



RedRover Readers and Early Ages Gathering to Learn Empathy Through Stories (EAGLES) Program

GRADE(S): 3-5 **SEL ALIGNMENT:** Self-awareness; Social Awareness;
Self-management/emotional regulation

THE GIRL AND THE WOLF

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TIME: 50 minutes (reading and discussion - 30; activity - 20)

MATERIALS: Anchor text ("The Girl and the Wolf")

KEY CONCEPTS

- What are ways we can show we are grateful? (Gratitude)
- What did the girl receive from the land and what did she give back? (Reciprocity)
- How are wolves and dogs similar? How are they different? (Understanding animal behavior and needs)
- How can taking a breath help us be more aware and figure things out? (Mindfulness)

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

You may want to do a land acknowledgment before this reading and lesson to determine what land you are on. [Native-land.ca](https://native-land.ca) is an app to help map Indigenous territories, treaties, and languages.

DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS FOR OLDER STUDENTS

Words about how people find a place to live carry a lot of meaning. Sometimes more than people are aware of. Take some time to define the terms below and write them down on a board or chart paper for the students to see. When asking students questions during the book, refer back to these definitions.

- Settle: to live somewhere.
- Colonize: to take over an area
- Relocation: the act of moving something or someone from one place to another

DEFINITIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Ask, "How do you describe your home? Is it one building or structure? Do you include spaces outdoors? Do you include multiple buildings or places? Do you include your community?"

Now, here are some more words I want to make sure everyone understands the meaning of...

- Conflict: a serious disagreement, or argument or struggle; can be physical or about ideas
- Fairness: impartial and just treatment or behavior without favoritism or discrimination

BEFORE READING:

As a class, discuss the following topics:

- Ask, "Have you ever felt grateful and said thank you?" "Have you ever thanked an animal?" "If so, when?" "When was the last time you felt grateful?" "What are you grateful for today?"
- How many of you have ever seen or met a wolf?
- When you think of wolves, what do you think of? Why do you think you think that? (Possible answers: wolves are strong, loyal, smart, good hunters, have powers, or wolves are dangerous. I learned that growing up or from other stories or they look like it.)
- Show the students the cover of the book and ask, "What do you think this book will be about?"



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DURING READING:

- On the page where it says, “The girl felt cold and scared. She didn’t know what to do.” Ask, “Have you ever felt scared and alone?” Are there other feelings that you’ve had when you are alone?” [Younger children can practice facial expression and body posture for feeling this way.] “Have you ever turned to an animal for comfort?”
- On the page where it says, “The girl drank in gulps and ate two handfuls of berries.” Ask, “What gifts did the girl get from the land?” [You may wish to acknowledge the land that you are standing on right now and tie it back to the story if you didn’t earlier in the reading.]
- On the page where it says, “‘Yes you do,’ the wolf told her.” Why do you think the wolf tells her she already knows what to do?
- On the page where it says, “She tied tobacco in a red cloth and left it at the river’s edge because she didn’t know a better way to say thank you.” Ask, “Why did the girl leave tobacco?” [Wait for answers] “Who was she thanking? What are other gifts or ways we as a group can say thank you?”
- On the page where it says, “I was lost and a wolf helped me.”... “I’ve heard old stories about wolves who help lost children too.” Ask, “What other stories or ideas have you heard about wolves? How are wolves tied to our stories and our lives?” [Possible answers may include stories of colonialism, destruction, stealing Native lands, and ranchers/ranching stories. Listen and discuss openly.]

FOR OLDER STUDENTS — DISCUSSION ON COLONIALISM

- What are you learning in school about when the colonists first arrived in America?
- Given the definitions of ‘colonize’ and ‘settle’ (refer to definitions again), which word do you think better describes the European people who came and lived on Native land that was to be called North America, settlers or colonists? Why might this word choice be important? How could the term “settlers” suggest something different than the term “colonists?”
 - If students don’t see on their own the problem of calling colonists “settlers,” ask the further question, “Do you think differently if I tell you that Native people were already settled there?”
 - If students believe Native people roamed about and were therefore not “settled,” spend some time asking about or sharing and discussing common Native patterns of moving between summer and winter grounds as well as ways of connecting to a place and feeling a sense of belonging that includes movement. Ask questions like, “When or where do you feel a sense of “home?” “How do you describe your home? Is it one building or structure? Do you include spaces outdoors? Do you include multiple buildings or places? Do you include your community?”

AFTER READING:

- What was the main problem in the book? Who helped the girl?
- What did the girl receive (or get) from the land and what did she give back? What edible and/or useful plants and herbs do we have here locally?
- How might this story have been different if the girl had been visited by a dog rather than a wolf? How are dogs and wolves alike and different?
- Wolves show up in many stories. What other stories with a girl in red and a wolf have you heard of? How is this story different? Why do you think the author chose to write this story?
- Thinking about Native stories like this one and others you may know, if you could fill a storybook with Native stories what would you include and how would it be organized? What local history would you share?
- Thinking about early colonial history you’ve heard or chapters you’ve read in history books, what information would you change or what would you like to add about the Native people already living on the land?
- What do you think the girl may have learned from her experience that day?



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ACTIVITIES:

FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

Roleplay activity: Ask students to get into pairs. One student pretends to be the wolf and one student pretends to be the girl. Imagine the wolf had come back at the end of the story. What would the girl say to the wolf? What would the wolf say to the girl?

Mindfulness Activity: Return to the page where the wolf encourages the girl and read, “Now, what are you going to do?” “I don’t know,” said the girl. “Yes, you do,” the wolf told her. “Take a deep breath, close your eyes then look. What do you see?” Ask students to pause and take a breath and then look around. Take turns describing what they notice around them. What do they feel? What do they hear? Talk about how pausing to take a breath helped the girl in the story and how it may be helpful for us to practice.

Gratitude Activity: Encourage students to share with a partner what they are grateful for and why. Alternatively, you can ask students to write thank-you notes, draw pictures or create things with nature as ways to show gratitude.

FOR OLDER STUDENTS

- Research reasons the population of wolves declined over the years and ways to help wolves today
- Compare and contrast views of animals: How are Indigenous people’s beliefs about wolves and the European colonists’ beliefs about wolves the same? How are they different?

AT THE END OF THE LESSON:

Ask students to reflect on these questions. Try this with the whole group, in a sharing circle, or ask students to fill out index cards.

- How did you feel about today’s book and discussion?
- Did today’s book and discussion change how you think about anything in your life?
- What did you learn from today’s book and discussion that you didn’t know before?



DON'T FORGET TO REPORT YOUR READING:

RedRover.org/reportreadings