

KidLit 2025-26: April 7 - May 12

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Communication – The Communication competency encompasses the knowledge, skills, processes and dispositions we associate with interactions with others. Through their communication, students acquire, develop and transform ideas and information, and make connections with others to share their ideas, express their individuality, further their learning, and get things done. The communication competency is fundamental to finding satisfaction, purpose and joy.



Thinking – The Thinking competency encompasses the knowledge, skills and processes we associate with intellectual development. It is through their competency as thinkers that students take subject-specific concepts and content and transform them into a new understanding. Thinking competence includes specific thinking skills as well as habits of mind, and metacognitive awareness. These are used to process information from a variety of sources, including thoughts and feelings that arise from the subconscious and unconscious mind and from embodied cognition, to create new understandings.



Personal and Social – The Personal and Social competency is the set of abilities that relate to students' identity in the world, both as individuals and as members of their community and society. Personal and social competency encompasses what students need to thrive as individuals, to understand and care about themselves and others, and to find and achieve their purposes in the world.



BIG IDEAS

The exploration of **text** and **story** deepens our understanding of diverse, complex ideas about identity, others, and the world.

People understand text differently depending on their world views and perspectives.

Texts are socially, culturally, geographically, and historically constructed.

Language shapes ideas and influences others.

Questioning what we hear, read, and view contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens.

Pre-unit Preparation

(dates vary depending on spring break, Easter & SD79 special days)

- September: Confirm dates of the unit with Brentwood's English department head.
Contact kindergarten teachers to confirm participation in the unit.
- January- February: Send availability of Brentwood classes to kindergarten teachers.
Confirm dates for weekly field trips to kindergarten and book buses.
Confirm date for kindergarten to come to Brentwood as unit finale (May 12, 2026)
Kindergarten teachers to book bus for their trip here for finale.
- February-March: Confirm number of students in kindergarten classes.
Investigate considerations for match-ups and updates to any challenges.
Print out and deliver to teachers their [kindergarten student interview sheets](#).
Ensure supply of laminating sheets, card stock, pencil crayons, staples/stapler, glue sticks, scissors
- Before spring break: Brentwood students select their genre unit (March 11, 2026).
Head of Department builds classes; KidLit numbers based on kindergarten classes.
Print out Grade 10 student interview sheets.
- Afternoon Day One: Deliver completed Grade 10 student interview sheets to kindergarten teachers.
Kindergarten teachers finalize buddies prior to our first visit.

Building the Schedule

Spring 2026: April 7-May 12

14 Classes total: **April 7, 9, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 27, 30**

May 2, 4, 6, 8, 12

Kindergarten visits: once a week (6 times)

Because my English 10 class times are controlled by a 6-day rotating timetable, this step takes some time and must be done early.

Below is what I send to the kindergarten teacher. I do this unit with two English 10 and two kindergarten classes, so my pre-unit communication is with the senior kindergarten teacher. Shawna Thomas is my third organizing partner.

*Kindie teachers, please let me know which of you will be the **B Team** and which is the **C team** :)*

DATE	DAY	B BLOCK TIMES	C BLOCK TIMES
April 7	Tuesday day 5 bca	8:15-9:35	10:25-11:45 (start early 10am?)
April 9	Wednesday day 1 abc	10:25-11:45	12:10-1:00 (run late 1:10?)
April 13	Monday day 3 cab	no classes district 79	
April 15	Wednesday day 5 bca	9:30-10:35	10:55-12:00
April 17	Friday day 1 abc	10:25-11:45 (start early 10am?)	11:55-1:00 (run late 1:10?)
April 21	Tuesday day 3 cab	11:55-1:00 (run late 1:10?)	8:15-9:35
April 23	Thursday day 5 bca	8:15-9:35	10:25-11:45
April 27	Monday day 1 abc	10:25-11:45	11:55-1:00 (run late 1:10?)
April 30	Thursday day 3 cab	11:55-1:00 (run late 1:10?)	8:15-9:35
May 2	Saturday day 1 abc	11:10-11:55	12:05-12:50
May 4	Monday day 5 bca	8:15-9:35	10:25-11:45
May 6	Wednesday day 1 abc	10:55-12:00	12:10-1:00 (run late 1:10?)
May 8	Friday day 3 cab	11:55-1:00 (run late 1:10?)	8:15-9:35
May 12	Tuesday day 5 bca	8:15-9:35	10:25-11:45 (start early 10am?)

