

A Week of Finding Your Voice with Molly Lou Melon

Materials Needed:

- Book: *Speak Up, Molly Lou Melon* by Patty Lovell
 - Large sheet of paper or poster board
 - Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
 - Paper lunch bags (2)
 - Construction paper (various colors)
 - Scissors (child-safe)
 - Glue stick
 - Yarn, googly eyes, buttons, and other miscellaneous craft supplies
 - Sticky notes or small pieces of paper
 - A small box or jar for a "Kind Words Jar"
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Day 1: Monday - Meeting the Characters

Learning Objectives:

- The student will listen to a story and identify the main characters (Molly Lou Melon, Ronald Durkin). (NMELG Reading: Comprehension - K.RL.3)
- The student will answer questions to demonstrate understanding of the story's beginning. (NMELG Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration - K.SL.2)
- The student will draw a picture representing a character from the story. (NMELG Writing: Text Types & Purposes - K.W.3)

Activities:

1. **Picture Walk & Prediction:** Before reading, look at the cover and a few pages of *Speak Up, Molly Lou Melon* together. Ask, "Who do you think this story is about? What do you think might happen based on the pictures?"
2. **First Read-Aloud:** Read the book aloud with expressive voices for each character. Stop after Ronald Durkin first makes fun of Molly Lou. Ask, "How do you think Molly Lou feels right now? What do you think she will do?"
3. **Character Portrait:** Give the student a piece of paper. Say, "Let's draw the main character we've met so far, Molly Lou Melon! What does she look like? Remember what the book said about her voice being 'a whisper' at first." The student can draw Molly Lou. On the bottom, you can write a sentence they dictate, such as, "This is Molly Lou Melon."

Differentiation:

- **Support:** Provide a simple outline of a person for the student to color and decorate as Molly Lou.
 - **Challenge:** Encourage the student to add details from the book to their drawing (like her dog, her grandma) and try to write Molly Lou's name themselves.
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Day 2: Tuesday - The Power of a Voice

Learning Objectives:

- The student will retell key events from the story in sequence. (NMELG Reading: Comprehension - K.RL.2)
- The student will explore different voice volumes and tones. (NMELG Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge - K.SL.6)
- The student will participate in a conversation about using one's voice for good. (NMELG Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration - K.SL.1)

Activities:

1. **Finish the Story:** Re-read the story from the beginning, finishing it this time. Emphasize the part where Molly Lou speaks up. Celebrate her bravery!
2. **Voice Volume Game:** Create three flashcards: "Whisper," "Talking Voice," and "Loud & Proud" (like Molly Lou). Practice saying a simple phrase ("My name is...") using each voice volume. Discuss when it's appropriate to use each one (e.g., whisper in a library, talking voice with friends, loud & proud on the playground).
3. **Story Sequencing:** Draw three large boxes on a piece of paper labeled "First," "Next," and "Last." Ask the student what happened at the beginning of the story (Molly Lou was quiet), in the middle (Ronald was unkind), and at the end (Molly Lou spoke up). Have the student draw a simple picture in each box to represent that part of the story.

Differentiation:

- **Support:** Guide the sequencing activity with specific questions like, "Who did we meet first? What did Ronald do next? How did Molly Lou fix the problem at the end?"
- **Challenge:** Ask the student to act out the different parts of the story using the appropriate voice volumes as they explain their drawings.

Day 3: Wednesday - Character Puppet Craft

Learning Objectives:

- The student will create representations of story characters. (Integrating Arts & Literacy)
- The student will describe a character's feelings and actions. (NMELG Reading: Comprehension - K.RL.3)
- The student will use new vocabulary from the story (e.g., "bellowed," "teased," "speak up"). (NMELG Language: Vocabulary Acquisition - K.L.4)

Activities:

1. **Puppet Creation Station:** Take out the two paper lunch bags and craft supplies. Assign one bag to be Molly Lou and one to be Ronald Durkin. Say, "Let's make our own Molly Lou and Ronald puppets!" Guide the student to decorate them. For Molly Lou, you might use yarn for hair. For Ronald, you could draw a frowny or surprised face.
2. **Feelings Talk:** While crafting, discuss the characters. Ask, "How was Ronald feeling when he made fun of Molly Lou? (Maybe he wanted attention). How did his feelings change at the end of the book? How did Molly Lou feel when she finally used her 'loud and proud' voice?"
3. **Using Our Puppets:** Once the puppets are dry, practice making them "talk." Use the Molly Lou puppet to practice whispering and then speaking up. Use the Ronald puppet to practice the line he says, and then have him apologize.

Differentiation:

- **Support:** Pre-cut some shapes for eyes, noses, etc., to make assembly easier. Focus on the

creative expression rather than a perfect replica.

- **Challenge:** Encourage the student to create a third puppet for another character, like Molly Lou's grandmother, and think about what advice she would give.

Day 4: Thursday - Kind Words Flower

Learning Objectives:

- The student will distinguish between kind and unkind words/actions. (Social-Emotional Learning Integration)
- The student will use drawing and dictation to express an opinion. (NMELG Writing: Text Types & Purposes - K.W.1)
- The student will connect the story's theme to their own life. (NMELG Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration - K.SL.3)

Activities:

1. **What are Kind Words?:** Briefly revisit the story, focusing on how Ronald's words made Molly Lou feel. Ask, "What are some words that make people feel good?" Brainstorm a list together.
2. **Kindness Flower Craft:** Draw a large circle in the middle of your poster board for the flower's center. Cut out several petal shapes from colored construction paper. On each petal, help the student write or dictate a kind word or phrase (e.g., "You're a good friend," "Please," "Thank you," "I like your drawing").
3. **Build the Flower:** Have the student glue the "kind word" petals around the center circle. In the center, you can write "Our Kind Words." Hang this poster up as a reminder. Add to it whenever the student thinks of a new kind word or phrase.

Differentiation:

- **Support:** Write the kind words for the student to trace, or have them simply decorate the petals with happy colors after you write the dictated word.
- **Challenge:** Have the student write some of the simpler kind words ("nice," "help," "love") on their own. Ask them to think of a time they used a kind word and how it made someone feel.

Day 5: Friday - Speak Up! A Puppet Show Celebration

Learning Objectives:

- The student will use puppets to retell the story, including characters, setting, and major events. (NMELG Reading: Comprehension - K.RL.2 & K.RL.3)
- The student will speak audibly and express thoughts and feelings clearly through dramatic play. (NMELG Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge - K.SL.6)
- The student will demonstrate confidence in creative expression. (Culminating Activity)

Activities:

1. **Set the Stage:** Create a simple "stage" by draping a blanket over a couple of chairs or hiding behind the couch. Get the puppets ready.
2. **Puppet Show Practice:** With the student, run through the story one more time. You can take one puppet and they take the other, or they can try to do both. Help them remember the sequence: Ronald teases, Molly Lou is sad, she remembers her grandma's words, and she speaks up!
3. **Showtime!** It's time to perform! Invite other family members (or stuffed animals) to be the

audience. Let the student lead the show. The goal is not a perfect performance, but a joyful and confident retelling of the story. Applaud enthusiastically at the end!

Differentiation:

- **Support:** Act as the narrator to help move the story along, prompting the student with lines like, "And then, Ronald came over and said..."
 - **Challenge:** Encourage the student to create a new scene! What happens the next day at school? Does Ronald become a friend? Let them use the puppets to create their own ending.
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Weekly Assessment & Culmination

Assessment for this week is informal and observational. Success is measured by the student's engagement and ability to connect with the story's central theme. Look for:

- **Comprehension:** Was the student able to retell the basic plot of the story during the puppet show? Did they identify the main characters and their feelings?
- **Application:** Did the student participate in the "Voice Volume" game and the "Kindness Flower" activity? Can they give an example of a kind word or a time to use a "talking voice"?
- **Creativity & Confidence:** Did the student enjoy making the crafts and putting on the puppet show? Do they seem to understand the positive message about speaking up for oneself and others? The final puppet show serves as a wonderful summative assessment of the week's learning journey.