

VOCAB FOCUS — Review: mural, community, transform, inspire, collaborate

Materials

SUPPLIES

- Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy & Theresa Howell
- Helix K-2 Daily Check-In Form (student copies)
- Emoji Faces / Feeling word cards
- Vocabulary anchor chart from Lesson 2 (displayed for reference)
- Whiteboard or chart paper for fluency sentence strip
- Recyclables for instrument building: cardboard boxes, empty cans or containers, rubber bands, plastic bottles
- Fillers for shakers: dry beans, coins, small pebbles, rice
- Tape, scissors, craft supplies for decorating instruments
- **TO PRINT:** Helix Daily Check-In Form, Fluency reading

OPTIONAL / GRADE LEVEL SPECIFIC

- Markers or paint for decorating instruments with mural-inspired designs
- Open space cleared for a music parade at the end
- Optional: images of recycled instruments from world music traditions
- Optional: a simple drum or tambourine to demonstrate sound vibration before building
- Optional: simple echo-reading passage (2–3 key pages from the book) on chart paper or printed strips

Pre-Lesson Set-Up

1. Write the fluency sentence strip on the board: "Maybe something beautiful. Just start."
2. Set out Check-In Forms and emoji/feeling word cards at each student's spot.
3. Pre-sort recyclable materials into bins or trays — one per table — so students can survey options quickly.
4. Display the vocabulary anchor chart from Lesson 2 for ongoing reference.
5. Clear a pathway or open space in the room for the music parade at the end.
6. Optional: Display images of instruments from world music traditions as a visual anchor.

Welcome & Student Check-In (8 min)

1. Greet students warmly. Have students complete their Check-In Form. After 2–3 minutes, invite sharing.
2. Play the Say It Game with the word Joyful.
 - Say it together, whisper it, say it like your whole body is smiling!
 - **Define:** "Joyful is a deep feeling of happiness that comes from the inside — not just a smile, but a whole-body feeling of everything being right."
 - "When have you felt joyful? [Take 2–3 responses.] Say 'I feel joyful!' to a friend. Show me your most joyful face — the one where your whole body is smiling!"

Modifications:

Emerging: Emoji chart for pointing. Invite students to show their joyful face.

Advanced: Can you think of a time when music changed how you were feeling? What happened?

Activate Prior Knowledge: Story Retelling (8 min)

1. Ask students to retell the story with a partner, beginning, middle, and end. Give 2–3 minutes.
2. Check together as a class and review the order of story events: beginning (gray neighborhood, Mira's small drawing), middle (muralist joins in, community collaborates), end (neighborhood transformed, beautiful).
3. "Here's the big thinking question: What is the ONE most important idea in this book — the idea you want to carry with you? Tell your partner in one sentence. [Take 3–4 shares.]"

Science of Reading: Reading Fluency with Expression (12 min)

Note: Fluency is the ability to read accurately, at an appropriate rate, and with expression. Maybe Something Beautiful's emotional arc from gray to joyful gives students rich opportunities to match their voice to the feeling of the text.

1. Introduce fluency: Read the sentence strip in a flat, robotic voice ("Maybe something beautiful. Just start.") then read it again with wonder and hope. Ask: which one felt like Mira's story? That is what fluency sounds like.
2. Choral read the sentence strip together: "Maybe something beautiful. Just start." First like you're not sure it's possible — then like you believe it with your whole heart!
3. Complete the grade-level fluency activity (see the leveled table below).

Discussion questions after fluency practice:

- Which part of the book was the hardest to read with expression? Why?
- Which part felt the most joyful to read aloud?
- Which vocabulary word describes how we want our reading to sound? [vibrant!]

Modifications:

Emerging: Allow the student to listen to 1–2 pages read aloud first, then echo just one sentence at a time. Use a pointer on each word to support tracking.

Advanced: Read a key page twice — once as the narrator describing the gray beginning, and once as Mira herself, full of joy and color. How does the voice shift?

Kindergarten	Echo Reading • Teacher reads 1–2 sentences aloud with strong expression. Students echo back the same sentence with the same voice and feeling. • Model the full range — quiet and flat for the gray beginning, warm and bright for the joyful ending. • Focus: matching voice to the feeling of the page.
1st Grade	Partner Reading • Partners take turns reading one page each. • Listening partner gives a 'color rating': 1 finger = gray (flat), 2 fingers = colorful (some expression), 3 fingers = vibrant (full expression). • Switch roles and try again. Goal: get to vibrant!
2nd Grade	Independent Re-Read & Self-Rating • Students independently re-read 2 pages. Self-rate on the 1–3 color scale. Practice until their rating reaches 3. • Optional: record a voice memo and listen back to hear their own expression.