English 10 classroom days (8 times)

Classes are 80 minutes M,T,Th,F; 65 minutes W; 45 minutes St

Class	Activity
Classroom #1	Introduction discussion: Why did students pick this genre unit? What do they remember about being younger? What do they miss about being younger? What do they remember about being read to, and can they remember not being able to read (or very well)? Me to read aloud to students: Focus on listening to story while looking at pictures Notice and discuss: illustration (use of page, movement, details); plot line; characterization; amount of text; font; diction. Students read to each other in groups of 2-3 Focus on listening to story while looking at pictures Notice and discuss: illustration (use of page, movement, details); plot line; characterization; amount of text; font; diction. Students look at and read past students' books Explain any changes to book requirements (eg fewer words, simpler vocabulary, positive kind messaging) Elementary School protocol and information: a) uniform; behavior; punctuality; tips for sneaky information gathering. b) no gifts/candy for kindies please; no lifting up or carrying their buddies; no photos; no phones. c) boundaries - theirs and buddies': talk to adults if uncomfortable; no leaving main area without adult present. d) Things to know: special needs kindies (eg foster care) higher needs kindies (eg developmental delays, health issues, etc); cultural, language considerations. They fill out their <u>questionnaires</u> in class (I'll deliver today to kindie teachers after school) Videos and notes: students finish class by watching short videos and taking notes to help their understanding of writing for children. Handout and prep #1: <u>tips for writing a children's book</u> (due next class) Students each select two children's books to take away and read. Handout and prep #2 - <u>Analyzing books</u>

Classroom #2	Due today: "Tips for writing a children's book" Debrief from first kindie visit Troubleshoot any issues, email kindie teacher with questions, share compliments. Watch video as class, discussing each point: 5 mistakes to avoid when writing a children's book (9 min) (TO DO: show, don't tell; keep it simple; use age-appropriate vocabulary; have page turners; remember the illustrations) Handout and prep #2 due: Analyzing books Students share their notes on their books. Return books. Students are invited to borrow other books. Reveal their final project: the book <i>Book Requirements:</i> <i>Cover: on card stock, illustrated front and back, laminated</i> <i>First page: dedication, photograph</i> <i>Story: 75-200 words, 6-7 pages of story or 8-9 pages of story</i> <i>Staple: both ends and the middle, with pointy bit on the inside of the book</i> Templates: to print, students must select two-sides, flip on SHORT edge. Writing the draft: it's easier to write the story on a separate doc then copy & paste to format. Formatting is picky. Story and dedication template for 6-7 page book Story and dedication template for 8-9 page book Students read through past students' books again (these are always available) Handout and prep #3 assigned: My Story Idea
Classroom #3	Students share story ideas with peers and teacher Students work on My Story Idea Instructions and tips: Writing dialogue: Writing for Children with Karen Cioffi Storyboarding can be their friend - show examples (we used to do this but ran out of time in the unit as structured.) Due today at end of class: My Story Idea
Classroom #4	Teacher returns My Story Idea Introduce Cover and back cover template Students work on draft Some students choose to work directly in the template.

	- This is fine, but they need to keep an eye on page # and accidentally changing pages. Takes a bit of learning to figure it out Other students choose to work on a doc then copy and paste into their template for the formatting step (layout, font, pages) What is a Draft: 1. Text is finished and as perfect as the student can make it; font and layout of writing is what they want in the final copy. 2. Illustrations are rough and only in pencil: they show what the student will draw and almost exactly where it will be in terms of size and layout. What makes a good draft: creative and appealing use of space with text and illustrations; personal & touching dedication; dedication photo might be present; teacher has only minor editing to do and only minor suggestions to make.
Classroom #5	Students work on draft. Due by end of class today, printed. Students work on cover.
Classroom #6	Cover is due at the beginning of class for laminating. Draft: returned with editing and suggestions. Students make edits and print final text copy of book for illustrating.
Classroom #7	Students work on illustrating and colouring.
Classroom #8	Final books are due by end of class - if a student wants a copy of their book, colour photocopy it before stapling! - cover is put on book and stapled x 3 - student puts book in envelope with their and buddy's names (and block #) Self- and course-evaluations - I do this as a Google form

When and What: Kindergarten Visits

Each visit is about 40 minutes long; we find 30 is too short and 50+ too long

Exception: last visit, to Brentwood. That visit is 60 minutes.

