

Growing Minds in Language Arts #2

Lessons for Stimulating Thinking

Author: R.E. Myers
Editor: Jonathan Gross
Illustrator: Bron Smith
Book Design: Jeff Richards

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Teacher's Guide For "Locks"

ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

As the title indicates, this activity is about the word *lock*. It's a useful word, and it has been used in various ways. "The two sides are locked in a battle," "They locked it up and threw away the key," and "It's a lock (certainty)" are just three of the ways that the word is used. The point made in the introduction is that locks keep things in and also keep things out; so a lock means one thing to a prison inmate and another to a burglar.

Level 1: Giving examples of using the word lock

Your students are asked to give examples of four uses for the word *lock*.

Level 2: Deciding what can and can't be locked

At the second level, your students are to decide which of fifteen items can be "locked" and which can't. The important part of their responses is the explanation they give for their decisions.

Level 3: Considering imaginary locks

The last part of the activity presents the idea of imaginary locks. These can be of many types. One type is when a candidate "locks up" an election. A person can be "locked out" of a conversation. "Locked in mortal combat" is an old expression that still has some currency. Interest rates are said to be "locked in" at a certain figure when you are purchasing a house.

At a deeper level, there can be imaginary locks on our hearts, minds, souls, and consciences. Students might see locks as a metaphor in this way.

Targeted Learner Outcomes: The student will:

- explore the concept of "lock"
- explain whether or not 15 things can be locked
- grasp the idea of an imaginary lock

Locks

A. Locks have become more prominent in our society, where burglary has increased alarmingly in recent years. We sometimes see advertisements for locks that can't be opened by sledgehammers or bullets. If these locks are effective, we may be safer—our possessions and our persons—because we use them. Locks can keep people out, but what living organisms aren't deterred by locks?

Locks have a number of purposes in addition to protecting ourselves and our valuables. A lock can keep someone or something *in*, for instance. What are the differences in these expressions? Give an example of each.

1. Locked up _____

2. Locked out _____

3. Locked in _____

4. Locked away _____



B. Which of these can be “locked” and which can’t? Explain why or why not.

1. air _____

2. water _____

3. sand _____

4. carbon dioxide _____

5. sound _____

6. wealth _____

7. nutrition _____

8. goodness _____

9. freedom _____

10. flavor _____

11. light _____

12. courage _____

13. interest rates _____

14. prejudice _____

15. radiation _____

C. Are there imaginary locks that are actually real? What are they?

