

TOGETHER. APART. REGRET. NEW START?

A lesson to accompany SOMETIMES A WALL...

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A lesson in three movements to accompany SOMETIMES A WALL...

There are many different kinds of walls.

Some are fun! A chalk wall. A rock wall. The wall kids build when playing with blocks. The walls that rise when making a fort with pillows and blankets.

Other times, the fort-building that started out as a fun activity turns a corner, and someone gets excluded.

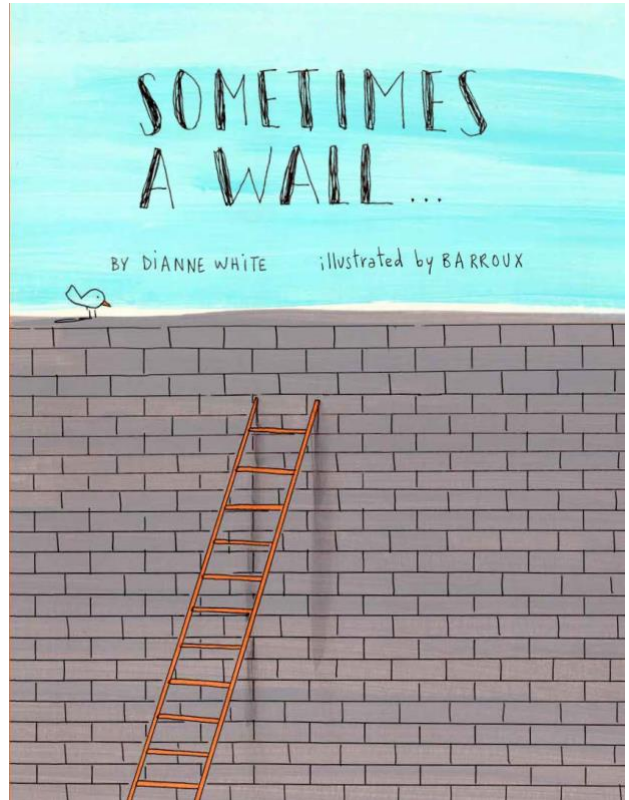
Leaving someone “out” and others “in” can look a million different ways. It doesn’t matter how young or old you are, we each have examples from our lives. Figuring out how to make amends when things go wrong is part of growing up and learning how to get along.

How will kids respond to the walls – both physical and metaphorical – they experience and the “different sides and points of view” they will encounter at school, home, and the world beyond? It’s my hope that *SOMETIMES A WALL...* and the lessons that follow might support this journey of discovery.

An Overview:

One mini-unit. Three picture books. Three lessons inviting students into conversations about empathy, friendship, and the path from conflict to resolution.

- **1st Movement:** *Together (I WALK WITH VANESSA* by Kerascoët)
- **2nd Movement:** *Apart (DRAW THE LINE* by Kathryn Otoshi)
- **3rd Movement:** *Regret. New start? (SOMETIMES A WALL..* by Dianne White, illustrated by Barroux)



by Dianne White, illustrated by Barroux.

SOMETIMES A WALL...

by Dianne White, illustrated by Barroux
Owlkids Books | ISBN 9781771473736
www.dianneWrites.com

What's different about reading wordless (or nearly wordless) picture books?

Unlike typical picture book read-alouds, including wordless or nearly wordless books in storytimes depends heavily on the ability to read and interpret illustrations. There's a give and take that happens. With few or no words for guidance, students must create meaning through careful observation, collaborative conversation, and thoughtful questioning.

In her book, [READING PICTURE BOOKS WITH CHILDREN](#), Megan Dowd Lambert suggests reading *with*, rather than *to* children. Her Whole Book Approach, inspired by [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) (VTS) employs a kind of “co-constructive storytime,” in which the adult reader guides a back-and-forth conversation with kids using the following open-ended questions as a starting point:

1. What's going on in this picture?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more can we find?

The lessons that follow aren't meant to be an *exact* implementation of Visual Thinking Strategies or the Whole Book Approach, but a starting place. (You can learn more about the Whole Book Approach [HERE](#).)



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

(<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>)

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade level topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, gaining the floor in respectful ways, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.
- Ask questions to clear up any confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.
- Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

- Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.
- Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Craft and Structure:

- Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.
- Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

READING

Literature

- Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.