Mill Bay Elementary is a 6 minute drive from Brentwood.

(timeline = three schools. 1st = 11 minutes; 2nd = 5 minutes)

From Shawna Thomas, kindergarten teacher partner: In past years, we "did fairy tales and linked our visits to stories and activities designed around them. In more recent years, we have connected our visits with land-based learning (gardening, large loose parts) and self-regulation strategies (being outside, moving our bodies in the gym, moving our bodies on the playground). It seems like less has been more. There is structure in place (what we're doing, how it should look), with the flexibility for all learners to be successful (choices given throughout the visit)."

Other activities that the Grade 10s have joined in on when at kindergarten: running the trails around the schools for the annual kilometer challenge; making crafts for Mother's Day/Father's Day and using clay, scissors, paint; math activities; science activities: basically, whatever the kindergarten teachers are excited to do with 1:1 support for their students.

2025 & 2026 plans

Lots of outside time. Mill Bay Elementary was formerly a nature school, so the school is designed intentionally for movement and outside free play.

Week 1 – (April 7-11)

- Kindergarten teachers have made the matches. We arrive, sign into the school, and walk to the classroom.
- Carpet time: expectations for both kindies and big buddies (respect, patience, kind words and actions) given by kindergarten teacher and me.

Activity: *Cutting out a handprint of big buddy, little buddy and writing their favourite things in-between the fingers. Groups can compare sizes of items like in the story- hands, feet, height, etc. After hand print craft, pairs can draw on white boards together or enjoy a quiet activity*

Location: *Classroom*

Materials: *scrapbook paper, scissors, pencils, felts, whiteboards*

Week 2 – (April 13-18)

Activity: *(Outdoors) Students will have a variety to explore such as playground, tunnels, log-climber, forest, Mt. Avery and swings. We will have sidewalk chalk out too for those interested.*

Location: *Stage & Primary Playground*

Materials: *variety of items, sidewalk chalk*

Week 3 – (April 20-25)

Activity: *(Garden) Students will plant a seed for the little buddy. We'll continue to grow them in our classrooms. After planting, pairs can continue to work in the garden, play on the intermediate playground or draw with sidewalk chalk.*

Location: *Garden & Intermediate Playground*

Materials: *pots, dirt, seeds, garden tools, sidewalk chalk*

Week 4 – (April 27-May 2)

Activity: *(Gym) Students can enjoy our gym space with a variety of items for the groups to share.*

Final day for Ms H to take photo of you with buddy

Week 5 – (May 4-May 9)

Activity: *(Outdoors) Students can enjoy large loose parts to create different structures (work in progress) or continue to enjoy the outdoor areas such as playground, swings, log-climber, Mt. Avery, forest, tunnels. Bubbles and sidewalk chalk will be available.*

Week 6 – (May 12) May 12 both classes

Activity: *Kindies come to Brentwood! Both kindergarten classes come to the Foote Centre for a scavenger hunt then return to play with balls, colouring books and bubbles. Cookies, fruit, juice and water as a snack. Buddies both receive their special surprise books towards the end of the field trip, and they sit and read together before one last run around. Last time together.*

Old Plan

from past kindergarten teachers: "We thought we'd pair our days with a fairytale. We'll read the story to our class before you arrive and the activity will connect to the story. It'll be interesting to see if your students know the fairytales as we do, or if the details differ in different parts of the world. "

Week 1 – (April 7-11)

Story: Goldilocks & the Three Bears

Activity: (Classroom) Cutting out a handprint of big buddy, little buddy and writing their favourite things in-between the fingers. Groups can compare sizes of items like in the story- hands, feet, height, etc. After hand print craft, pairs can draw on white boards together.