Read Aloud / Partner Reading (8 min)

1. Read the first 3–4 pages aloud with strong expression. Then transition to echo or partner reading based on student abilities.
2. "As you read, listen for our vocabulary words. When you hear or read one, tap your shoulder! And notice how the feeling of the story changes from the first page to the last."
3. Comprehension check: "What is the most important thing you will carry with you from Maybe Something Beautiful? Tell your partner in one sentence." Call on 3–4 students to share.

STEAM Activity: Beautiful Music & Movement — Music + Engineering + Creative Expression (20 min)

Part 1: Introduce the Activity

1. "Mira used art to bring her community together. Today we're going to use music to do the same thing! Many of the world's instruments were first made from simple, everyday materials — hollow logs, dried gourds, strips of bamboo. Today you're going to do the same: build your own instrument from recycled materials."
2. Show pictures of instruments from a world music tradition. Ask: What do you notice about how they are made?
3. Brainstorm: "Your instrument can make any kind of sound — shaking, tapping, strumming. Think: How will you design it? And make it beautiful, like Mira's murals — decorate it with mural-inspired designs!" Show students the materials.

Part 2: Design & Build (12 min)

1. Students select materials and begin building. Circulate and ask:
 - What type of instrument is yours — percussion, string, or wind?
 - What causes the sound? [Vibration! When materials shake or are struck, they vibrate and make sound.]
 - How did you decide what to put inside your shaker, or how tight to stretch your rubber band?
2. Decorate instruments with bold colors and designs inspired by Mira's murals.

Part 3: Practice & Music Parade

1. Practice together — clap a simple pattern, then students join in with their instruments.
2. Community parade: walk through the space playing instruments together. This is like a neighborhood coming to life.
3. Science connection: "Put your hand lightly on your instrument while you play it. What do you feel? [Vibration!] Sound is made by vibration — something moving back and forth quickly pushes the air and creates sound waves that travel to our ears."

Sample Instruments (These are just samples, let students be creative!)



Modifications:

Emerging: Pre-fill a simple shaker container (sealed bottle with beans inside) for students who find construction challenging. Let them focus on decorating and playing.

Advanced: Experiment with how the instrument's sound changes: 'What happens if you put more filling in your shaker? If you stretch your rubber band tighter? Can you make a higher pitch? A lower one?' Record their experiment on paper.

Closing & Celebration (5 min)

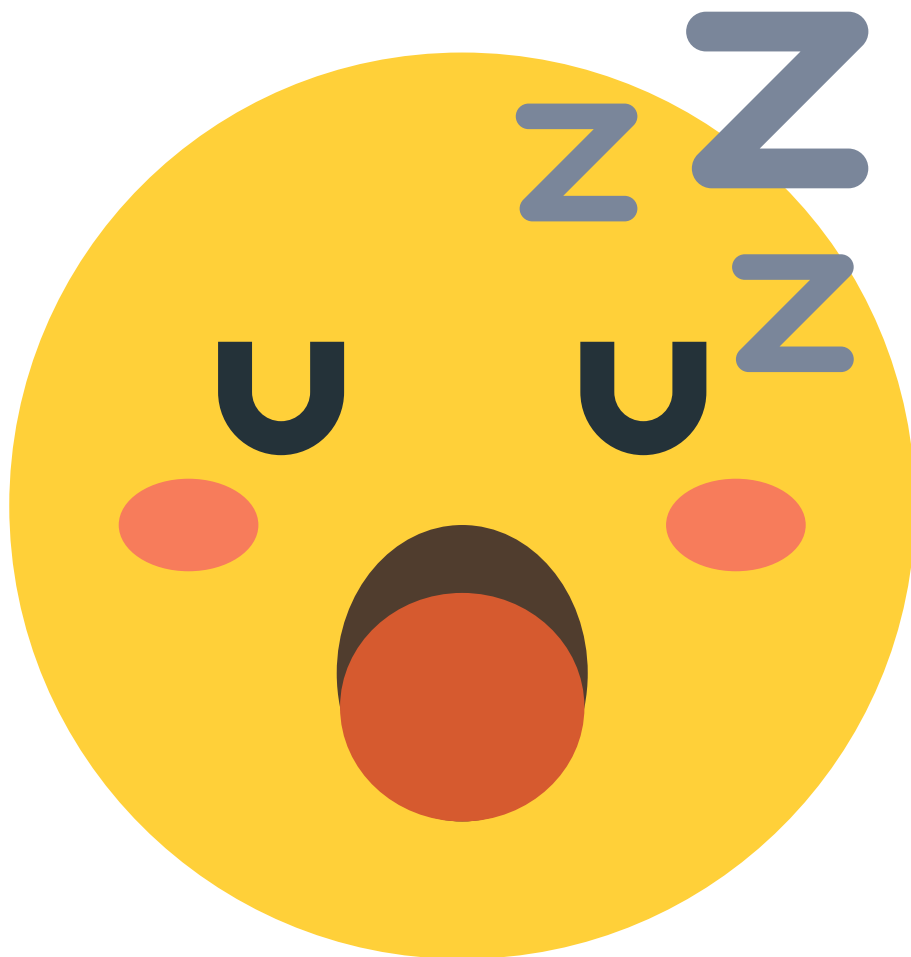
1. Celebrate how extraordinary the instruments and performances are. Invite students to do a quick walk and tell a friend: 'You transformed this space with your music!'
2. Highlight the three lessons together: "You read a story about a girl who changed her neighborhood with one small drawing. You built your own city, painted a mural, read with expression, and made music together. You have transformed this space, just like she transformed hers."

