

Wordless Picturebooks: Potential for Use in a Late French Immersion Middle School Classroom

by

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Bachelor of Education, Faculté St Jean, University of Alberta 1997

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the area of Language and Literacy

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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University of Victoria

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### **Abstract**

This project explores the potential of wordless picturebooks for use in a Late French Immersion middle school classroom. In Chapter 1 I discuss my motivation for my project and the connections to the curriculum. In Chapter 2 I examine the theoretical and conceptual foundations of Vygotsky, Barnes and Mercer, highlighting the importance of talk and discussion in classrooms. In this chapter I also examine the role of interactive read-alouds and dialogic talk, as well as contextualizing the motivation and challenges of the Late French Immersion adolescent student. In Chapter 3 I describe the design of a unit plan which includes the use of wordless picturebooks and is based on the knowledge gained through the research literature. This plan highlights collaborative group situations that encourage exploratory talk. Wordless picturebooks can provide opportunities for Late French Immersion students to successfully engage in conversation.

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## Acknowledgements

I am highly indebted to Dr. Ruthanne Tobin for her guidance, understanding, compassion and constant support, as well as for providing necessary motivation and encouragement in completing this project. I would also like to thank Dr. Sylvia Pantaleo for her passion and enthusiasm for picturebooks. I appreciate her immense knowledge and guidance throughout this process. I offer my sincere appreciation for the learning opportunities provided by Dr. Tobin and Dr. Pantaleo, as well as the other professors during our program – Dr. James Nahachewsky, Dr. Deborah Begoray and Dr. Todd Milford.

I cannot express enough thanks to my friends and family for their continued support and encouragement. It would not have been possible without their kind words and belief. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of them.

A huge thank you to Valeskca – her constant belief in me, her patience and support, her perseverance and enthusiasm – were all very much appreciated. I thank her for her encouragement, camaraderie and expertise. My Master's journey was highlighted by our times full of great laughs, fabulous dinners and great conversations. Merci!

I would like to express my special gratitude and thanks to my family – to my parents for spending the past three summers playing with, feeding and loving my children during this process. To my dad for always having meals ready and to my mom for her editing assistance. Thanks to my sister for her ideas, love, patience, cheerleading, late-night conversations and continued faith in me. Tusen takk!

Finally, a huge thank you to my children, Emilie and Luke for being so incredibly loving, patient and encouraging. I appreciate your understanding and support during this Master's program.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

I am a graduate of the French Immersion program. I began in preschool and continued until the end of my Bachelor of Education degree at the French campus at the University of Alberta, le Faculté Saint-Jean. I am an Anglophone teaching other Anglophones in a French Immersion program. Despite the challenges and stresses of teaching in a second language, over the years I have learned from many great teachers and mentors that my being a successful *product* of the French Immersion program is important and motivating for my students.

I became a teacher because I was inspired by my own middle school teachers, who were funny and approachable, and they made learning exciting, interactive and engaging. They encouraged my language development and supported me in my creation of my own discourse (Gee, 1989), “Franglais.” Group discussions, whole class activities and partner work were daily occurrences in my classes. At my middle school, the French Immersion philosophy placed a strong emphasis both on conversation—exploratory talk and presentational talk—and on group work. My teachers helped me gain confidence in my second language and they provided a safe, nurturing environment where I practiced my oral, written, and reading skills. It was at the middle school level, the most confusing and challenging time for me as a student, that I encountered the educators who inspired me to become a French Immersion middle school teacher myself.

### **The Late French Immersion Context**

I have observed the joy and satisfaction, as well as the frustrations and challenges, that come with working with adolescents who are learning in a second language, while they simultaneously negotiate the rapid waters of puberty and new social dynamics (Alberta Education, 2011; Bradford, 1991). When students begin their journey in Late French Immersion

(LFI) in Grade 6, many find it academically challenging. Suddenly, their teacher addresses them in an unfamiliar language, and they are expected to begin reading, speaking and writing in basic French; yet, they are still required to meet the same curricular expectations as their English cohorts. Second language learners take five to seven years to become linguistically as proficient as their English counterparts (Cummins, 1981). By the beginning of Grade 8, LFI students are expected to be at the same proficiency level as Early FI students, which is a huge undertaking for the LFI Grade 6 and 7 students and teachers to accomplish. Curriculum expectations must be met, core content must be completed in a second language (L2), and teachers must respond effectively to adolescents who often appear to be in a “constant state of flux, with little consistency in self-awareness” (MacIntyre, Burns & Jessome, 2011, p. 84).

### **Student Engagement**

The dilemma for the LFI teacher is how to guide and engage students who are struggling to speak and understand, while simultaneously attempting to nurture their egocentric, insecure adolescent selves. Adolescents strive for peer acceptance and a sense of belonging, and do not want to risk rejection by standing out too much or looking foolish (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2002; Martinez, Roser, & Harmon, 2009; Murphy, 2009; Senokossoff, 2013). French Immersion adolescents, in particular, sometimes suffer from “*immersion identity*,” struggling “with a sense of belonging over and above the typical adolescent process of constructing present and possible future selves” (MacIntyre et al., 2011, p. 84). The L2 student often seeks acceptance in both the social and academic areas, which can often be in conflict (Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 2011).

I searched for an answer as to how I could provide age- and content-appropriate material for beginner language learners. My “ah-ha” moment came during the summer of 2014 in my

graduate course on oracy with Dr. Pantaleo, who shared her passion for picturebooks, particularly wordless picturebooks, and helped me realize the impact these books could have on FI students. English and French Immersion students could be using the same wordless books, regardless of their ability or language. Using wordless picturebooks that are geared towards the adolescent learner, L2 students can feel successful, increasingly confident, and afforded with opportunities to collaborate and to feel comparable or equal to their first-language counterparts with regard to content (Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Martinez et al., 2009; Roser, Martinez, & Fowler-Amato, 2011). Books that are at the right academic and social level can contribute to learners' sense of being successful. Appropriate high-interest books with limited or no vocabulary that resonate with the experiences and knowledge of the adolescent learner are more likely to improve motivation and foster engagement.

### **Definition of Picturebooks and Wordless Picturebooks**

First of all, it is important to define picturebooks and wordless picturebooks. A picturebook is a marriage of words and pictures (Murphy, 2009) in which the story depends on interaction between the written text and the image (Arizpe & Styles, 2003), by which a certain synergy is formed (Sipe, 1998). The compound word *picturebook* is used to indicate the interdependence of word and image (Arizpe, 2013). A wordless picturebook is defined by Dowhower (1997) as “a book that tells a story through a series of illustrations without written text” (p. 63). It has also been defined as a text where the visual image carries the weight of the meaning (Arizpe, 2013). When engaging with wordless picturebooks, students are encouraged to interpret the messages, and communicate their understanding orally, visually, or in writing. In the Late French Immersion context, this communication would be done in French.

## **Connections to Curriculum**

The content of the Late French Immersion program in British Columbia is strongly grounded in oral language skills (British Columbia Ministry of Education – Français langue seconde – Immersion 6 et 7, 1999). The new British Columbia (BC) proposed curriculum draft for the FI program (BC Ministry of Education, 2015) stresses active learning by the students. Under the curriculum organizer of “Creating and Communicating,” the LFI goals for Grade 7 state that the student should be able to explain an opinion with an appropriate vocabulary, participate in spontaneous conversations, and explain main ideas from a text (p. 10).

A rich vocabulary facilitates the expression of one’s thoughts and feelings in a second language. When students use books without words, especially if the student is hampered by having to translate every word with a dictionary, thoughts can come easier. Without complex words hindering understanding, ideally students can more easily share ideas and express themselves, while simultaneously learning appropriate vocabulary.

One of the target curricular competencies described above is the ability for students to maintain spontaneous conversation. Ideally this classroom environment would include dialogic characteristics such as collaborative interactions where students develop their ideas, question their understanding, and contribute opinions through thoughtful reflection and discussion (Alexander, 2000). In a dialogic environment teachers and students use the power of talk to stimulate and extend thinking, while also advancing learning and understanding (Alexander, 2000). Indeed, in such a classroom opportunities are afforded for students to engage in informal discussions that promote interactivity, language development, and active listening skills. In partner-to-partner or whole-class discussions, these conversations can result in meaningful exchanges.

Another curriculum requirement is the ability for students to summarize the main ideas of a text in a clear and organized manner. Through interactive read-alouds by the teacher, the story line and other elements can be discovered, and opportunities arise for inserting playful and insightful ways of developing literary understanding of plot, character development, and other literary structures.

### **Project Overview**

In Chapter 1 I have described the motivation that led me to this project, contextualized the nature of Late French Immersion students, defined picturebooks, and explained how my project connects with the curriculum. In Chapter 2 I describe the theoretical framework and the literature that were foundational to my project. Topics include exploratory and collaborative talk, dialogic teaching, interactive read-alouds, and the context for learning in a Late French Immersion classroom. In Chapter 3 I apply the theory and the literature findings, and describe a unit for teachers to use in their classrooms. In this chapter I also identify three important readings for teachers, describe areas for future growth, and give a personal reflection on my learning.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

In this chapter I discuss the use of picturebooks and their potential for literacy learning in the French immersion context. Prior to discussing my central topic, it is important to examine the theoretical and conceptual foundations that undergird first and second language learning. An overview of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) is followed by a discussion of talk in the classroom. I review the work of the following influential thinkers and researchers: Barnes's concept of exploratory talk (1976, 2008), Mercer's interthinking (2000), and Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading (1978). Other topics discussed include multimodality, dialogic talk, interactive read-alouds, and motivation. Contextualizing the teaching and learning environment, climate, conditions, and challenges in a Late French Immersion classroom are also discussed.

### **Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Foundations**

#### **Vygotsky's sociocultural theory.**

There is no greater influence on current pedagogical practices perhaps than Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which described how learning is a social process that occurs and deepens by interacting with others. Vygotsky was instrumental in validating the spoken word—both formal and exploratory talk—and believed that people could learn and succeed by talking and collaborating with others. Smagorinsky (2007) described Vygotsky's perspective on teaching as “exploratory, playful, [with] experimental uses of speech [which] can serve an important role in the development of new ideas” (p. 66). According to Vygotsky, providing opportunities for people to speak was critical to their learning. Smagorinsky's (2013) interpretation of Vygotsky's philosophy of inclusivity is that “he was passionate about the need

to eliminate feelings of inferiority by having children participate to the greatest extent possible in conventional cultural activities so as to develop self-esteem that would make positive contributions to a sense of well-being” (p. 195). Supportive social environments provide the framework for academic growth. By drawing on personal experience and knowledge from a student’s life outside of school and melding it with the learning that takes place inside of school, the student’s motivation to learn can increase and the odds for success can improve.

According to Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), learning opportunities need to match the child’s developmental level. ZPD can be described as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under the adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). In their ZPD, students’ engagement is scaffolded by teachers or by a more knowledgeable other (MKO) to help them make connections between their lives and the content of their learning. Dialogue within students’ ZPD is fundamental to thinking and learning and provides opportunities for learners to share, express, and reiterate their thoughts with others.

### **Barnes and Mercer on exploratory and collaborative talk.**

Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory significantly influenced researchers such as Barnes, Mercer, Alexander and Wells. Their research has focused extensively on the importance of talk in the classroom and how it should be exploratory, collaborative and dialogic. Indeed, as an overarching theme, all of these foundational thinkers place high value on learning through talk. In addition, they note how a teacher’s development of a dialogic stance is crucial for success in the literacy classroom.