Week 2 – (April 13-18)

Story: Hansel & Gretel

Activity: (Playground) Students will have a variety of items to create an obstacle course for their buddy like the trail Hansel and Gretel leave. After the obstacle course, pairs can play on the primary playground or draw with sidewalk chalk.

Week 3 – (April 20-25)

Story: Jack & Beanstalk

Activity: (Garden) Students will plant a seed for the little buddy. We'll continue to grow them in our classrooms. After planting, pairs can play on the intermediate playground or draw with sidewalk chalk.

Week 4 – (April 27-May 2)

Story: Three Billy Goats Gruff

Activity: (Classroom) Students will be faced with the challenge of getting across the bridge. Afterwards, they can branch out and play with our choices/centres toys.

Week 5 – (May 4-May 9)

Story: Three Little Pigs

Activity: (Classroom) Students will be faced with the challenge of huffing and puffing (moving air) to propel or fly objects. (This activity connects with our Force & Motion Unit. We build kites or mazes.)

Week 6 – (May 12) May 12 both classes

Activity: Kindies come to Brentwood! Both kindergarten classes come to the gym for a scavenger hunt then return to play with balls, colouring books and bubbles. Cookies, fruit, juice and water as a snack. Buddies both receive their special surprise books towards the end of the field trip, and they sit and read together before one last run around. Last time together.

From Shawna Thomas (October 2025), kindergarten teacher

You have a few outlines from various years to share with your audience. One year, we did fairy tales and linked our visits to stories and activities designed around them. In more recent years, we have connected our visits with land-based learning (gardening, large loose parts) and self-regulation strategies (being outside, moving our bodies in the gym, moving our bodies on the playground). It seems like less has been more. There is structure in place (what we're doing, how it should look), with the flexibility for all learners to be successful (choices given throughout the visit).

I've attached 2 files. The first is a 'Picture in Your Pocket'. Before our first visit, we draw a picture for our big buddies. I am matchmaking during this time. I have already read over your students' responses and highlighted common threads between the pairs. I read out a little bit about each big buddy that I know the little buddy will love. I also share big buddy fears. My students are always surprised that the big kids are scared of them or dogs..., lol. This creates empathy for their big buddy.

The second file is our 'Brentwood Buddy Book'. It is simple but age-appropriate. Students reflect on each buddy visit and complete one of the pages. Our students are very proud to have authored their own book for their big buddy. This gives our writing (printing and drawing) meaning and purpose. We are writing for a specific audience (big buddies) in a polished format.

When our students receive their books from their big buddies, it is magical. The big buddies capture the essence of their little buddy. Our students feel important, valued and respected.

Over the years, the big buddies seem to enjoy this time to pause life and remember the simplicity of being 5 again. It is truly a wonderful relationship between the two schools, fostering a sense of community.

I also have my blog that you can share titled *The Wiggly Tooth*. Under 'posts by themes', you will see 'Brentwood Buddies'. When you click it, the last 2 years of posts will come up. So this year and Mill Bay, and the last year at Bonner.

