



## A Lesson on Nature's Violet Children by Jacqueline Pina

**Grade Level:** Grade 5

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 1 hour 30 minutes

**Lesson Keywords:** Discussion, reading, writing, nature's violet children

**Lesson Description:** The purpose of this lesson is for students to become more comfortable with figurative language as well as becoming familiar with tone and theme in literature. After developing their understanding of these literary components, each student is then asked to think critically upon the reading in relation to their own experiences.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.2: Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

---

## Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

**Instructions:** Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

### Nature's Violet Children

by

**Content:** Once on a sunny hill in the woods grew many violets. They had slept quietly through the long winter, tucked up snug and warm in the soft, white snow-blankets that King Winter had sent Mother Nature for her flower babies. Jack Frost had gone pouting over the hills because the little sunbeams would not play with him, and they spoiled his fancy pictures. The tiny raindrops knocked at the door of Mother Nature's great, brown house; and the birds called to the flowers to wake up.

The violets raised their strong, hardy leaves, lifted up their dainty heads, and were glad because spring had come again. While they were so happy, a little girl named Ruth came to the woods in search of wild flowers. How pretty those violets are, she said. I wish I could stay and watch the buds open, but I will take some of them with me and keep them in water, and they will remind me of this sunny hill. Perhaps they will blossom.

Then the violets were frightened and whispered, Please don't take us! Ruth did not hear them. She pulled stem after stem until her small hands were full.

When Ruth got home, she put the buds into a vase of water, and set them in an open window where they could see the blue sky and feel the kisses of the sunbeams. But, the poor little violets drooped for a time, they were so homesick, and whispered to each other, Let us give up and die! A beautiful canary in a cage over their heads sang Cheer up! Chirrup! but they would not listen to him at first. By and by, they said, Why do you sing that to us? How can we be happy away from our beautiful home?

Still the bird sang, Cheer up! Chirrup! The sun is smiling at you and I am singing to you. We are trying to make you glad. How nice it would be if you would only blossom and make some one happy instead of hanging your heads and trying to die. Do you think I like to be shut up in here? If someone would leave the door of my cage open, I would spread my wings and fly out of the window, far away to the green woods and the blue sky. But, while I am here, I may as well sing and be glad. Cheer up! Chirrup!

Perhaps he is right, said the buds, and they lifted up their heads and began to grow. One bright spring morning Mother Nature passed by the window and gave them each a lovely violet cap. Then they were glad, and Ruth was happy, too, because her buds had blossomed.

The cheery canary sang his sweetest song to them. The whole day was bright because Mother Nature's little violet children had tried their best to be happy and so had made others happy, too. As the great red sun went down into the west, he heard the happy bird still singing, Cheer up! Chirrup!

---

---

## Task 1: Vocabulary

**Instructions:** Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

**Q: 1 WordPhrase:** Dainty **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author describes the violets; "The violets raised their strong, hardy leaves, lifted up their dainty heads..." What does the word "dainty" mean in this sentence?

- A: Large
- B: Heavy
- C: Small
- D: Long

**Question:** Which one of the sentences uses the word "dainty" correctly?

- A: Samantha had trouble reaching for the shelf because she was so dainty.
  - B: Robert kicked the ball because he was feeling dainty.
  - C: Steve said he could not have lifted the large boulder because it was dainty.
  - D: Since Ron is dainty, he was the best player on the wrestling team.
- 

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** "...the violets drooped for a time." **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author says; "...the violets drooped for a time." What does the word "drooped" mean in this sentence?

- A: Stood straight up
- B: Danced in the vase
- C: Leaned over
- D: Talked

**Question:** Which one of sentences uses the word "drooped" correctly?

- A: The flowers did not receive enough sun so they drooped over their pot.
  - B: Nick drooped his pencil.
  - C: The birthday girl was so excited that she drooped over her cake.
  - D: The dog drooped around all day because he was excited to go to the park.
- 

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** Bud **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** Ruth says, "I wish I could stay and watch the buds open" when she notices the violets. What does Ruth mean by "watch the buds open"?

- A: She wants the flowers to sing.
- B: She wants to see the flowers open up.
- C: She doesn't want the flowers to open up.
- D: She doesn't want the flowers to sing.

**Question:** Which one of the sentences uses the word "bud" correctly?

- A: The buds on the roses had started to open.
  - B: Robert decided to bud Tim in the lunch line.
  - C: Samantha didn't have enough dimes to buy the eraser so Ron gave her some of his buds.
  - D: The buds were fizzing so Samantha didn't want to drink them.
- 

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** "...Perhaps they will blossom." **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** Ruth decides to take the violets home because she hopes they will "blossom." What does the word "blossom" mean in the sentence; "but I will "take some of them with me and keep them in water, and they will remind me of this sunny hill. Perhaps they will blossom."

- A: That the violets will die
- B: That the violets will lose their leaves and petals
- C: That the violets will produce flowers
- D: That the violets will grow taller but not produce any flowers

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word "blossom" correctly?

- A: Samanthas roses began to blossom after a few weeks.
  - B: Ron was hopeful that his dog would blossom soon.
  - C: Robert wanted to try seafood so his mother made him a blossom to try.
  - D: Steve gave the blossom to his cat so his cat would not be hungry.
-

---

## Task 2: Forum Discussion

**Instructions:** This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

### 1 - What are the first images you see when reading the beginning of the text?

The author uses imagery in the beginning of the text to describe the change of seasons. Explain why this imagery helps set the tone of the story.

### 2 - Why does the bird want the violets to "Cheer up!" ?

The bird near the violets says, Do you think I like?to be shut up in here? If someone would leave the door of my cage open, I would spread?my wings and fly out of the window, far away to the green woods and the blue sky. But,?while I am here, I may as well sing and be glad. Cheer up! Chirrup! Do you think it is fair to assume that the bird does not like being in Ruth's home either?

?

### 3 - What do the use of adjectives add to the story?

The author uses many adjectives to describe the scenery and scenarios in the story. What role do these adjectives add or take away from the central theme of the story? Do you believe that this story has a central theme? Explain your answer using quotes from the text.

---

=====

Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** Please write 2-3 paragraphs about why you feel the violets were homesick and what you think helped them overcome their homesickness. Use examples from past expeirences you had where you had to overcome your own homesickness.

=====