Sharing ideas and thoughts with others is pivotal to understanding concepts and developing thinking. Barnes (2008) viewed talk between peers in a classroom as being different from conversations with a teacher. He organized talk into two overarching categories—exploratory talk and presentation talk. According to Barnes (1976), often when students speak in school to their teachers, they are expected to speak in a polished way, a form of presentation talk, instead of in a more uncertain, potentially still questioning way, or what he called exploratory talk. Barnes (2008) believed that teachers need to emphasize exploratory talk as part of the “early stages of approaching new ideas” (p. 11), and as an opportunity to share thoughts and ideas without having to be perfect or even rehearsed in speech. Exploratory talk is a social mode of thinking; that is, it is a way in which people use language to think together (Mercer, 1996). Barnes (2008) believed it was important for teachers to make it possible for students to think aloud even when they are talking with the whole class, and to give more responsibility to learners to develop their own understanding of the matter at hand. However, students will engage in talk that is constructive only when they feel at ease to do so, and when they feel the teacher has given them permission and the space to talk (Barnes, 1976; Edwards-Groves, Anstey & Bull, 2013).

Consistent with Barnes’s view that knowledge is constructed through social sharing, Mercer (2000) discussed “interthinking,” the opportunity for students to engage collaboratively in exploratory talk with others. Knowledge and understanding can develop when people are involved in meaningful activities that are socially relevant and mediated by language (Mercer, 1996; Rogoff, 1990 as cited by Rojas-Drummond & Peon Zapata, 2004). Learning occurs through conversation and in establishing ground rules in small-group exploratory talk situations (Mercer, 2000) in which learners are respectful and kind to one another. Mercer acknowledges

that much preparation, guidance and supervision by a teacher is required for successful group discussions, including understanding other patterns of communication. Another important consideration is that teachers not engage in conversations that rely on “closed” questions, providing little opportunity for students to develop higher-level thinking skills (Simpson, Mercer & Majors, 2010). Through using thoughtful, open questioning, teachers can provide students with opportunities to be actively involved in discussions, and thereby promote exploratory talk. Most importantly, deeper learning, better understanding, and skills improvement to prepare the learner for independent thinking are encouraged in such a context. Furthermore, understanding, knowing and respecting the backgrounds of students is important in creating a successful classroom that encourages collaborative, respectful talk (Barnes, 2008).

#### **Wells and Alexander on dialogic inquiry and teaching.**

A teacher who encourages questions that have multiple answers, gives students time to reflect and prepare answers, and encourages students to build on one another’s ideas creates a space that is dialogic in nature (Wells & Ball, 2008). In a dialogic classroom, collaboration and communication are encouraged among individual learners in a supportive manner (Alexander, 2006), and the message of engaged talk to explore, challenge, reconsider and extend ideas is used to improve student learning (Boyd & Markarian, 2011). Both students and teacher play an active role in co-constructing the knowledge (Wells, 2006). “When students are directly involved and have *a sense of agency* in the ongoing activity, that’s when they are most interested and motivated to engage in dialogue ... it is then that they have something they want to contribute” (Wells & Ball, 2008, p. 171). When students are more engaged in what traditionally would have been viewed as the role of the teacher, they are more eager to participate in the conversations in class. The teacher becomes more of a co-inquirer, leader and organizer rather than a deliverer of

content. The power of the dialogue is flexible, questions are open, feedback is specific, engagement is of a meta-level reflection, and explanations of one's thoughts are lengthy (Reznitskaya, 2012).

Wells (2000) discusses the characteristics of dialogic classrooms where the classroom is seen as a community of inquiry, with purposeful activities that are situated and unique; where “‘action’ is a critical precondition for participation in exploratory talk” (Wells & Ball, 2008, p. 171). The curriculum is a means, not an end; the outcomes are emergent and the activities allow for diversity and originality. A classroom community is created, based on the belief that “understanding is constructed in the process of people working together to solve the problems that arise in the course of shared activity” (Wells, 2000, p. 12). Knowledge does not happen in a vacuum, but rather through the collaboration of the class. Wells and Ball (2008) identify three important features of a classroom that support dialogic inquiry. Firstly, when students are given the chance to participate, they begin to realize that their contributions influence the outcome of discussions. Secondly, the class begins to embrace the collaborative nature of the group where more is achieved by working together than alone. Finally, the level of understanding between the individuals in the group improves. Wells reiterates the importance of developing a dialogic stance where students and teachers both continue to wonder, ask questions and attempt to answer these questions through collaboration as they continue on the journey towards lifelong learning.

Alexander (2006), who also highlights the power of talk to stimulate and extend one's thinking and understanding in the school setting, describes what genuine dialogue looks like in a classroom, guided by his five main principles of collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful. Collective talk involves teachers and students working together. Reciprocity is evident by mutual listening between teachers and students. Supportive dialogue happens when

learners are able to share their ideas freely. Building on each other's ideas and making connections between ideas is cumulative; the purposeful nature of dialogue occurs when teachers plan and facilitate teaching with certain academic goals in mind. Dialogue allows for the process of learning to think, as well as providing opportunities to co-construct meaning and understanding (Highman, Brindley & Van de Pol, 2014). Talking with others to deepen one's own understanding is a critical component of learning.

The role of the teacher is quite different in a dialogic classroom and it can be a big shift for some educators. Many teachers believe that they are already using dialogic practices, but such is rarely the case, and furthermore these practices are difficult to achieve (Alexander, 2008; Reznitskaya, 2012). Teachers traditionally tend to control classroom conversations. Alexander (2008) recognizes that teachers may need to learn how to implement dialogic talk and how to properly employ more open questioning tactics to extend student thinking. Teachers can encourage students to become the "active agents in the story rather than merely passive spectators of someone else's telling" (Wolfenbarger & Sipe, 2007, p. 277) by accepting that new knowledge and insights may emerge from the students' dialogue (Highman et al., 2014). By establishing a classroom environment that engages students in conversation, and by listening and providing space for student voices, the teacher is much more aware of students' understanding and knowledge, and where they are in their learning process, thus making the teacher better able to support students' learning. Freeing up the floor and allowing students an opportunity to talk is very important.

Classrooms should not solely be either monologic or dialogic – they require teachers to adopt both stances. Monologic talk is often teacher-driven, where one person is speaking and the others are listening. Monologic talk is sometimes pedagogically appropriate, depending on the

purpose of the instructions. At other times, monologic talk can create an environment that fails to foster meaningful connections between the learner and the subject since the student is often the receiver of the message, while the teacher is the one who knows the facts. It is sometimes top-down, fixed transmission of fixed ideas. As described above, dialogic talk creates opportunities for multiple voices. A teacher should use a variety of talk strategies and not be limited to only one type (Boyd & Markarian, 2011).

### **Gee and Discourse/discourse.**

Classroom discourse is only one type of discourse. Gee recognizes that everyone engages in many types of discourse and that everyone has multiple Discourses. Discourse, as defined by Gee (1989), is one's "identity kit," comprised of "ways of being in the world; discourses integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes" (pp. 6-7) of the communities, clubs or groups to which an individual belongs to. Gee (1989) describes two main types of Discourse – Primary and Secondary. Primary Discourse is learned through social practice within one's own family; a Secondary Discourse is something that is developed later, through experience and exposure to situations, often at school, places of worship, and other organizations with which one is involved (Gee, 1989). The development of a Secondary Discourses begins through scaffolding, collaborating and participating in experiences with others. It is often viewed as an apprenticeship.

Students arrive at school with their Primary Discourse, their prior experiences and attitudes towards school, languages and teachers, and all of these factors impact how students will interact with others. Acknowledging and being aware of one's own Primary Discourse can help students understand and learn Secondary Discourses. FI students are learning a Secondary Discourse in the FI classroom. The students strive to belong to the Francophone community but

they struggle significantly to reach native-like competency (Roy & Galiev, 2011). Therefore they create their own Bilingual Discourse through experiences created in the classroom and as a class.

Gee (1989) also makes a distinction between big “D” Discourse and small “d” discourse. Small “d” discourse consists of “stretches of language that make sense” (Gee, 1989, p. 6). Gee explains that student interaction with a text should be a socially-mediated process in which oral, reading and writing exchanges need to occur (St. Clair & Phipps, 2008). In the bilingual classroom, French instruction, conversation, reading and writing all happen simultaneously. As a result, the discourse of these conversations is often happening in a mixture of French and English, thus creating conditions that better mediate the learning in French (Roy, 2008). For students to develop a second language successfully, they need to understand their Primary Discourse and develop their Secondary Discourses by hypothesizing, practicing and testing the rules of language.

#### **Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of reading.**

In addition to researchers who posit that students and teachers need to collaborate in a dialogic setting, Rosenblatt’s (1986) transactional theory of reading emphasizes how the reader and the text collaborate to make meaning during the reading event. To Rosenblatt (1986) “reading is a transactional process that goes on between a particular reader and a particular text at a particular time and under particular circumstances, so each interpretation of text may be different for different individuals” (p. 123). Thus, according to Rosenblatt, text is only words until the reader transacts with it. Rosenblatt (1986) identified two predominant stances during reading: the aesthetic stance and the efferent stance, but states that these stances exist on a continuum that can fluctuate during the reading event. She described the aesthetic stance as the reader experiencing, appreciating and reflecting upon what is being read, and the efferent stance

as consisting of reader attention to the residue of the reading – the main ideas or information.

Teachers need to demonstrate to students how to use what they read, and how to use what they know, to build knowledge and experience the text. What teachers do with literature and expect from learners is instrumental in determining a reader's stance. According to Rosenblatt (1986), reading is more than making sense of symbols on a page; it is an opportunity to participate imaginatively, experience emotions, and make connections with what is being communicated by the words on the page. Learning opportunities in the classroom are maximized when a social and interactive environment is created in a classroom (Mercer, 1996), students are working within their ZPD (Vygotsky, 1976), talk is exploratory (Barnes, 1976), and reading is seen as a transaction between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 1978).

### **Interactive Read-alouds**

Rosenblatt's (1986) transactional theory of reading highlights the importance of building on students' knowledge and experiences. Interactive read-alouds are an instructional activity that can provide opportunities for students to share their understanding and knowledge through discussion. Interacting with the text through collaborative discussions is one of the primary goals of interactive read-alouds, which are common in many elementary classrooms, as they provide excellent opportunities to demonstrate good reading strategies. Interactive read-alouds offer situations in which the students and teacher can discuss, question and interact with a text. Teachers and students share authority by discussing and building on ideas together, and students can make intertextual connections and engage in collaborative meaning-making (Ariail & Albright, 2005). Teachers can model positive reading strategies that can demonstrate how skilful readers think as they read and how they make meaning from the text (Fischer, Flood, Lapp & Frey, 2004). How a teacher presents and supports the reading of literature is instrumental in

determining a reader's stance, as well as her attitude towards, and ways of reading and engaging with a text (Roy, 2008). Clearly, interactive read-alouds can play a critical role in modeling and fostering dialogic and social relationships with text.

Primary teachers are instrumental in providing some of the first positive reading, writing, and speaking opportunities with texts for young learners. Many elementary teachers rely on picturebooks as a rich resource for strengthening literacy development and supporting young children's reading skills (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007; Nikolajeva, 2013). Reading and talking about picturebooks in classrooms can also provide opportunities for students to engage in class discussions through exploratory talk (Barnes, 1976) and collective thinking (Mercer, 1996), and to adopt an aesthetic stance as they transact with the literature (Rosenblatt, 1978).

Ghiso and McGuire (2007) explored ways to use picturebooks in read-aloud experiences to promote verbal responses. The study focused on the role of the teacher when using picturebooks with sparse verbal text during whole-class read alouds. Study participants were 25 African-American Kindergarten students who attended a high-poverty public school in a major city in the eastern United States. The children participated in this year-long research as part of a larger study of children's responses to picturebooks. The students engaged in multiple interactive read-alouds. Data were collected through transcripts, field notes, and an interview with the classroom teacher who had 10 years of experience. The analysis of the data was done on three levels. The first level focused on what was communicated by the verbal text of the story and what was communicated by the illustrations. On the second level of analysis, the teacher's conversations were categorized; on the third, the discourse patterns and the timing of the verbal reading of the text were analyzed. The results were then triangulated with the teacher interview data. The teacher's passion for read-alouds as a collaborative discovery was apparent in

discussions, as well as the students' opinions and their comfort levels with sparsely worded books. The teacher used five types of mediation approaches: developing visual analysis strategies, mining available print, probing for underlying relationships, connecting the story to readers' experiences, and building a cohesive whole (pp. 347-355). This study demonstrated that when teachers are able to model ways to interact with picturebooks with few words, students are able to do the same. With proper scaffolding by teachers, sparsely-worded picturebooks can allow for deeper literature discussions and active participation by readers. This whole class collective discussion can motivate students, and improve student vocabulary development. With skilful teaching, wordless picturebooks can provide the platform to discuss artistic elements, plot, and to consider emotional states and connections with the characters and events of the story. Although this study featured Kindergarten students, the findings are meaningful to my context as Late French Immersion students lack the L2 vocabulary required to be able to fully participate in discussions without support.