<https://thewigglytooth.wordpress.com/>

A Picture in your Pocket

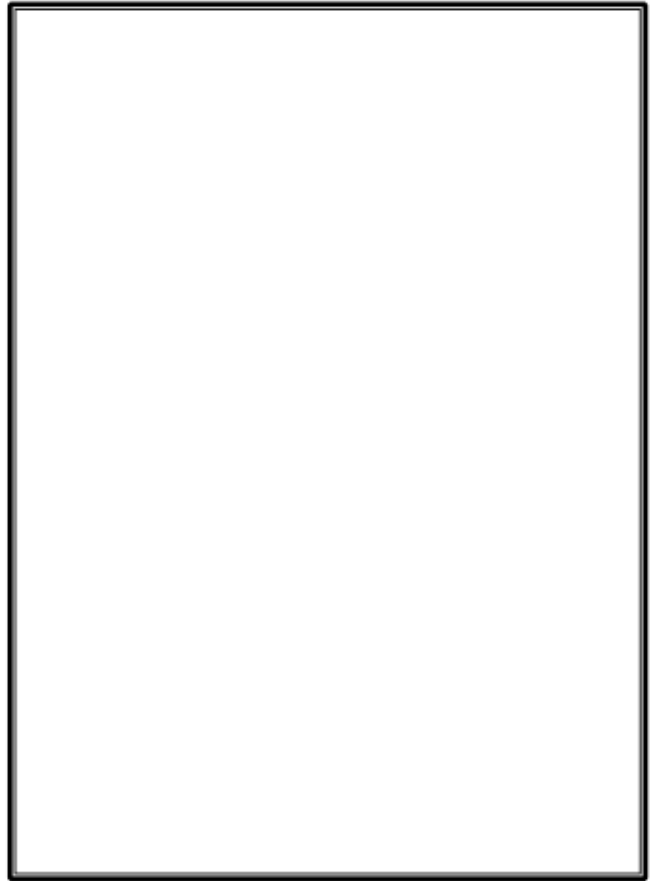
To _____

From _____

My Buddy Book

To: _____

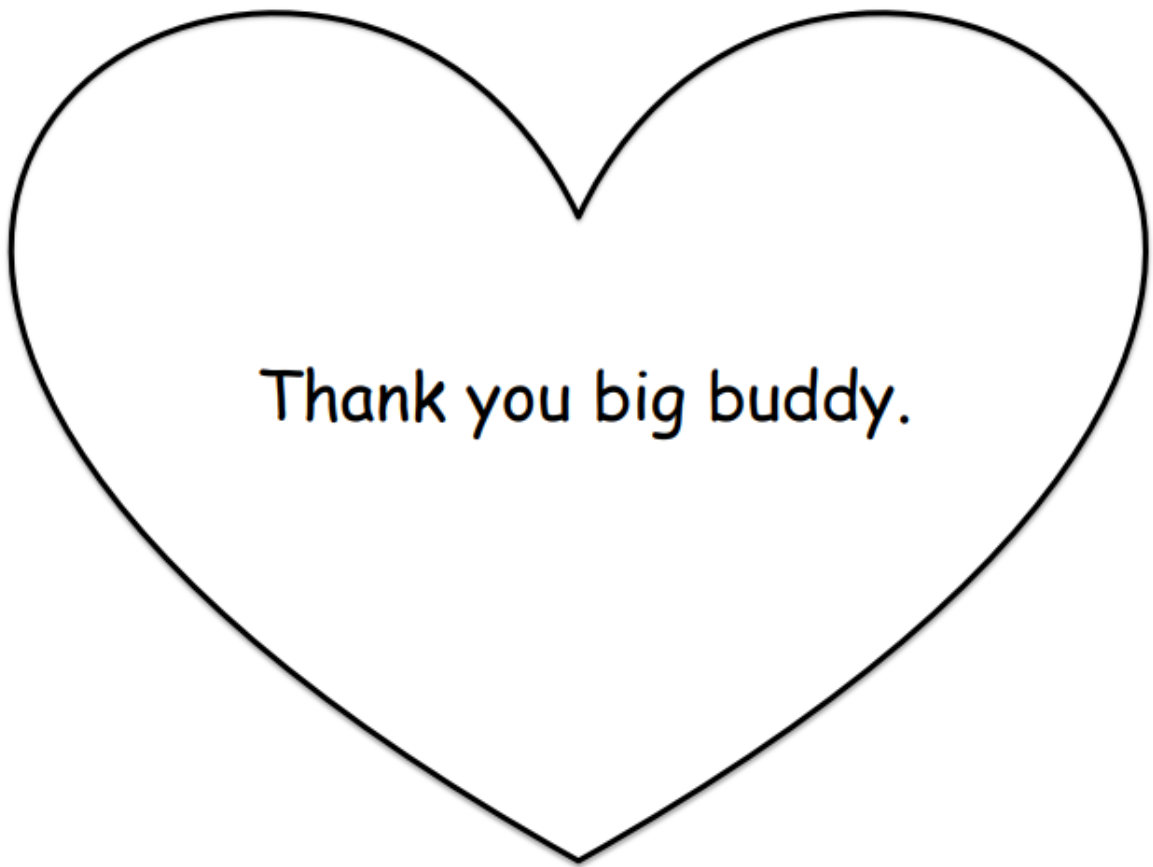
From: _____



This is my buddy's hand. This is my hand.

I like to _____ with my big buddy.

This is my big buddy and I _____.



Thank you big buddy.