[illegible]

Happy



Sleepy



Angry



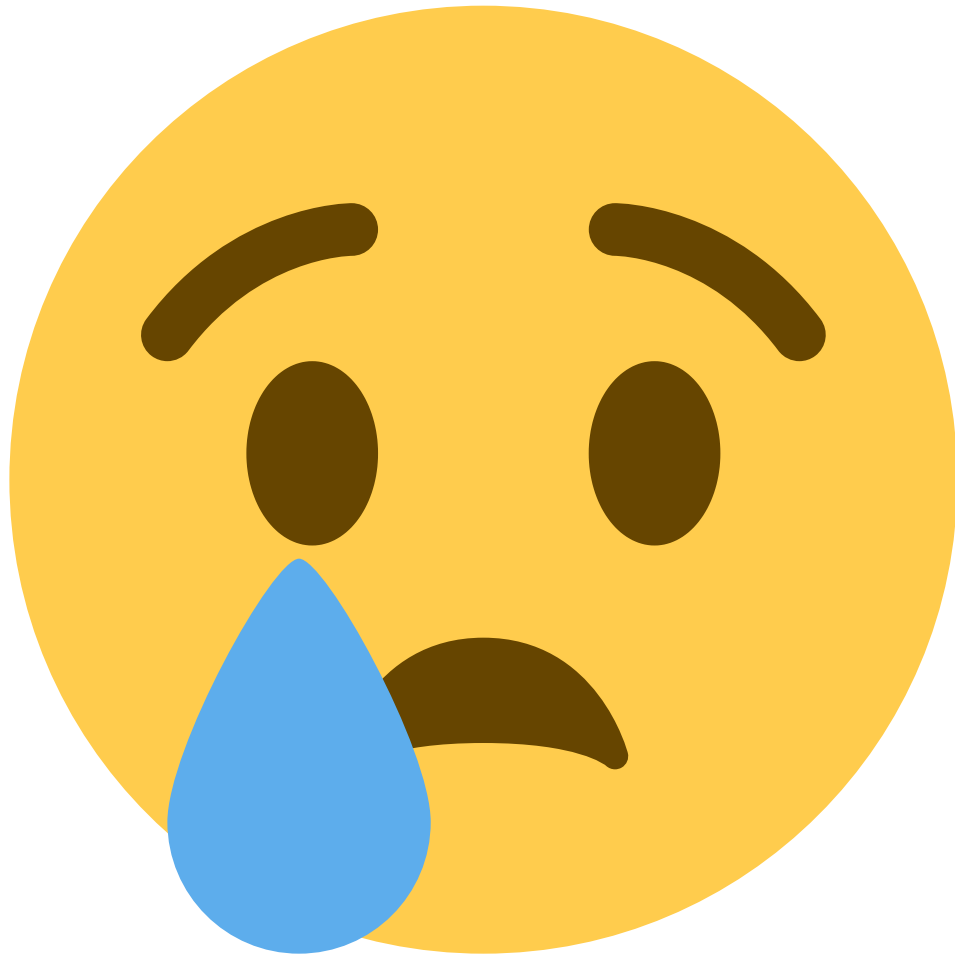
Sick



Nervous



Sad



Scared



Silly



Frustrated



Excited



Calm



Afraid



Confused



Caring



Day of the Week:



Date

What will I do today?

Cut and paste at least 4 pictures of what you will do today. Glue them in the order that you will complete them.

1

2

3

4

How am I feeling?

Cut and paste the feeling faces you are feeling right now.

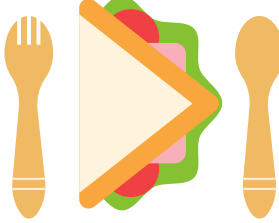
How am I feeling?