The study by Ghiso and McGuire (2007) demonstrated the benefits of scaffolding language and the importance of guided conversation to develop vocabulary at the primary level. Albright and Ariail (2005) studied the benefits of read-alouds beyond the primary years by studying the regularity with which teachers in one Texas district use read-alouds with their middle year students. In their study, Albright and Ariail (2005) surveyed the teaching staff of three middle schools in one independent school district. Data were analyzed using a constant comparison method of analysis, and results indicated that teachers found value in using read-alouds as a tool to engage the learner. Although most teachers described using read-alouds in a traditional vs interactive manner, the read-alouds still encouraged meaningful opportunities for class and small group discussions, as well as authentic journal writing opportunities. Albright

and Ariail's findings also suggested that teachers noted an improved attitude in students toward reading. Teachers viewed read-alouds as being important, with benefits such as promoting a love of reading, enhancing understanding and comprehension of text, and creating class discussions between students and teachers, often at a critical level. In a L2 setting, interactive read-alouds can allow teachers to model proper pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, and style (Albright & Ariail, 2005). However, interactive read-alouds can also provide students with opportunities to make meaningful connections between a text and their personal experiences.

### **Multimodality**

As findings from previous studies have indicated, read-alouding books can contribute to students' language and literacy development. However, texts can take on many different forms, from books and articles to websites, podcasts, billboards and magazines. For eons, people have used visual images, without any written text, to convey messages (Arif, 2008). Today teachers need to prepare students for the diverse nature of texts in the digital age and the plethora of visual images that exist in most media forms. According to Lewis (2001, p. 59), children born into the first years of the 21st century are more likely to possess a richer and better understanding of visual imagery and its modes of deployment than any other generation in the history of humans. According to Fransecky and Debes (1972), visual literacy refers to "a group of vision-competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences" (p. 27). Our contemporary world is filled with images, and while multimodality comprises all modes of communication including images, oral language, writing, and gestures (Early & Yeung, 2009; Pantaleo, 2015), the semiotic elements of each mode, which contribute to the meaning-making, vary across modes. Therefore, it is important that the knowledge and skills needed for making sense of visual codes be taught explicitly in order for

students to improve and deepen their visual literacy skills (Pantaleo, 2015). The goal of visual literacy in a L2 context is to explicitly teach students to develop their thoughts and ideas through the use of pictures (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011). Wordless picturebooks can provide students with opportunities to engage with a text despite the language limitations that may exist.

### **Wordless Picturebooks and Adolescents**

Wordless picturebooks can be included in the curriculum to interest adolescents, to provide opportunities for collaboration with others and with the text, and to support language learners (Serafini, 2014). Reading can be a challenge for some students, particularly those adolescent learners who sometimes lack motivation or interest due to poor L2 skills. According to Murphy (2009), “picture books can pique the interest of many adolescent students who, on the surface, may appear to be bored and apathetic” (p. 20). Scaffolding and modeling by the teacher is imperative in order for picturebooks to be used positively in the classroom, and readers need to be given adequate time to engage with the text, to read and re-read it, and to reflect on it before being asked to make sense of it (Arizpe, 2013; Pantaleo, 2014b; Pantaleo & Bomphray, 2011). Through dialogic discussions in L2, students can explore, collaborate, and create their own meanings and interpretations of the story and images.

Martínez-Roldán and Newcomer (2011) conducted an interpretive case study at an Arizona school, serving students from pre-K through Grade 8. Participants included a pre-emergent, non-English speaker from Mexico and an English-proficient speaker from Iraq. Both participants were aged between 10-11 years, had recently moved to the United States, and needed significant support to express themselves in English. Through a total of 12 discussions over a two-month period Martínez-Roldán and Newcomer (2011) studied the social nature of the students' interpretive work, engaged the students in a process of inquiry, and observed how they

incorporated strategies and co-constructed their responses and their own version of the wordless graphic novel *The Arrival* (2006) by Shaun Tan. Data collected included research audio-video recordings, student drawings, and student created comic-strips. Martínez-Roldán and Newcomer (2011) analyzed the data by reviewing the recorded discussions and the students' written stories, and identifying emergent themes and the strategies the students used to make meaning. Further, they studied the different ways students approached the text and examined how the students used language to negotiate understanding within a group (Martínez-Roldán & Newcomer 2011). The findings of the study revealed that wordless picturebooks are an open and inviting way for L2 learners to share their language and experiences. Moreover, wordless picturebooks allow learners to enjoy making meaning from text without struggling with the words (Martínez-Roldán & Newcomer, 2011). This study is significant as it demonstrated that wordless texts offer teachers an opportunity to learn more about how children engage with texts, independent of their language proficiency. More specifically, working with wordless texts can engage students to work collaboratively and support one another through exploratory talk.

Pantaleo (2011) explored how developing student knowledge of literary and illustrative elements affects students' understanding, interpretation and analysis of picturebooks and graphic novels, and their subsequent creation of print texts. Twenty-five Grade 7 public school students participated in the research. The researcher worked for 360 minutes over four mornings per week for 10 weeks with the classroom teacher and the culturally and ethnically diverse group of 14 girls and 11 boys. The students spent time with the teacher and the researcher, talking about appropriate responses and the expectations regarding engagement and participations in discussions and group work. Additional picturebooks were supplied for the students to view during their free time. Students read the literature independently, completed written responses,

and participated in peer-led and small group discussions and whole class activities. The students also learned about some elements of graphic novels and created their own multimodal print text. In groups, they hesitantly explained and built on one another's ideas to formulate more cohesive thoughts. Pantaleo (2011) found that group discussions using picturebooks had several advantages: "By listening to their own talk, as well as the talk of others, students can develop their understanding of the material/text under consideration, of themselves and of their world" (p. 274). The students were encouraged to express ideas and thoughts that were still developing, and to engage in conversation with others and listen to different ideas. Overall data analysis revealed that when students are given time to discuss and work collaboratively, and with proper scaffolding, they are able to deepen their oral and written responses and connect better with the material they are reading. Pantaleo's study showed that when picturebooks are used, adolescents can accrue the same benefits as elementary students.

### **Possibilities for Picturebook Use in a Second Language Environment**

As discussed in the Martínez-Roldán and Newcomer (2011) study, wordless texts are an excellent resource for L2 teachers as they allow students to engage with others in the L2 and make meaning through images without struggling with the language. Below I review some relevant literature, based on the theoretical and conceptual foundations discussed above, on the application possibilities of using wordless picturebooks in a French Immersion context. For a L2 learner, wordless picturebooks can provide the freedom to construct meaning, without being hindered by words. Wordless picturebooks reduce reader anxiety about decoding words; therefore minimizing potential bias against low-literacy participants (Arizpe, 2013), especially those L2 learners who have not yet mastered second language literacy skills. When there are no words, students are more confident and ready to engage with the material.

### **Picturebooks and ZPD in L2.**

To further demonstrate the effectiveness of wordless picturebooks in an L2 setting, Hu and Commeyras (2008) investigated the language and literacy development of a five-year-old who explored wordless picturebooks in the learner's mother tongue and in a second language. The study focused on three main questions: (1) How can wordless picture books be used to develop biliteracy in Chinese and English with a five-year-old Chinese national? (2) What reading and writing abilities does the child develop in Chinese and in English?; and (3) What oral language development in English occurs through making up stories for wordless picturebooks? The Chinese student had limited English skills and met with the researcher three times a week for 45-60 minutes over 10 consecutive weeks. Each week a different wordless picturebook was used, and the texts progressed in difficulty. Pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities were conducted in English during the weekly sessions. Data were collected from the tutoring session, two interviews were conducted with the parents, and informal assessments were completed in both English and Chinese. The assessments included Alphabet Recognition, a Character Recognition chart and a Directionality Assessment. Other assessments included the child's reading of the Dolch/Fry word list, and her oral Chinese and oral English vocabulary scores. Three types of vocabulary development (sight, context and oral-only vocabulary) were assessed.

Without words to read, vocabulary and responses come from a learner's own personal word bank through the use of collaborative talk between the learner and the adult or between students. In the case study of Hu and Commeyras (2008), the researcher discussed with the student the various elements of the story, and the child explained each of the elements. The researcher helped with any unknown words, corrected mistakes and provided word cards with

the proper grammar. In their next session, the child retold the story using the cards for reference. The final session involved matching words with pictures, making up different sentences with the words and the pictures, and working on spelling. The researcher worked within the ZPD of the student, who was comfortable and felt supported and successful in her learning. She was able to communicate at a higher language level through her increased vocabulary based on the images from the wordless picturebooks, and her sentences were more complex as a result.

The findings demonstrated that over the course of 10 weeks the student displayed an increased vocabulary that resulted in richer oral storytelling skills. Further, the results demonstrated that, from week 5 to post tutoring, the student was able to communicate at a higher language level with increased vocabulary, longer sentences and improved accuracy during storytelling. Although the student's reading vocabulary in both languages improved, results indicated greater improvement in L2. The researchers described how children can develop their literacy skills in L2 by reviewing high frequency words, focussing language development on communication rather than grammatical accuracy, working within their ZPD, and creating stories from wordless picture books and then sharing their stories with others (Hu & Commeyras, 2008). Clearly, an essential part of developing language proficiency is providing students with opportunities to use and play with language. Although this study featured a five-year-old child, the findings are relevant to a LFI middle school context because students are at the beginning stages of their L2 development. Next, I discuss the use of picturebooks and exploratory talk to develop L2.

### **Picturebooks and exploratory talk in L2.**

As explained by Hu and Commeyras (2008) wordless picturebooks are an effective tool to build students' vocabulary and general knowledge through sharing and collaborative work.

Engaging in exploratory talk in L2 is essential for growth and improvement because this type of discourse provides opportunities for L2 learners to work collaboratively and support each other in idea building. The wordless picturebook is ideal to stimulate L2's oral and written linguistic output (Louie & Sierschynski, 2015, p. 108), due to the lack of written words. Arif (2008) conducted a case study to better understand the sense-making process when a child transacts with wordless picturebooks. Data were collected during four 30-minute sessions, each of which involving a different wordless picturebook. A seven-year-old child was asked to look through the book, read the story aloud and share his understanding. Researchers asked and responded to the child's questions. The sessions were recorded on video, transcripts were made, and the child's intonations, facial expressions, and physical responses were later analyzed and categorized. Data analysis revealed that the boy provided explanations, added to his vocabulary, and engaged in conversations relating to the story because he was supported in an environment that encouraged exploratory talk. Arif (2008) identified five major categories that the student used when transacting with wordless picturebooks: using prior knowledge; drawing on prior experience; intertextuality (making reference to other texts); multiple perspective-taking; and active, playful behaviours. This study demonstrated the development of vocabulary and confidence in a second language of a student in a one-on-one environment; however, the categories may be applied to language learning in a group setting as well. The student was an active participant in choosing the stories to study and was able to take an active role in his learning. The participant explored six books and was invited to choose the book he found most appealing. Including the student in the selection process allowed him to be more invested in the reading activity. By taking on a more engaged role in his learning, his achievement and motivation improved. This study is

relevant to the LFI context because although students bring a world of knowledge to their language learning, they are still in the beginning stages of their vocabulary development.

