



# TAKING A STAND

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**TEXT TYPE:** Info-fiction: Narrative—Historical Short Story

**GUIDED READING LEVEL:** U/V

**SUMMARY:** Taking a Stand tells the story of an influential Canadian historical figure, Nellie McClung, who fought vigorously to obtain more rights for women. Nellie McClung was passionate about securing the right to vote for all women. Through her hard work and determination, McClung helped to provide Canadian women with voting rights in 1916. In 1929, as part of the ‘famous five,’ Nellie also fought the legal battle to have women declared persons. Taking a Stand is a story of courage, determination, and having a voice.

## TEXT FEATURES

- dialogue
- historical note
- time transition passages in italics

## VISUAL LITERACY

- pictures
- captions

## TEXT SUPPORTS

- pictures provide historical information related to clothes, homes, lifestyle
- historical note
- variations in font signal time transitions

## POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- lack of background knowledge related to this time period
- challenging vocabulary (for both word recognition and meaning, e.g., ‘concocted,’ ‘suffrage,’ ‘Disqualifications,’ ‘matron,’ ‘audible’)
- some complex sentence structures
- time transitions within story text

## FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- making connections: text to self, text to text, text to world

## FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- inferring
- evaluating

## ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- Say Something strategy
- discussing with a partner
- sharing ideas
- Reader’s Theatre activity (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

## WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: using meaning connections to solve unfamiliar words
- word solving and building: using knowledge of prefixes and suffixes to word solve

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- use background knowledge to make connections
- link text ideas to personal experiences, other texts, and knowledge about the world
- use meaning connections to solve unfamiliar words and construct meaning
- understand signals for time transition within a narrative

## ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Making Connections Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

## BEFORE READING

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### Making Connections: Text to Self and Inferring

#### Activate and build prior knowledge

- Together, read aloud the historical note located on the back cover. Compare the information found in the historical note to the title of the story. Ask, *Are you familiar with the expression ‘taking a stand’? What does this expression mean? Why do you think the author has used this title to tell the story of Nellie McClung? Can you describe a time in your life when you felt it was necessary to ‘take a stand’?* You may wish to use a Think-Pair-Share oral language activity to facilitate this conversation (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*).
- Direct students to preview the text, focusing on the pictures with captions. Encourage students to make connections by activating prior knowledge related to this period in Canadian history. Ask, *Do you know something about this time period which may help you to understand the story?*

### Word Solving and Building

#### Introduce supports and challenges

- Direct students to the historical note again. Locate the word ‘Disqualifications.’ Discuss how readers can solve unfamiliar words by focusing on meaning connections. Ask, *What smaller word do you recognize within this word? How can you use your understanding of ‘qualify’ to help you construct the meaning of the word ‘Disqualifications’? How does the prefix –Dis impact the meaning of this word?* Repeat this process for words like ‘securing’ (also found in the introduction). Record these words on a chart. Model how to colour code the words by using one colour for the root word, and different colours for the prefixes and suffixes. Colour coding the words will encourage students to focus on structure and meaning cues.

**ESL NOTE:** In order to have students increase their vocabulary, have them post sticky notes next to unfamiliar words and look them up in the dictionary. Discuss their meanings with students. They can choose a few of these words to put in their Vocabulary Notebook. In the notebook, make 4 columns: word, definition, example sentence, visual connection (to help remember the word).

### Making Connections: Text to Self, Text to Text, and Text to World

- Discuss the importance of using the strategy of making connections while reading. When you explain making connections it is sometimes a good idea to use student-friendly language. You may use the term ‘making connections’ or you may decide to call it ‘making a link.’

### Text Features and Evaluating

- Explain that there will be time transitions in this story. Direct students to page 5 of the text. Point out the variations in text font used by the author. Explain that these variations in text font (from regular font to italics) signal a change in time. Read the first sentence on page 5, and point out that the content of the text itself is a signal of a time shift.

**Making Connections: Text to Self, Text to Text, and Text to World**

- Say, *The story we are reading is ‘info-fiction.’ What does that mean? How can you tell the difference between the parts of the story that are fiction and those that are informational?* Allow students to share their ideas.

**Set a purpose for reading**

- Introduce the double entry organizer seen below. Direct students to use this organizer as a recording tool while reading. Encourage students to link ideas looked at in the story to other issues of human rights worldwide. Not all connections need be made to the world around them however; they can be made on a more personal front as well. The goal is to get students involved with what they are reading.

Important Facts from the Text	My Connections
- The politician told Nellie to keep silent.	- On the news I saw that a lady from Myanmar was fighting for human rights.

**Provide for early finishers**

- Invite early finishers to reread their connections listed on the double entry organizer. Ask students to code their connections using the following coding system: TS (Text to Self), TT (Text to Text), and TW (Text to World).

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**DURING READING**

**Monitor reading**

- Have each student read a portion of the text aloud to you. Assist with word solving, vocabulary, and comprehension of text. Always provide a comprehension prompt that highlights the focus strategy (making connections), e.g., *Does this remind you of any other texts I have read to you? Have you ever felt the way Nellie did? What does this story make you think about?*

**Observe**

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Making Connections Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*.)

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**AFTER READING**

**Revisit the purpose for reading**

- Direct each student to select one fact and accompanying connection from their double entry organizer. Provide an opportunity for students to share these selections. A Say Something activity provides an effective structure for facilitating this discussion (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*).

**Making Connections: Text to Self, Text to Text, and Text to World**

### **Check on outstanding challenges**

- Your observations will help you work out other challenges students experienced. Discuss and clarify at this point. Did students have difficulty understanding the time transitions in the story? Did students have difficulties with some of the vocabulary (e.g., ‘pokey,’ ‘urns,’ ‘suffrage,’ ‘churn,’ ‘senators’)? Support students in their attempts to find the meaning of these words, selecting from a range of appropriate strategies.

### **Note successful strategy use**

- Explain a successful reading strategy you observed, e.g., *When Nathaniel was reading, I noticed how he was connecting his own personal experiences to the text. When he read about Nellie’s chores on the farm, he was able to describe a personal connection related to a field trip to the Pioneer Village. During this field trip, Nathaniel tried some of the chores described in the text.*

## **FOCUSED REREADING**

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Three options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or you might select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 5 Literacy Support Guide*.

### **Written**

- Invite each student to select one of the characters, and write a persuasive letter to express his or her point of view regarding equality for women. For example, a student might decide to write a persuasive letter, written in the voice of Nellie McClung, to the Premier of Manitoba. In this letter, Nellie will try to persuade the Premier to support voting rights for women. Students should use vivid and expressive language to make their argument interesting.

### **Artistic**

- Invite students to create an illustration of a commemorative stamp celebrating the life of Nellie McClung. Provide an opportunity for students to share these visual representations with the rest of the class. Have students use electronic and print resources to conduct further research on McClung’s life and accomplishments.

### **Oral/dramatic**

- As a Reader’s Theatre activity, invite paired or small groups of students to select one scene from the story and share it with the rest of the class. Remind participants to read with expression and fluency. Afterwards, ask students to identify the point of view of the characters, and to think about what other voices should be heard. For example, students may choose to perform the argument between Nellie and the Premier, on page 7. You might ask, *What would the women that Nellie is fighting for say were they to face the Premier?*

**Evaluating and  
Synthesizing**

**Analyzing and Inferring**

**Making Connections: Text  
to World and Inferring**