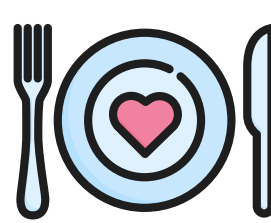
Brush Teeth



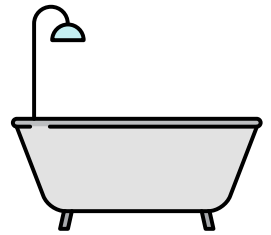
Eat Breakfast



Eat Lunch



Eat Dinner



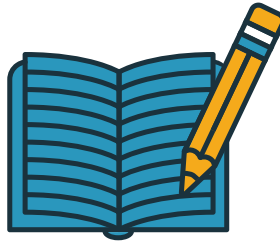
Shower or Bath



Read



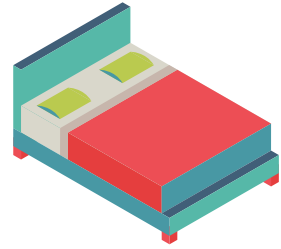
School



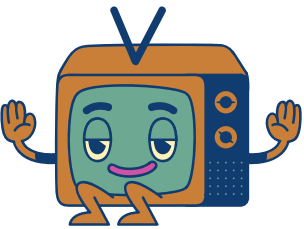
Homework



Exercise



Get ready for bed



Watch TV



Do Your Chores



Wake Up



Play with friends
or family



Relax



Happy



Sleepy



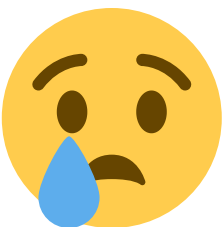
Angry



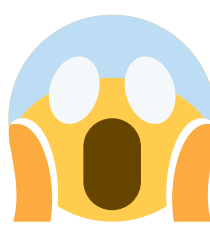
Sick



Nervous



Sad



Scared



Silly



Frustrated



Excited

Cut out each of the schedule squares and the feelings and emotions. Use these to complete your daily reflection. Use the blank boxes to create your own!

Maybe Something Beautiful

How art transformed a neighborhood

In the heart of a gray city, there lived a girl who loved to doodle, draw, color, and paint. Every time she saw a blank piece of paper, Mira thought to herself, “Hmm, maybe...” and because of this, her room was filled with color, and her heart was filled with joy.

On her way to school one day, Mira gave a round apple to Mr. Henry, the owner of the shop down the street. She gave a flower to Ms. Lopez, the lady with the sparkling eyes.

She gave a songbird to Mr. Sax and a red heart to the policeman who walked up and down the streets.

On her way home, Mira taped a glowing sun onto the wall hiding in the shadows. Her city was less gray-but not so much.

The next day, Mira saw a man with a pocket full of paintbrushes. He gazed at the wall. He looked at her sun. He held his fingers up in a square and peered through them.

“Hmm...” he said thoughtfully.

“What do you see?” Mira asked.

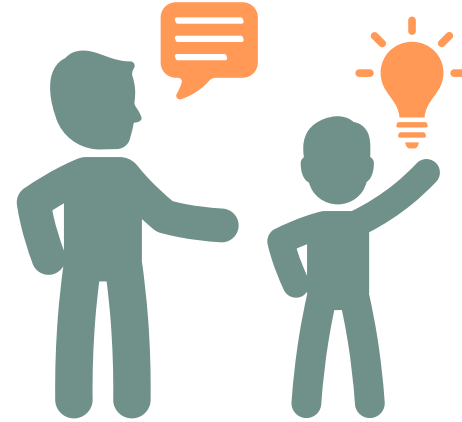
“Maybe...something beautiful,” the man replied.



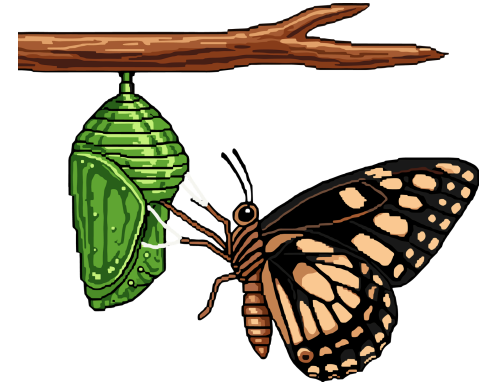
MURAL



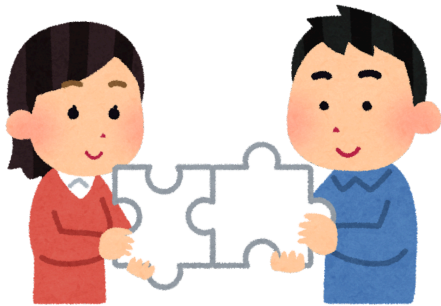
COMMUNITY



INSPIRE



TRANSFORM



COLLABORATE



mural

mur · al



beautiful

beau · ti · ful



neighborhood

neigh · bor · hood



colors

col · ors



community

com · mu · ni · ty

Syllable cards for Maybe
Something Beautiful