Wordless picturebooks are useful in an L2 classroom because they provide opportunities for learners to construct and create their own meaning. The books are invaluable in building new vocabulary through discussion in small and whole class settings. Teachers can see value in encouraging active, playful behaviours in order to help develop language learning (Arif, 2008).

### **Picturebook usage in the Late French Immersion classroom: Context for learning.**

Wordless picturebooks can help students connect their prior knowledge to a story, build their L2 vocabulary, and elicit exploratory talk. As students develop their storytelling skills they may begin to express their personal thoughts and feelings. The use of wordless picturebooks as communication prompts can afford L2 students with opportunities to engage in the social and linguistic learning process through discussions (Dagenais, Day & Toohey, 2006; Ghiso & McGuire, 2007; Hu & Commeyras, 2008; Pantaleo, 2011). Collaborating with an adult, a peer, a group of peers, or a whole class can contribute to students' engagement with wordless picturebooks. In the next section, I consider how a LFI teacher can use wordless picturebooks in the classroom and how these books can positively contribute to the classroom climate, student motivation to learn and use the L2, and the need for the skilful grouping of students to facilitate learning.

### ***Classroom climate in Late French Immersion classrooms.***

Establishing a classroom environment where students are invited to participate and contribute freely to discussions is very important, and by encouraging collaborative thinking, without fear of being evaluated, progress in the second language can happen. Dagenais et al. (2006) explored the changes in the linguistic development of one student from Grade 5 through

to Grade 8 in a French Immersion setting. The purpose of the study was to discover how literacy practices were shaped and identities forged as students interacted with teachers. Also discussed in the study were suggestions of how partnerships between researchers and teachers can serve or change the social relations and the educational pathways of students. In this ethnographic study of the child's home and school language and literacy practices, Sarah was the focus student and she was observed over two years. Her participation in classroom literacy activities was recorded using a variety of mixed methods such as field notes, and by audio and video recordings twice monthly over one school year and monthly over the next year. During the study, Sarah also participated in individual semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed through reflections and observations made by the student and the teachers in hopes of bringing awareness to educators and policy makers as to the realities of the French Immersion students and teachers.

The findings of the research showed that she participated fully in discussions when she was supported and accompanied by close friends or in small groups, but struggled to participate in whole class discussions. Two of her teachers did not see her reluctance to perform in large group conversations as an indication of any educational difficulties. However, one teacher thought that Sarah relied heavily on her peers for support and learning and was consequently viewed as “a dependent, weak learner whose English skills needed remediation and whose future in French Immersion was uncertain” (Dagenais et al., 2006, p. 213). Four suggestions were presented by Dagenais et al. at the end of the study: multilingual children may need to work with peers; they must be able to draw on all their linguistic resources in the plurilingual classroom; they need to be able to claim desirable identities at school, including identities of being an expert; and they need to participate in meaningful, comfortable activities (p. 216). This study is significant because it demonstrated the multiple roles of the French Immersion student and the

influence of peers and teacher on forming the identity of the student, as well as the social nature of learning a second language. Sarah participated when she felt supported and engaged in her learning, and she was reluctant to participate when the classroom environment was less dialogic and conducive to collaborative conversations. If students are given the opportunity to shift between apprentice and expert roles, and an opportunity to draw on personal experiences and community resources when faced with challenging, multifaceted tasks in second language contexts (Dagenais et al., 2006; Gutiérrez & Meyer, 2000), they can work in a supportive, collaborative environment, as they learn and develop their own identity.

### ***Motivation in the French Immersion classroom.***

Providing a nurturing, supportive environment helps with second language acquisition but the students also need to be willing to take risks in speaking. Some Late French Immersion classrooms start with students embarking on the program in Grade 6, with 80-100% of their classes being conducted in French. The compounding of typical adolescent developmental issues and academic instability can be challenging for any learner, but French Immersion students also experience anxiety related to their (in)ability to convey their messages and ideas (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan, 2002). Willingness to communicate (WTC) is key to L2 acquisition, and “people who experience high levels of fear or anxiety about communicating tend to avoid [communicating]” (MacIntyre et al., 2002, p. 539). Creating a positive and supportive environment is essential to the success of the L2 learner. The idea that the student must communicate in French can disrupt the learning process for a FI student (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a, 1994b) and affect the quality of the L2 communication (Horwitz, 1986). Students are more willing to engage in conversation when they are in a situation that they perceive as safe and encouraging. MacIntyre et al. (2002) describe a “heightened keenness when they first begin

learning French and that, as they work to acquire proficiency in the language, their enthusiasm diminishes” (p. 543). I believe wordless picturebooks, which are ideal for vocabulary building and meaning-making, would likely enhance and facilitate the second language learning experience and contribute significantly to establishing a safe environment for students.

***Creating conditions for discussion.***

Time needs to be devoted to creating a classroom where students value discussion and respect group talk. Creating such an atmosphere requires explicit teaching of discussion tools, which include listening carefully, contributing to others’ ideas, learning how to add to or elaborate on an idea, and knowing how to keep a discussion focused and how to respectfully challenge a classmate’s idea (Wolsey & Lapp, 2009). Mercer and colleagues describe the need for students and teachers to establish ground rules together to promote conversations in the classroom in order for “thinking together” orally to be productive (Mercer & Littleton, 2007 as cited in Higham, Brindley & Van de Pol, 2014, p. 88). Teachers and students can determine how to conduct academic discussions and, together, establish the framework for the characteristics of good conversations. Encouraging and structuring opportunities for discussion will provide a supportive environment for collective thinking. One way of promoting positive discussion is by encouraging students to build on their peers’ thoughts and opinions. The process of thinking, sharing and talking collectively needs to be valued and explicitly modeled by the teacher if students are to engage in effective discussion and learn more deeply. A classroom environment that is supportive of exploratory talk, where students are encouraged to speak French at their own comfort level, will feature student experimentation with the language, and the latter will eventually lead to functional fluency. As described above, wordless picturebooks lend themselves naturally to encourage dialogue among students.

### *Challenges for Late French Immersion students.*

An ideal learning environment in any LFI classroom involves students communicating and collaborating in a respectful and meaningful manner. However learning a second language can also be an isolating experience as students learn language at their own pace. “Second-language reading is a diverse, complicated and frustrating landscape to traverse, let alone explain or predict” (Bernhardt, 2000, p. 791). Many French Immersion students begin their journey eager and keen to speak, read and write. The early quick progression in the first year of learning a new language is exciting, but the reality can be a bit frustrating in the second and third year of an immersion program. Students want to read more complicated material, speak more fluently and eloquently, and write with ease and style; yet, as Cummins (1981) explains, communication skills alone take about two years to develop and academic language five or more years.

A challenge that often exists in group collaborative situations is that certain students rely heavily on others to help them with language and understanding. When students are asked to speak and share their knowledge, especially if they are lacking confidence and vocabulary in French, they will not fully participate in conversations. They will rely on others to speak for them or they will repeat what others have said (Dagenais et al., 2006). One way to address this challenge is to place more emphasis on the importance of exploratory and collective thinking using picturebooks. Even students at a preliminary language level can contribute and experience some level of success using wordless picturebooks, which can then serve as a confidence builder that encourages those students to try to read simple high-interest books.

Another challenge in L2 classrooms is that students are eager to participate in collaborative discussions but they are reluctant to speak. Erben (2004) discovered that as students progressed in their knowledge of L2, they used the language more frequently; however,

in secondary school, the situation reversed itself and students used more L1. Peer pressure and low self-confidence often are issues for the adolescent learner in their L2, adding one more complexity to working with and understanding the French Immersion student.

***Challenges for Late French Immersion teachers.***

In order for teachers to address the challenges faced by many students learning a second language, they must first recognize and address the challenges of teaching LFI at the middle school level. Although the academic and curricular expectations are equivalent to those for students in the English program, there is the added challenge of learning the core subject areas in a second language. Like first language teachers, a French Immersion teacher needs to be engaging, reflective, interactive, flexible, responsive and experiential in teaching approaches. At the middle school level, it is also very important to understand adolescent group dynamics. Furthermore, LFI teachers need to prepare and adapt materials, contextualize learning topics (making the abstract concrete), use more cooperative learning techniques, teach social as well as academic language, and instruct on the cultures of second language communities, while being aware of literacy development in two languages (Erben, 2004). Late French Immersion students are expected to actively participate, complete oral presentations and engage in conversations in their second language (French), as well as read, write and learn in it. They must also engage in conversations with a partner, in small groups, as a class and with other adults (British Columbia Ministry of Education – Curriculum – Immersion Tardive 6 et 7, 1999). These expectations place enormous demands on LFI teachers as they strive to build language and concepts for adolescents who are shaping their personal identities and trying to build confidence in themselves and in their new language.

One of the major obstacles faced by many Late French Immersion teachers is access to affordable French resources. The market for French materials is small and expensive making wordless picturebooks an excellent alternative that can be used by everyone and at every level in a middle school. Through a request to the Parent Action Committee (PAC), or a local school fund, wordless picturebooks can be purchased for a school library to be used by everyone, not just Late French Immersion teachers. When students are supplied with rich resources such as picturebooks and are encouraged to participate, their comprehension and oral language skills could develop significantly.

One aspect to consider when purchasing wordless picturebooks is the number and variety of resources required for a teacher who would like to take a whole-class approach to using wordless picturebooks in the classroom. Ideally, each student, or pair of students, would be able to interact, observe, and make connections with the images at their own pace, with their own copy. As teachers consider purchasing wordless picturebooks, it is important to consider the diverse interests of students and the complexity of the storylines (in connection with the students' language level). Based on many years of experience, I realize the extent to which students must relate to, and connect with, books before they can engage in reading them.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have discussed the theoretical and conceptual foundations for use of wordless picturebooks in first and second language settings, including how middle school teachers can use wordless picturebooks as oracy prompts, in vocabulary building, and in exploratory and collaborative situations. I also discussed Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), Barnes's concept of exploratory talk (1976, 2008), Mercer's concept of interthinking (2000), and Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading (1978). In addition to the brief overviews on

multimodality, dialogic talk, and interactive read alouds, I discussed issues relating to French Immersion classrooms such as climate, the importance of motivation when learning L2 and other obstacles faced by LFI students and teachers.

In Chapter 3, I explain a unit plan using wordless picturebooks for implementation in my FI Grade 7 classroom. In addition to the unit plan, I provide a rationale by discussing how I am influenced by the research literature and my knowledge of the LFI context. I also recommend three readings and discuss three implications for future research.

## Chapter 3

### Wordless Picturebook Unit and Connections to the Literature

In Chapter 2 I discussed the theoretical and conceptual foundations for use of picturebooks and wordless picturebooks with a variety of different ages and in various contexts. In this chapter I describe what I will do in my classroom now that I have knowledge of the research literature on encouraging exploratory talk in a dialogic setting while using wordless picturebooks as conversational prompts and I have reflected on its implications for my practice. I start with a brief overview of my unit plan, incorporating wordless picturebooks, for four lessons in my French Immersion language arts class (for more details see Appendix A). With each brief description of the lesson I provide a rationale explaining why I designed the teaching and activities in the way I did, based on my literature review. I then identify three relevant readings and three implications for future research.

#### Overview of Unit Plan

Following is a description of a one-week unit of instruction in French Language Arts using wordless picturebooks as prompts for collaborative discussion. The students in this class would have already completed one year of Late French Immersion. The lessons feature dialogic pedagogy as student voice is elicited, encouraged and supported (Alexander, 2006; Boyd & Markarian, 2011). In the lesson descriptions I explain and rationalize how students will share their thoughts and opinions in a nurturing environment, and how they will collaborate and work cooperatively in partners and in small groups.

