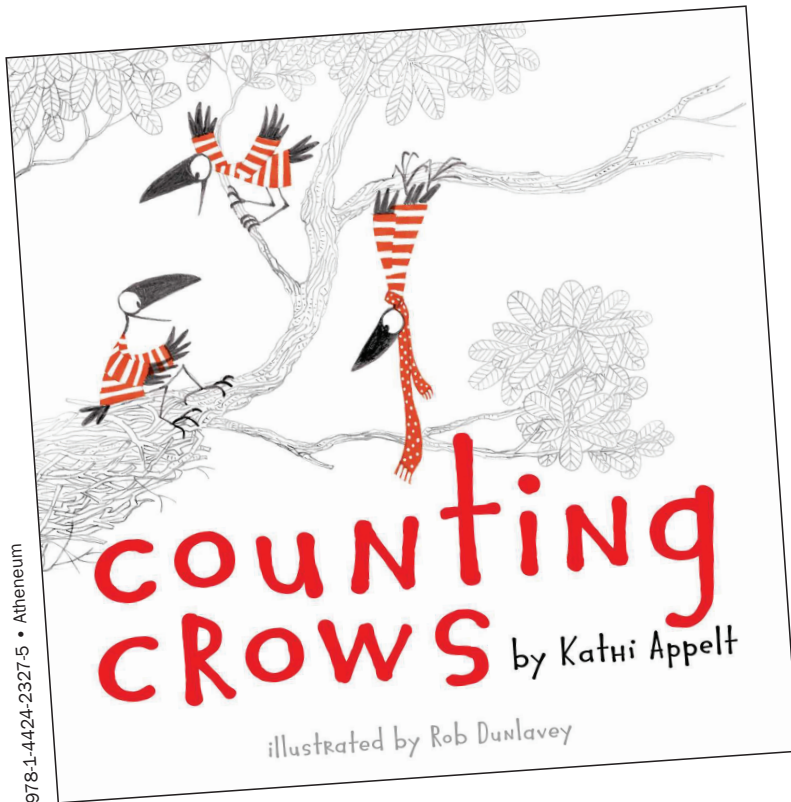


Curriculum Guide



Counting Crows

By Kathi Appelt
Illustrated by Rob Dunlavey

One, two, three
crows in a tree.

THESE CROWS ARE HUNGRY and their numbers grow as they count themselves and the tasty snacks they devour. Twelve

counting crows enjoy twelve chewy chips and twelve slimy snails, until one cat counts twelve crows' tails! Off they fly, counting as they go, far away from that pesky cat.

Children in grades K–2 will love counting these jaunty crows in their eye-catching red-and-white striped sweaters. Newbery Honor Book author and two-time National Book Award finalist Kathi Appelt knows a thing or two about hungry crows and brings these snacking bandits to life with her pitch-perfect rhyme and kid-pleasing phrasing.

★ “Writing a fresh counting rhyme calls for the poet to hear the numbers in a new way, and that’s just what Appelt has done. She tweaks sequences, varies rhythms, and punctuates her lines with piquant sound words.” —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ “Children can caw and cack, cackle and grack, along with the crows, following the rhyming text throughout. . . . Something to crow about!” —*Booklist*, starred review

★ “This is a real counting fest, as not only the crows, but the food they collect—berries, bugs and snacks—are fodder for the counting game and for improving reading skills at the same time.” —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review



kathiappelt.com

Common Core State Standards addressed by the activities in this guide are noted throughout. For more information on the Common Core, visit corestandards.org.

Discussion Questions



- ▶ What is the setting of the story? What information can you gather about the setting from the illustrations? What information can you gather about the setting from the text? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3**
- ▶ The crows are busy filling their bellies with all sorts of treats, but soon another character comes into the story. What is the problem in the story? How do the crows deal with this problem? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3**
- ▶ Author Kathi Appelt uses some pretend words to tell the tale of the hungry crows. Hunt through the text and locate the pretend words the author has invented. Why do you think she used these made-up words in telling the story?
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4
- ▶ What words would you choose to describe the crows' reaction when the cat appears? How do the illustrations help the reader understand how the crows are feeling?
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3
- ▶ Look at the last illustration in the book. Based on the clues given in the artwork, describe how the cat might be feeling.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3



Activities

- ▶ Imagine that a thirteenth crow joined the group of crows featured in *Counting Crows*, just after “twelve on a park bench, wing by wing.” What would this thirteenth crow feast on with his pals? Follow the pattern of the text to create a page for the thirteen crows. Your page should have four lines of text with the second and fourth lines ending in rhyming words.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.10; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.10; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.6
- ▶ Design a menu for the hungry counting crows. Use items described in the text on your menu. Add a few ideas of your own! Think of the name of the restaurant connected to your menu. Divide items into appetizers, entrees, sides, and desserts. Include prices for your crow-friendly food.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1
- ▶ Recite the text of *Counting Crows* as a choral poem. Divide the text into different speaking parts. Decide which parts of the text will be recited chorally and which sections of the text will be recited individually.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.10; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.10; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.6
- ▶ List the number words used in *Counting Crows*. Keep a tally of how many times each number word is used in the story. Write two true math statements about your data. Examples to ponder: Which number word was used the most? What is the difference between how many times the word “twelve” was used and how many times the word “five” was used?
CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.MD.B.3; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.MD.C.4
- ▶ Go on a rhyme hunt through the text. List pairs of words that rhyme in the story. Can you think of more words that also rhyme with the pairs that you found? Add these word-family rhymes to your list, too!
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.2.A



The discussion questions and activities in this guide were created by Leigh Courtney, Ph.D. She teaches in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both masters' and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

Name: _____

HOW MANY LEGS ARE WALKING THROUGH COUNTING CROWS?

Find the page in the story featuring ten crows and ten crunchy crickets. How many crow legs are there altogether on this page? How many cricket legs are there altogether? Use cubes and pictures to show your solution in the box below. On the lines below, use number sentences and words to show your solution. At the bottom of the page, use your solutions to fill in the blanks in the sentence.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.OA.A.2; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.OA.A.1; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.2.OA.A.1

CUBES AND PICTURES

Crow legs

Cricket legs

NUMBER SENTENCES AND WORDS

Crow legs

Cricket legs

There are _____ crow legs on the page and _____ cricket legs.



TASTY NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES

Name: _____

These counting crows are very hungry! Look through the book and identify the things (nouns) that the crows eat. Notice how each noun is made even more appealing with the addition of a describing word (adjective) before it. In the chart below, list the adjectives and nouns that are used to describe the crows' feast in *Counting Crows*. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.K.1.B; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.1.1.F**



ADJECTIVE	NOUN
Example: Roly-poly	bugs

A GALLERY of FEELINGS

Name: _____

An author's words can tell the reader how a character is feeling in a story. Illustrations can also give clues about characters' emotions. Create a gallery of illustrations that show how the characters might feel in different situations in *Counting Crows*. Read each situation below, select a good word to describe how the character/s might feel, and design an illustration of the character/s showing that feeling.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3



Nine crows are on a telephone line.
One crow falls off the line.

Word to describe the fallen crow's feelings:



One cat counts twelve crows' tails.
Word to describe how the cat is feeling:



Six crows make a nest of straw and sticks.

Word to describe the crows' feelings:



One crow is eating spicy ants.

Word to describe the crows' feelings:
