

Lesson Plans and Classroom  
Activities to support

## The Tumbleweed Came Back

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Illustrated by Kevin Rechin



### Before Reading

**CCSS-R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences.**

Students will preview text to build background knowledge, using the reading strategies of developing schema and making predictions.

Let's look at the cover picture. What do you think this book will be about? Do you think it is fiction or nonfiction? Why do you say that?

What are tumbleweeds? Where (in what ecosystem) do we find tumbleweeds?



### Preview Vocabulary Words

**CCSS- R.4 Students will interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text.**

**(write these words on chart paper)**

irate (p. 7\*)

stoop (p. 10)

coop (p. 10)

loft (p. 14)

'cause (p. 22)

time capsule (p. 24)

gizmo (p. 24)

interstellar (p. 29)

(\*Numbering of pages begins on internal cover page.)

Define the words using context clues. Chart responses.



## After Reading

**Students will share mental images, connections and generate questions.**

**Questions:** Have students generate questions about the story and chart their answers.

**Mental Images:** Picture books help with MI but I wondered if any of you had other sensory connections? I heard an old cowboy song in my head. "Tumbling Along with the Tumbling Tumbleweeds" by the Sons of Pioneers.

What did you hear or feel, taste or smell? Chart.

**Connections:** Does this story remind you of other books we've read or experiences you've had in your own life? Chart student responses and label text-to-text, text-to-self, or text-to-world.



## Story Elements



**CCRA R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development.**

Students will identify literary elements of plot, characters, setting and theme. Make a chart similar to the one below and have the students identify the story elements of plot, characters, setting and theme.

Plot	Characters	Setting	Theme
Problem	Kids	Where is the Rio Grande	Perseverance
Solution	Granny		



**CCRA R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.**

Students will identify the narrator and his/her point of view. How might the story be different if told from the Granny's Point of View? The Tumbleweed's Point of View?

Who is telling the story? How do you know that? How do the children feel about the tumbleweeds? How does granny feel about the tumbleweeds? What evidence do you have that Granny was irate? (Pictures when her friends were over, etc.).



**CCRA.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text including determining technical, connotative and figurative meanings and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.**

Writers sometimes use a figure of speech to spice up their writing. The following passages utilize a figure of speech to describe a character.

Reread these passages, identify the figures of speech and discuss what is meant by these sayings.

**Figures of Speech:**

p. 18\* Our granny was a wreck

p. 24 grinned from ear to ear

p. 26 they didn't give a hoot

(\*Numbering of pages begins on internal cover page.)

**Fantastic Verbs:**

p. 5\* flicked

p. 8 captured (up)

p. 14 zooming

p. 16 conjured

p. 16 dissolved

p. 20 crammed

p. 20 slapped

p. 22 barging (in)

(\*Numbering of pages begins on internal cover page.)



**Revision Lesson:**

Strong verbs convey action and emotion. Talk about the author's use of verbs, above.

Tell students to choose a paragraph from their writer's notebooks and revise a couple of verbs. Read their new sentences to a partner.

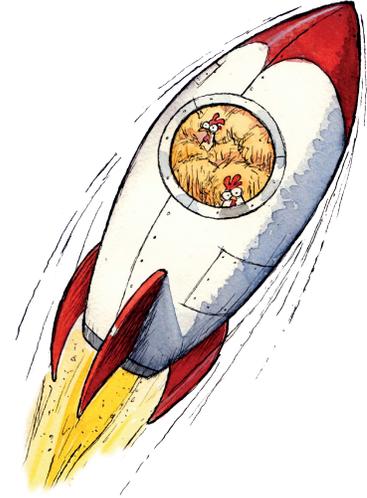


## Text Type and Purposes

**CCRA.W.3 Students will write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.**

This is a circle story, similar to If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Joffe Numeroff or Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes. However this story is unique in that the author did not "finish" the story; she leaves it open to interpretation. Choose one of the activities below to finish this story.

1. The children built a rocket ship and they were sure that the Tumbleweeds were gone for good! What do you think? Did the tumbleweeds come back? How do you think this story ends? Today you are going to write an ending to the story. Be creative! What DID happen to those tumbleweeds?



*Include a page with Tumbleweeds as a border where students will write the ending to this story.*

2. Reread the story, taking note of the different ways the children (came up with) to get rid of the tumbleweeds once and for all. Design a "tumbleweed trap" that will (get rid of them). Describe your invention and write a paragraph telling how it will be used.

**Lesson Plans by Tami Coyle.**