For the unit plan, I have chosen a wordless picturebook written by Suzy Lee, entitled *Mirror* (2003) (or in French, *Miroir*). *Mirror* is a “visual tour-de-force that requires no words to tell its universal tale” (Goodreads, 2010, n.p.). Artistically rich and sophisticated wordless

picturebooks such as *Mirror* are interesting to adolescents. As Pantaleo (2011) notes, “Teachers need to select engaging material and design thoughtful activities that provide meaningful opportunities for students to use language for multiple purposes” (p. 274). In this unit, students will use the story to elicit genuine feelings and communicate authentically with their classmates and teacher.

Suzy Lee is the author and illustrator of numerous award-winning picturebooks. *Mirror* is about a young girl and her reflection. The beginning of the story is quite carefree and joyful, as the girl makes faces and plays games with her reflection. Lee uses the gutter (i.e. the middle of the book between the two pages) to represent the mirror, showing the interaction between the girl and her reflection, but also as a border between reality and illusion. Hesitantly, the girl and her reflection begin to interact. It then becomes more playful and enthusiastic when halfway through the story, the girl and the reflection become one. Her reflection begins to show dissonance and to do its own thing, much to the disappointment of the girl. The mirror is broken and the book concludes with the same image it began with – a girl, hiding her head and sitting in a ball on the floor. Lee uses primarily black and white in her charcoal drawings, which are simple yet visually effective. The story may lead the reader to question what is real and what is imaginary, as well as questioning friendships and relationships, among other topics. This book is a good introduction to wordless picturebooks as it has the potential to engage adolescents in meaningful discussions and activities. The book also affords readers with opportunities to make connections with the story with respect to considering the consequences of one’s actions, as well as with experiencing adolescent growing pains and feelings of loneliness.

## **Essential Understandings of the Unit Plan**

This unit would take place over four French language arts classes of approximately 60 minutes each. The overarching goal of the unit would be to expose students to wordless picturebooks while providing them with opportunities to talk and engage in authentic conversations of a literary nature, and build their French vocabulary. Students would explore the book independently and with a partner, complete written responses, and participate in small group and whole-class discussions (Pantaleo 2011, 2012, 2014a) throughout the unit. Guidelines of behavior during group discussions focusing on respectful attitudes and conversations will have already been established with the class and will be reviewed as a group prior and during the lessons. Conversations at the beginning of the unit may be more teacher-driven, in order to help students recognize the semiotic resources in wordless picturebooks (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007; Pantaleo, 2007). Prior to the beginning of this unit, students will have had some direct teaching about elements of visual art and design. At the end of this unit, students will share their thoughts and feelings pertaining to specific images in a minimum of two wordless picturebooks, use a rich vocabulary (with words that they have chosen), and be able to provide a brief summary of these books in French. In keeping with the research literature, these activities will provide real situations for students to engage in authentic conversations in French in the classroom (Dagenais et al., 2008; MacIntyre et al., 2011).

### **Lesson 1: Introduction to Wordless Picturebooks**

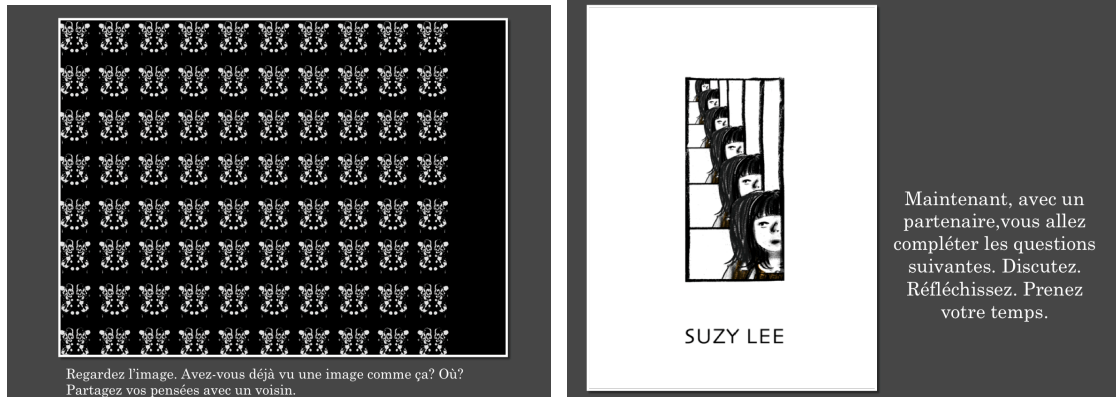
Lesson #1 will provide an introduction to wordless picturebooks. First, expectations regarding the unit will be discussed and posted for the students to see and to give them an idea of the upcoming events (Appendix B). Next, an Anticipation Guide worksheet (Appendix C) listing statements that are true or false about preconceived notions regarding wordless picturebooks,

will be distributed to generate some interest regarding the upcoming unit, as well as to identify any stereotypes and misconceptions. Engaging in a discussion regarding prior knowledge can help teachers determine students' background knowledge (Arif, 2008; Ghiso & McGuire, 2007; Hu & Commeyras, 2008; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Mercer, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). Students will complete the worksheet independently; it will be put aside until later in the class.

Next, an image of the title page of *Miroir* will be shown to the class and students will be asked to predict what might happen in the story (Slide 1 & 2). Ideas will be generated and shared during a whole class discussion with the teacher recording students' thoughts on the board. Student input would be written in a mixture of their authentic Discourse, probably a mixture of French and English (Arif, 2008; Gee, 1989). Words that are not known in French will be recorded on the word wall, with translations to follow later. Encouraging the students to use their bilingual abilities in discussions helps encourage participation and confidence (Ivey & Broaddus, 2007). Students also value when teachers echo their contributions "by intentionally using the child's wording" (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007, p. 346). These strategies help to create the dialogic manner of the conversations.



Slide #1 & #2



### Slide #3 & #4

The teacher will then show Slide #3 & #4 and encourage small paired conversations between the students. Next copies of the book *Miroir*, will be handed out and working in pairs students will be provided with opportunities to interthink (Mercer, 2000) and collaborate using exploratory talk (Barnes, 1976) in French with supportive peers (Dagenais et al., 2006). The students will be asked to take their time and look longer (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007), “to ‘see’ not merely look, and [to be] encouraged to think deeply” (Pantaleo, 2012, p. 58) about the storyline and the themes presented and to transact with the text, which in *Miroir* consists of images (Rosenblatt, 1978). The illustrations in a wordless picturebook “tempt the reader to stop and linger” (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007, p. 343). Students will be required to complete the other side of the True/False worksheet that asks them to begin to formulate a summary of the story, to pick two images and to record three vocabulary words that are unknown in French that would be used to describe images, thoughts or feelings while reading the story (Appendix D). Ideally, students will engage in exploratory talk in their groups as they share, modify and adapt their ideas, while completing the worksheet. Students will be given more time to work on the worksheet during the following lesson. The culminating activity for this lesson will be to review the T/F Anticipation Guide together (Slides #5 & #6). Connections with the book and real-life situations will be made through the questions and the discussions in class, which will hopefully deepen the students’

understanding of and relationship with the text (Arif, 2008; Ghiso & McGuire, 2007; Hu & Commeyras, 2008; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007).

#1. Je pense qu'un livre a besoin des MOTS pour être intéressant.

#2. Le sujet du livre est à propos d'une fille qui a cassé un miroir.

#3. Les livres sans mots ont toujours des images compliqués et en couleur.

#4. J'aime regarder dans un miroir à mon image.

#5. Je pense que les livres illustrés sont seulement pour les enfants très jeunes.

#6. J'aime avoir l'opportunité en classe pour discuter avec mes amis à propos de ce que nous apprenons.

#7. Desfois, je trouve que les amis peuvent être difficile.

#8. J'aime quand les autres personnes m'écoutent.

#9. J'essaye d'écouter les autres quand ils parlent.

#10. Je veux regarder les images du livre moi-même maintenant.

Slide #5 & #6

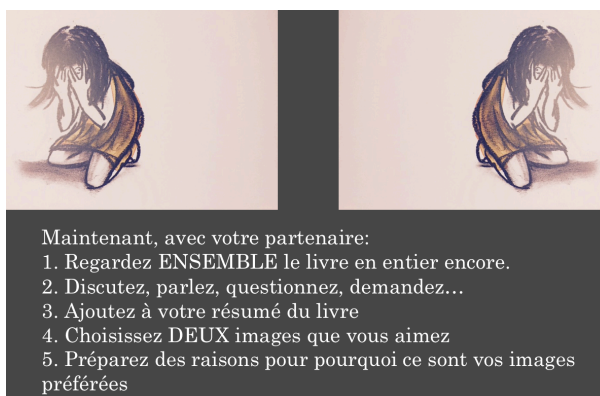
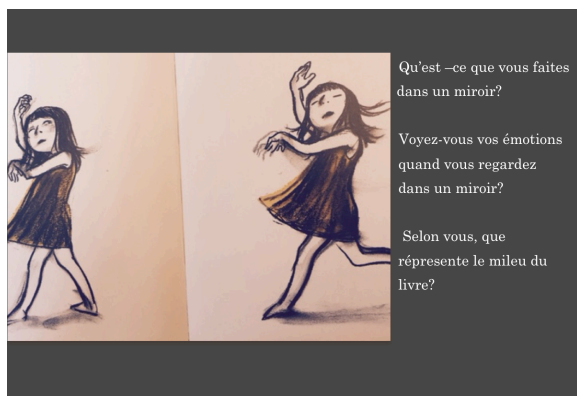
## Lesson 2: Scaffolding Students' Ideas

The second lesson will build on the previous lesson. The previous day's worksheet will be redistributed to the students (Appendix C & D). A short video of the images of the story *Mirror* set to music, will be shown, followed by discussion to encourage further understanding and insight into the book (Slide #7 & #8). The video introduces another mode of looking at the text for the students, making it a more complex, intertextual experience (Arif, 2008; Crawford & Hade, 2000; Serafini, 2012). Afterwards, as a class, we will begin a summary of the story. I will first model for students what I see in the story, provide a brief summary and invite students to participate by sharing what they had observed, discussed or written during the previous day's lesson. Students will be encouraged to contribute any new thoughts or insights that may have been formulated while watching the video. The key point is to scaffold the ideas and thoughts of the students and model the process of composing a summary through talk and collaboration (Barnes, Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007, Mercer, 2000). Time would be

allotted to work together, as a class, on establishing qualities of a “good aesthetic written response” (Pantaleo, 2011a, p. 264) including being able to express emotions and opinions and provide reasons. We will return to the summary in the next lesson. Next, completion of the worksheet from the previous lesson (Appendix D) will be done collaboratively with students working in small groups and together they will finalize their two chosen images and express orally why they have chosen these images in the story.



### Slide #7 & #8



### Slide #9 & #10

Next, the students will share their ideas together with their partners and build on each other's thoughts and suggestions based on the video, the picturebook and through listening to their classmates' ideas (Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Mercer, 2000;

Pantaleo, 2011). The students will be given a few open-ended questions (Appendix E; Slide #9 & #10) regarding various content and theme ideas to help guide the conversations but they will be encouraged to generate their own topics as well (Pantaleo, 2011). They will be expected to be able to explain their answers and choices, with the reassurance that multiple interpretations will be accepted (Ghisso & McGuire, 2007). When students feel supported and listened to, they are more likely to participate and engage in conversations (Alexander, 2006; Boyd & Markarian, 2011). In these small groups, responses will be written collaboratively, with efforts made to incorporate new vocabulary that was recorded during Lesson #1. Responses will be collected and will be shared in Lesson #3. The second lesson will conclude with students having time to look, independently or with a partner, at multiple examples of wordless picturebooks. Finding reading material of interest to adolescents is essential to motivate them to participate in these activities (Louie & Sierschynski, 2015; Massey, 2015; Roser et al., 2011; Serafini, 2014; Senokossoff, 2013). Therefore I will provide a multitude of wordless picturebook examples that address the interests of my students and reflect subjects that are interesting to them – for example, friendship, reality versus imaginary, forgiveness and family.

### **Lesson 3: Sharing Picturebook Summaries Through Read-Aloud**

The third lesson will begin with distributing the previous day's class worksheet (Appendix D & E) and a review of the previous lesson including student summaries and explanations of their favorite images. Next, any new vocabulary that students discovered while working together or independently will be added to the word wall. Third, I will begin with the class-composed summary started on the previous day and read it out loud to the class. The intention is to validate students' multidimensional understanding of the story. Then, interested students will be invited and encouraged to share their summaries of *Miroir* in an interactive read

aloud type of scenario. Middle-school students are more motivated, interested and engaged when their teachers read aloud to them (Albright & Ariail, 2005) and honour their thoughts and contributions in discussions (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007; Pantaleo, 2011). Indeed, in a collaborative setting “student input is essential to [students] engaging with and making meaning from the text” (Ghiso & McGuire, 2007, p. 346). Students will also be given time to share with the class their favourite images and asked to explain why they have chosen them. By explaining and reflecting on their opinions with their peers, students can deepen their understanding.

Following this sharing session, students will once again be given time to choose a wordless picturebook of their choice in pairs and begin to repeat some of the strategies of looking at the images, talking with a partner regarding plot and favorite images, and generating vocabulary words to add to their list (Hu & Commenyras, 2008) (Appendix F). Through the repetition of the activity, with a different book, ideally students will begin to feel more confident and successful in their abilities to communicate and engage in a collaborative discussion using a wordless picturebook (Hu & Commenyras, 2008; Ivey & Bacchaus, 2007).

#### **Lesson 4: Story Generation Using Picturebooks**

The fourth and final lesson will begin with a check-in to discuss any student questions or comments that may have come up while they were working with their partner in their choice selection of a wordless picturebook. Afterwards, the students will rejoin with their partners and they will have a chance to complete their summaries, identify favorite images and vocabulary words, and tell the story of what is happening in their particular picturebook (Appendix F). Partners will first review their work from the previous lesson, and then they will join another partner group. Literacy skills can be developed when students compose stories for wordless picturebooks and then read their stories (Hu & Commeyras, 2008). Stories will also reflect

terminology shared within the class's own Discourse (Gee, 1978; Ghiso & McGuire, 2007, Pantaleo, 2014b). Throughout the unit, common vocabulary will have been learned and used in discussions and the class will therefore begin to form a common language within the group. As a class, a reflection will follow regarding wordless picturebooks with respect to preconceived notions and newfound interests for various forms of text. Questions asked will reflect observations and topics generated by the class as a whole during the four lessons, and provide students with the opportunity to share their thoughts regarding working in partners and groups (Arizpe, 2013; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007) (Appendix G). This formative evaluation will include a self-evaluation component as well as an evaluation by a teacher/peer.

### **Summary of Unit**

At the end of this unit, students will have been exposed to various activities with the overarching goal of providing meaningful opportunities to use language surrounding wordless picturebooks. *Miroir* is simple in its images, yet complex in its themes, depicting scenes that are relevant and interesting to adolescents. Most of the chosen exercises reflect an emphasis on providing students with opportunities to talk. As described above, students will discuss the cover page, anticipate the story with a partner, explore the images, provide a summary in a group situation, explain their thoughts and opinions in small and large groups, and collaborate in whole class discussions. Students will have engaged in exploratory talk as a class, with partners and in small groups. Through these conversations, students will have had opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings and build on each other's ideas. They will have engaged in discussions and added to their vocabulary by using newly discovered words. Ideally, students will feel more confident speaking French, a Secondary discourse, and be more capable of engaging with a variety of text and conversational situations in a second-language.

In the next section, I describe two articles and one chapter that I have selected, which I believe are most pertinent for sharing with French Immersion colleagues. The article by MacIntyre et al. (2011) highlights the importance of establishing a positive and supportive relationship with the L2 students. The chapter by Wells and Ball (2008) emphasizes the value of collaborating and the possibilities that arise in dialogic settings. In the article by Pantaleo (2011), she iterates the importance of students engaging in discussions with peers and provides specific examples of adolescents engaging in collaborative talk.

### **Sharing Readings with Colleagues**

The three selected articles contextualize what I view as the most important factors with respect to encouraging and understanding the French Immersion adolescent in a dialogic setting. MacIntyre, P., Burns, C. & Jessome, A. (2011). Ambivalence about communicating in a second language: A qualitative study of French Immersion students' willingness to communicate. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95 (1), 81-96.

MacIntyre et al. (2011) highlight the challenge of communicating in a second language for the adolescent French Immersion student, through descriptions of situations in which some students were willing to communicate and others were not. Communication with teachers and friends, along with perceived competence and error were identified as major factors that influenced student willingness to communicate. The authors provide the context to understand the challenges of working with students at this critical developmental stage, as well as strategies and ideas to motivate the learners.

MacIntyre et al. (2011) present a pyramid model of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) that illustrates the factors and processes affecting L2 communication. The pyramid identifies characteristics over which the student has very little control (e.g., personality and social

situation), as well as others over which there is more control (e.g., self-confidence and desire to communicate). It is important for teachers to acknowledge these situational factors and to strive to establish a positive and supportive learning space. The survey results indicated that many students felt very self-conscious when speaking in French in class, especially when they felt that they were less competent than their peers, or that they would be embarrassed or ridiculed by their classmates. The researchers concluded that if students feel self-conscious and are in situations that require authentic communication, they are more willing to communicate. The data analysis also revealed that adolescent students also enjoy speaking in French with their teacher if their teacher is not too critical of them. One student stated he/she “felt comfortable talking with my teacher because she understands if I get my words mixed up or don’t know a word” (MacIntyre et al., 2011, p. 88). By creating a positive, supportive, and dialogic environment that encourages exploratory talk, adolescent immersion students would be more likely to communicate and consequently develop their confidence. Moment-to-moment dynamics in social situations and the role of the other communication partner (s) are key to determining whether the adolescent is willing to communicate.

Wells, G., & Ball, T. (2008). Exploratory talk and dialogic inquiry. In N. Mercer & S.

Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in school* (pp. 167-184). London, UK: SAGE

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Wells and Ball (2008) describe how more dialogue and exploratory talk can be produced when an inquiry approach to teaching and learning is adopted. Wells and Ball provide specific examples of teachers successfully using inquiry-based situations to motivate students to become more involved and engaged in what was being studied. One teacher incorporated whole class meetings which she expanded into her read-alouds; another teacher established a collaborative

“Knowledge” wall where students asked and answered questions; a third teacher organized car races and students modified their vehicles based on discussions about, and experimentation with, various materials to improve performance. These examples demonstrated how collaboration begins with meaning, learning and understanding. The research described in this chapter provides excellent background to exploratory talk and dialogic inquiry, with concrete examples to inspire and motivate teachers to use this stance in their own classrooms.

Pantaleo, S. (2011). Middle years students’ collaborative talk about *The red tree*: ‘A book that really works your mind’. *Australian Language and Literacy*, 34(3), 260-278.

Pantaleo (2011) provides concrete evidence that when students are engaged in collaborative and exploratory talk, they are able to maintain and engage in genuine conversations about literature. She begins by contextualizing her research in sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and the foundational concepts of interthinking (Mercer, 2000) and exploratory talk (Barnes, 1976). Description of the methods includes a brief synopsis of *The Red Tree* (Tan, 2001) as well as a few other picturebooks. Excerpts of student discussions demonstrate collaborative and authentic conversations among the students. The excerpts provide clear examples of students’ interthinking abilities, and of students adhering to discussion etiquette. Pantaleo emphasizes how critical it is to properly scaffold classroom discussions with students in order to create successful learning opportunities where students are able to talk and learn together.

### **Implications for Future Research**

French Immersion started in Canada in the 1970s and the number of students enrolled has grown steadily, from 7.9% of the total population of students in 1992 to 9.9% in 2013 (Canadian Parents for French, 2014). Bilingualism and mutual understanding of English and French culture

continues to be an important part of Canadian discourse and Canadian history; yet, very few studies have focused on the particular pedagogical challenges in the French Immersion context.

More studies need to focus on middle school students and the importance of talk. Middle school years can be especially challenging both socially and academically. Indeed, students are in a transition stage where many often value the opinions of their peers over their teachers (MacIntyre, et al., 2002; Martinez et al., 2009; Murphy, 2009; Senokossoff, 2013). Researchers who conduct studies regarding dialogic-type discussions in the classroom often offer caution regarding the need to have clear expectations in establishing successful group discussions (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand & Gamoran, 2003; Pantaleo, 2011). Many teachers value group discussion but lack the tools to scaffold and structure it to be more effective. Therefore research could be done in areas where specific guidelines have been established in dialogic classrooms in which talk is respectful, supportive and encouraging of others to grow and expand their learning.

Research is also limited regarding the application of educational theories in a French Immersion context such as sociocultural talk and dialogic teaching. A theoretical and practical discussion of the implications of theory for teaching in French Immersion could provide much needed theoretical knowledge, especially if a focus on pedagogical examples is also included.

Another area of research that is needed is a focus on understanding techniques and strategies to motivate L2 learners to become more communicative, particularly the adolescent L2. MacIntyre (2007) addressed the problem by identifying the key issue of language anxiety, but much research is still needed to understand how to engage students in their new curriculum content in the French language.

As a French Immersion teacher, I try to create scenarios in which students are given opportunities to participate at an exploratory level, combining elements of French, English and

their own creation of a language as many still struggle with speaking. Further research on ways to bolster confidence in speaking in L2 would be beneficial. Erben (2004) discovered that as students progressed in their knowledge of L2, they used it more frequently; yet, in the secondary school setting, the situation reversed itself and students used more L1. This finding was in part because of “adolescent peer pressure and conformity” (Erben, 2004, p. 328). Discovering ways in which speaking in L2 could be viewed as “cool” to the adolescent learner is critical.

With respect to picturebooks which can “pique the interest of many adolescent students who ... may appear to be bored and apathetic” (Murphy, 2009, p. 20), there is a need for research on the use of picturebooks in second language settings to explore if the identified benefits of use in L1 transfer to L2 settings, and to identify other benefits, given that the language of instruction differs from their home language. Using wordless picturebooks could be beneficial for L2 students because Murphy (2009) stated that readers who struggle find wordless picturebooks to be helpful for creating their own texts, since they are using their own words, which can help them gain a sense of competency in the language. Ivey and Broaddus (2007) found that many middle school students have developed negative attitudes about reading, and that “reading voluntarily in a second language ... is likely even less appealing (p. 516). Perhaps providing stories without words, and then adding peer-written stories, could help change the attitudes of the reluctant readers.

## **Conclusion**

This Master of Education journey began with wondering how to motivate French Immersion middle school students to read and speak more French. Through my review of the research literature I have identified some key factors to be included in a dialogic environment. These factors include creating an environment that is supportive and collaborative towards

learning and the adolescent learner, and the use of wordless picturebooks in the classroom to encourage L2 learners to speak, read and write more in the second language. The literature review revealed that wordless picturebooks can offer multiple learning opportunities and value at every grade level and in every subject (Arif, 2008; Arizpe, 2013; Louie & Sierschynski, 2015; Pantaleo, 2007, 2014b; Roser et al., 2011; Senokossoff, 2013; Serafini, 2012, 2014).

In planning my anticipated unit, I realized the need to persevere in making my classroom more dialogic. I encourage a lot of discussions in my teaching practice but I often do not establish expectations or proper protocol during collaborative talk. Repeatedly in my research, it was highlighted that teachers must scaffold and take the time to set up rules regarding group work. Pantaleo (2011) cites Lyle (2008) as saying that “the educational value of any classroom talk between children hinges on how well the teacher has set up the activities” (p. 229). This quote emphasizes for me the importance of remembering the “why” when unit plans are being created and daily exercises are being taught. By explicitly stating the value of talking, collaborating, interthinking, and self-reflecting the stance of students and the teacher begins to change.

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Wolsey, T., & Lapp, D. (2009). Discussion-based instruction in the middle and secondary school classroom. In K. Wood & W. Blanton (Eds.), *Literacy instruction for adolescents: Research-based practice* (pp. 368-391). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

## Appendix A

### The Unit Plan for Teachers – Using Wordless Picturebooks in a LFI Grade 7 Classroom

At the end of this unit students will be able to :

- Identify and give examples of wordless picturebooks
- Describe the importance of the front cover
- Share their thoughts and perceptions before reading several books as well as after reading and explain what changed and what stayed the same (Explorer et réfléchir – formuler des hypothèses en se basant sur les indices)
- Participate in a spontaneous conversation summarizing the main ideas in several books (Explorer et réfléchir – identifier les idées d’un texte; Créer et Communiquer – tenir une conversations spontanée)
- Identify a few favorite images and explain why they chose them (Créer et Communiquer – tenir une conversations spontanée)
- Use a rich vocabulary to describe the images and their thoughts and opinions with several other wordless picturebooks, by using, if necessary, the words on the word wall (Créer et Communiquer –exprimer et justifier une opinion avec un vocabulaire varié et approprié)
- Be an active and respectful listener (l’écoute active)
- Be an active and respectful participant in whole class and small group discussions (les formes de politesse)

#### **Lesson #1 – Introduction to Wordless Picturebooks**

Enduring Understanding: By the end of the lessons, the students will be able to:

- Reflect on preconceived ideas and beliefs regarding wordless picturebooks
- Give a summary of the wordless picturebook, *Miroir*, by Suzy Lee

- Identify certain elements of wordless picturebooks
- Identify two images and be able to begin to explain why they have chosen them
- Engage in respectful, collaborative discussions regarding various literary elements of wordless picturebooks and *Miroir*

**Introduction:** The unit on wordless picturebooks would be introduced by stating the unit goals, which would be placed in the classroom (Appendix B). A guide to how the students would be assessed on their learning would also be shared.

**Activity #1:** I will distribute a True/False page with 10 questions (Appendix C) to be completed individually. The purpose of the activity is to generate some excitement regarding the upcoming unit, as well as to identify any stereotypes and background knowledge the students may have about wordless picturebooks.

**Activity #2:** I will show an image of the title page, *Miroir*, a wordless picturebook by Suzy Lee and ask the class to think silently and independently about what this book could be about. After a minute, the students would be invited to share with a partner, and then the ideas would be shared out as a class. Ideas would be written in a mixture of French and English and would represent the authentic discourse of the students (Slide #1 & #2). New vocabulary words would be added on a word wall, which would be displayed throughout the unit. Students will also be shown two more images from the book *Miroir* to continue the anticipation and dialogue regarding the content of the story (Slide #3 & #4).

**Activity #3:** In partners, students will have a copy of the book *Miroir*. The students will be asked to take their time, to look and to think deeply about the choice of image and color as they work through the book. Students will be asked to orally and in writing (Appendix D) complete a very brief (2-3 sentences) summary of the story in French, using a French/English dictionary as

needed and recording any new vocabulary that they may discover along the way. They will also be asked to choose two images that they like and discuss in the pair why they had chosen those images. A collaborative and exploratory conversation will ensue in which the pairs would be encouraged to modify and adapt their work and their thoughts during the conversations.

**Conclusion:** Time will be given to allow students the opportunity to adjust or modify any answers from the T/F questions completed at the beginning of class. As a class, we will then go over the anticipatory guide and discuss how the answers changed or stayed the same (Slide #5 & #6). Once everyone has completed the sheet, various students will read each question aloud and discuss various answers. Time will then be given to report out any summaries and images that students may want to share with the class and to record new vocabulary onto the word wall.

Worksheets will be collected.

## **Lesson 2: Scaffolding Students' Ideas**

Enduring Understanding: By the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:

- Identify and give a summary of *Miroir* using a rich vocabulary
- Explain to a partner their favorite images from *Miroir* incorporating new vocabulary words
- Identify titles of a few specific wordless picturebooks
- Actively participate and engage in conversations surrounding *Miroir* with classmates

**Introduction:** The class will begin with a quick review of the previous day's lesson regarding preconceived notions towards wordless picturebooks. Appendix C & D will be handed back and students will return to their partners.

**Activity #1:** Students will watch a video of the book *Miroir* and engage in group and partner conversations based on prompts given by the teacher (Slide 7 & 8). Conversations will center on

artistic elements as well as identification of major themes, culminating in a partial summary of the story. The video will provide another medium of presentation for the story.

**Activity #2:** With copies of the book, *Miroir* in front of the students, I will begin to model what I see in the story, providing a brief summary and inviting students to share what they had observed or written down from the previous day. This summarizing process would be done in collaboration with student input and together we would begin to formulate a written summary of the story on the chalkboard to be referenced throughout this lesson and the following lessons. Time would then be given to add to the students' summary in partners and to their chosen images section (Appendix D).

**Activity #3:** Afterwards, I will propose some open questions about other thoughts or interpretations of the images and themes regarding *Miroir* for the class to consider (Slide #9 & #10). A discussion will follow. Students will then be prompted to the question page (Appendix E). The first few questions will be discussed as a class to model the type of responses. I will allow ample time for the students to consider the questions and discuss them with a partner. Ideally, conversation would flow and I will be able to help only with the uptake of responses to encourage the discussion and flow between the students.

**Activity #4:** After a few questions and once I have modeled how the discussion should flow, the students will continue to complete the worksheet in groups of 4. The students will work through their ideas together and ideally build on each other's thoughts and suggestions. Time permitting, groups will report their findings with myself acting as a facilitator and recorder of answers on the board.

**Activity #5:** Students will be given time to independently, or with a partner, look at multiple examples of wordless picturebooks. Ideally, students will find a few different examples that they

find interesting. The students will be used the following class so students will be asked to choose 2 or 3 book that they particularly enjoy.

**Conclusion:** The students will have, as a class, collaboratively discussed and looked at the book *Miroir*. Ideally they will feel comfortable about providing a summary of the story, and in choosing images that they like in the picturebook, and engaged in respectful listening to other people's opinions. They will also be more familiar with wordless picturebooks, other than *Miroir*.

### **Lesson 3: Sharing Picturebook Summaries Through Read-Aloud**

Enduring Understanding: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain to a small group their favorite images from a specific wordless picturebook
- Give a brief summary of a specific wordless picturebook
- Provide a minimum of four new vocabulary words

**Introduction:** A quick review will be done to highlight some of the strategies that were used when working with the book, *Miroir* such as taking time to look and slow down, discussing with a partner, observing the front page, discussing the images with others, and creating a summary. Appendices D and E will be redistributed and students will be invited to share their summaries or their favorite images to the whole class.

**Activity #1:** Working in partners, students will choose one specific wordless picturebook to work with. They will look at the book, provide a summary of the story, choose two of their favorite images, and identify four vocabulary words that were unknown to them before and that are important to the summary (Appendix F). Words can be added onto the word wall.

**Activity #2:** Time permitting, selected groups will share their summaries, favorite images or new vocabulary words to the class.

**Conclusion:** As a class, a discussion will ensue regarding some similar strategies that were used to discuss the story and the images.

#### **Lesson 4: Story Generation Using Picturebooks**

Enduring Understanding: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain to a small group their favorite images from a specific wordless picturebook
- Share out in a small group a brief summary of a wordless picturebook, complete with a minimum of four new vocabulary words
- Discuss and complete a reflection process regarding the unit on wordless picturebooks
- Listen attentively and respectfully to classmates while they share their summaries
- Complete a self-evaluation and self-reflection

**Introduction:** The class will debrief any issue from yesterday and discuss and queries that may have come up.

**Activity #1:** Students will work with their partner from the previous day and rework or adjust any changes that should be made of their chosen book (Appendix F).

**Activity #2:** Students will present to another partner group and discuss their opinions and thoughts toward their own book as well as the other group's book.

**Conclusion:** As a class, a self-reflection and self-evaluation will follow regarding wordless picturebooks (Appendix G). Questions will be asked that will reflect observations and topics that were generated by the class as a whole during the unit.

**Overall:** At the end of this unit, students will have been exposed to a multitude of different wordless picturebooks. They will have engaged in exploratory talk as a class, in partners and in small groups. The students will also have opportunities to collaborate on each other's ideas and grow their vocabulary together.

**Connections to the Curriculum**

**Grade 7 Late French Immersion**

**Français langue seconde – Immersion – 7e année tardive**

Objectives	Lesson #1	Lesson #2	Lesson #3	Lesson #4
<b>Explore and think</b> <i>(Explorer et réfléchir)</i> Identify secondary ideas in a text <i>(Identifier les idées secondaires d'un texte)</i>		X	X	X
<b>Explore and think</b> <i>(Explorer et réfléchir)</i> Interpret and interact with a text <i>(Interpréter un texte pour y réagir)</i>	X	X	X	X
<b>Create and communicate</b> <i>(Créer et communiquer)</i> Express and justify an opinion with an appropriate and varied vocabulary <i>(Exprimer et justifier une opinion avec un vocabulaire varié et approprié)</i>	X	X	X	X
<b>Create and communicate</b> <i>(Créer et communiquer)</i> Maintain a spontaneous conversation <i>(Tenir une conversation spontanée)</i>	X	X	X	X
<b>Create and communicate</b> <i>(Créer et communiquer)</i> Give an overview of the main ideas of a text in a clear, organized manner <i>(Résumer l'idée principale d'un texte de manière claire et organisée)</i>		X	X	

## Appendix B

### Les buts pour l'unité – les albums illustrés sans mot

À la fin de l'unité, vous allez être capable de:

- **IDENTIFIER** et **DONNER** des exemples des albums illustrés sans mot
- **DÉCRIRE** l'importance de la couverture du livre
- **PARTAGER** vos opinions et vos attentes **AVANT** la lecture et **APRÈS** et comment vos opinions sont les mêmes ou différents
- **PARTICIPER** dans les conversations spontanées
- **IDENTIFIER** quelques images préférées et **EXPLIQUER** pourquoi vous les avez choisies
- **UTILISER** un vocabulaire riche
- **ÉCOUTER** attentivement et respectueux
- **PARTICIPER** dans les discussions en partenaire et en équipe

## Appendix C

## Class #1 &amp; #2 Worksheet

Questions pour : Miroir par Suzy Lee

nom : \_\_\_\_\_

## Vrai ou Faux

1. Je pense qu'un livre a besoin des MOTS pour être intéressant.  
\_\_\_\_\_
  2. Le sujet du livre est à propos d'une fille qui a cassé un miroir.  
\_\_\_\_\_
  3. Les livres sans mots ont toujours des images compliquées et en couleur. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. J'aime regarder dans un miroir à mon image. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Je pense seulement que les livres illustrés sont seulement pour les enfants très jeunes. \_\_\_\_\_
  6. J'aime avoir l'opportunité en classe pour discuter avec mes amis à propos de ce que nous apprenons. \_\_\_\_\_
  7. Des fois, je trouve que les amis peuvent être difficile. \_\_\_\_\_
  8. J'aime quand les autres personnes m'écoutent. \_\_\_\_\_
  9. J'essaye d'écouter les autres quand ils parlent. \_\_\_\_\_
  10. Je veux regarder les images du livre moi-même maintenant. \_\_\_\_\_
-

**Appendix D****Feuille de route #1**

	<b>Jour #1</b>	<b>Jour #2</b>
<b>Résumé</b>		
<b>Image #1</b>		
<b>Image #2</b>		
<b>Nouveaux mots de vocabulaire</b>		

## Appendix E

## Questions pour la classe #2 – Miroir par Suzy Lee

noms: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Complétez les questions suivantes EN ÉQUIPE. Nous allons discuter ensemble nos opinions à la fin, alors soyez prêts à partager vos réponses avec la classe. Ajoutez des questions ou commentaires que vous avez aussi.

Qu'est-ce que vous faites dans un miroir?

Mais SI on entre...

Au milieu du livre, qu'est-ce qui change avec la fille? Qu'est-ce que ça représente?

Penses à ce que vous voyez quand vous regardez dans le miroir? Votre image? Vos émotions? La tristesse?

Quels sont les changements de la première page à la dernière page? Pourquoi? Qu'est-ce que ça signifie?

Trouve, avec l'aide d'un dictionnaire, un minimum de 4 nouveaux mots que tu trouves est important pour décrire ce livre.

Ajoute quelques questions ou sujets que vous avez maintenant.

**Appendix F****Feuille de route #2**

	<b>Titre de l'histoire #1 choisi</b>
<b>Résumé</b>	
<b>Image #1</b>	
<b>Image #2</b>	
<b>Nouveaux mots de vocabulaire</b>	

## Appendix G

## Évaluation – par TOI et MME (ou un autre élève)

	Par moi	Par Mme ou un élève
Je suis capable de donner les titres d'un minimum de 4 albums illustrés sans mot.	1 livre 2 livres 3 livres 4 livres	1 livre 2 livres 3 livres 4 livres
Je peux exprimer mes pensées pour UNE minute à propos d'un album illustré sans mot	0 à 30 secondes 30 à 50 secondes 50 à 65 secondes 65 et plus de secondes	0 à 30 secondes 30 à 50 secondes 50 à 65 secondes 65 et plus de secondes
Je suis capable d'identifier un minimum de 3 éléments à regarder pendant la lecture d'un album illustré sans mot	1 élément 2 éléments 3 éléments 4 ou plus d'éléments	1 élément 2 éléments 3 éléments 4 ou plus d'éléments
Je peux incorporer un minimum de 4 mots de vocabulaire correctement quand je parle à propos d'un album illustré sans mot	0 à 1 mot 2 mots 3 à 4 mots 5 ou plus de mots	0 à 1 mot 2 mots 3 à 4 mots 5 ou plus de mots

Maintenant, écrivez un minimum de 3 phrases d'auto-évaluation.

## Appendix H - Slide Presentation

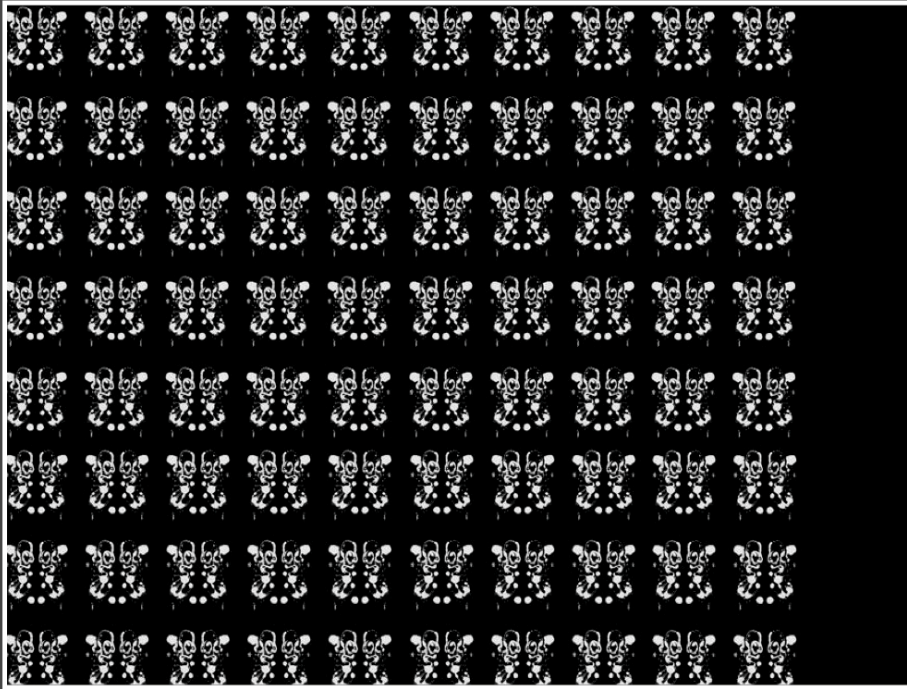


Slide #1

Regardons seulement le titre et la couverture. Prenez quelques minutes seuls et pensez aux questions suivantes:

- Que pensez-vous de la page couverture?
- Quel est le sujet du livre?

Slide #2



Regardez l'image. Avez-vous déjà vu une image comme ça? Où?  
Partagez vos pensées avec un voisin.

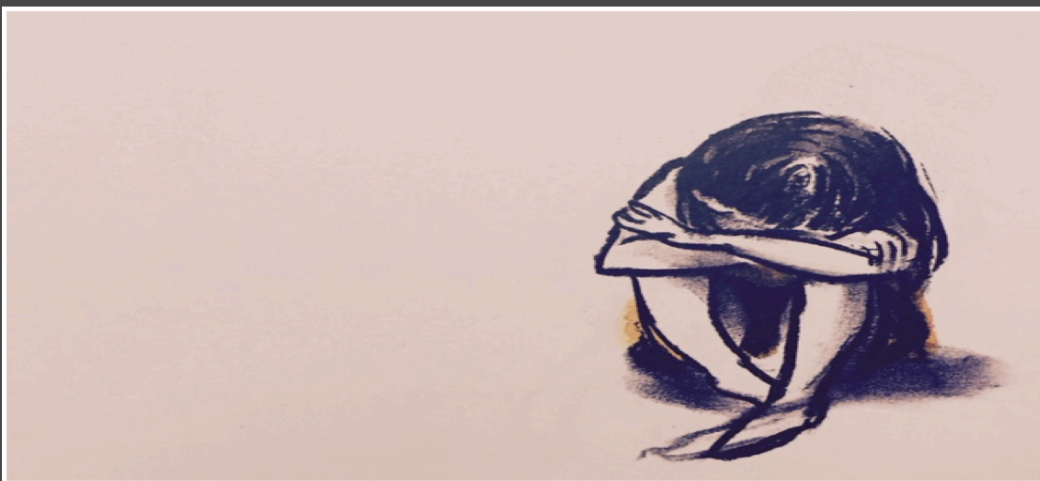
Slide #3



SUZY LEE

Maintenant, avec un  
partenaire, vous allez  
compléter les questions  
suivantes. Discutez.  
Réfléchissez. Prenez  
votre temps.

Slide #4



#1. Je pense qu'un livre a besoin des MOTS pour être intéressant.

#2. Le sujet du livre est à propos d'une fille qui a cassé un miroir.

#3. Les livres sans mots ont toujours des images compliqués et en couleur.

#### Slide #5

#4. J'aime regarder dans un miroir à mon image.

#5. Je pense que les livres illustrés sont seulement pour les enfants très jeunes.

#6. J'aime avoir l'opportunité en classe pour discuter avec mes amis à propos de ce que nous apprenons.

#7. Desfois, je trouve que les amis peuvent être difficile.

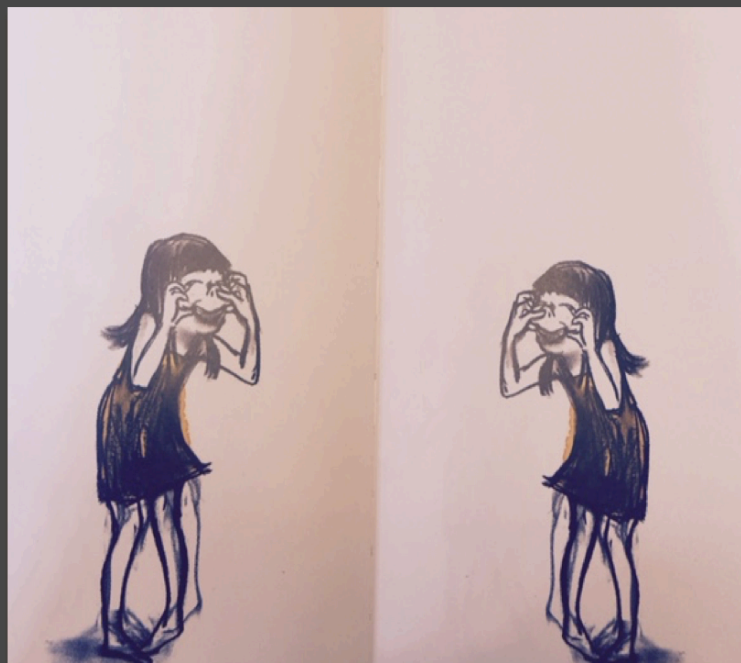
#8. J'aime quand les autres personnes m'écoutent.

#9. J'essaye d'écouter les autres quand ils parlent.

#10. Je veux regarder les images du livre moi-même maintenant.



#### Slide #6



Regardons ensemble le vidéo.

<http://www.suzyleebooks.com/books/mirror/slide/mirror.htm>

Slide #7



Qu'est-ce que vous pensez du vidéo? Aimez-vous la musique?  
La présentation? Tournez à votre voisin et discutez.

Slide #8

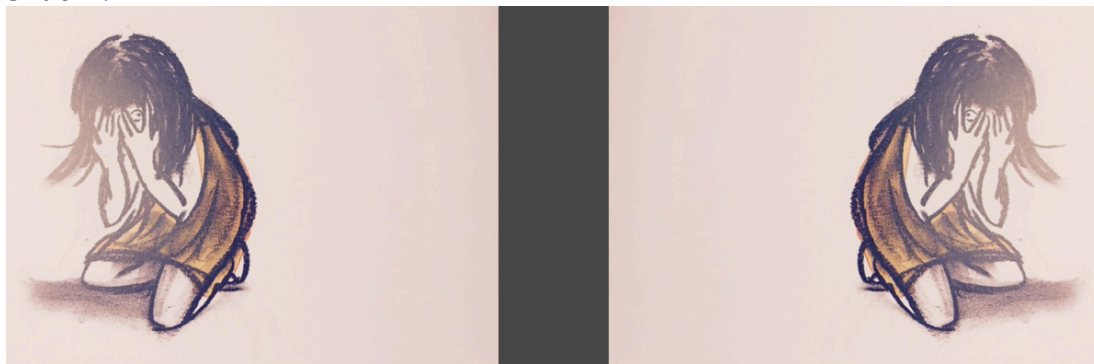


Qu'est-ce que vous faites dans un miroir?

Voyez-vous vos émotions quand vous regardez dans un miroir?

Selon vous, que représente le milieu du livre?

Slide #9



Maintenant, avec votre partenaire:

1. Regardez ENSEMBLE le livre en entier encore.
2. Discutez, parlez, questionnez, demandez...
3. Ajoutez à votre résumé du livre
4. Choisissez DEUX images que vous aimez
5. Préparez des raisons pour pourquoi ce sont vos images préférées

Slide #10

## Appendix I

### Letter of Permission to Use Artwork

Hello,

My name is Christianne Wiigs and I am currently working on a Masters of Education from the University of Victoria. For my final project, I am examining ways that wordless picture books can be used with second language learners to help them with their speaking and writing skills. I am basing my final unit plan on the book, *Mirror*, by Suzy Lee (2003). I would like to use some of her artwork, with your permission, in my final project. How do I go about attaining permission?

Thank you for your help with this query.

Christianne Wiigs

Saltspring Island. BC, CANADA

On Nov 12, 2015, at 7:57 AM, Corraini Rights <[rights@corraini.com](mailto:rights@corraini.com)> wrote:

Dear Christianne

Your final project will be published or it will be just a copy for an master exam?

please let me know.

Thanks

Giovanna

**Giovanna Ballin**

**International Relations and Subsidiary Rights Manager**

**Edizioni Corraini**

Via I. Nievo 7/A

Mantova – ITALY

Tel. : +39 0376 322753

Fax : +39 0376 365566

E.mail: [rights@corraini.com](mailto:rights@corraini.com)

Dear Giovanna,

My final project will be downloaded onto the university's directory for other students and university staff to view.

Do I have permission?

Thanks,

Christianne

Ok Christianne the important thing is that the final project will be not on sale. But I guess not.

Ciao

Giovanna

**Giovanna Ballin**

**International Relations and Subsidiary Rights Manager**

**Edizioni Corraini**

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