

3–7 Grade ELA Lesson Plan

The League of Littles by Casey Lyall

Grade Levels

3–7

Time

45–60 minutes

Common Core State Standards (CCSS ELA)

- **RL.3–7.1:** Ask and answer questions using evidence from the text.
 - **RL.3–7.2:** Determine the theme or central message.
 - **RL.3–7.3:** Describe how characters respond to challenges and how they change.
 - **RL.3–7.6:** Explain how different characters' points of view influence events.
 - **RL.3–7.7:** Analyze how illustrations contribute to the story's meaning and mood.
 - **W.3–7.3:** Write narratives using descriptive details and clear event sequences.
 - **SL.3–7.1:** Participate effectively in collaborative discussions.
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Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Analyze how Lexi, Mo, and Eli work together to solve problems.
 - Identify themes of teamwork, responsibility, perseverance, and friendship.
 - Use text and illustrations as evidence to support their thinking.
 - Explore how mysteries are developed and solved in a graphic novel.
 - Write a creative narrative featuring an original secret mission.
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Essential Questions

- Why is teamwork important when solving problems?
 - What qualities make a good leader?
 - How can different strengths help a team succeed?
 - How do graphic novel illustrations provide clues to the story?
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Materials

- *The League of Littles* by Casey Lyall
 - Mystery Investigation Graphic Organizer
 - Sticky Notes
 - Chart Paper
 - Writing Journals or Notebook Paper
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Vocabulary

- Mission
 - Clue
 - Investigation
 - Evidence
 - Teamwork
 - Responsibility
 - Inference
 - Dialogue
 - Graphic Novel
 - Perspective
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Before Reading (10 minutes)

Activate Prior Knowledge

Ask students:

- Have you ever worked with a team to solve a problem?
- What makes a good detective?
- What special talents would you bring to a secret organization?
- Why is it important to help others?

Students complete a **Think-Pair-Share**, followed by a whole-class discussion.

During Reading (25 minutes)

Mystery Investigation Tracker

Students gather evidence as they read.

Mystery	Clues	Teamwork in Action	Solution
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Encourage students to notice:

- Facial expressions
 - Body language
 - Dialogue
 - Visual clues in the artwork
 - Character teamwork
 - Humor
 - Problem-solving strategies
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Class Discussion

Discuss:

1. What problem are the League members trying to solve?
 2. How does each teammate contribute to the mission?
 3. Which clues help solve the mystery?
 4. How do the illustrations provide information that the words do not?
 5. What lesson do the characters learn about working together?
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Mini-Lesson

Solving Mysteries in Graphic Novels

Explain that mystery readers look for:

- Clues
- Evidence
- Motives
- Predictions
- Red herrings (false clues)
- Character actions

Graphic novels add another layer by using:

- Facial expressions
- Panel sequence
- Background details
- Body language
- Visual humor

Ask students to identify one illustration that gives an important clue before the characters discover it.

Collaborative Activity (10–15 minutes)

Secret Agent Challenge

Place students in small teams.

Give each team a simple classroom mystery, such as:

- A missing classroom supply
- A lost library book
- A mystery note
- A missing snack

Teams create an investigation plan:

- What happened?
- What clues will you look for?
- Who might know something?
- How will your team work together?

Groups present their plans to the class.

Writing Activity (20–25 minutes)

Writing Prompt

Imagine you are the newest recruit in a secret organization that helps kids solve problems. Your first mission is to recover something important before time runs out. Describe the mystery, the clues you uncover, how your teammates help, and how you solve the case. Explain what you learn about teamwork, responsibility, and helping others. Include descriptive details, dialogue, and a satisfying ending.

Extension Activities

Grades 3–4

Design Your Secret Agent

Create a character profile for your own League of Littles member.

Include:

- Name

- Code name
 - Special skills
 - Favorite gadget
 - Mission badge
 - Illustration
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Grades 5–7

Write a New Mission

Write the next chapter in which the League must solve a brand-new mystery.

Include:

- New characters
 - Clues
 - Obstacles
 - Teamwork
 - Resolution
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Graphic Novel Activity

Create a six-panel comic showing:

- Mission briefing
- Discovery of the problem
- Collecting clues
- Teamwork
- Solving the mystery
- Celebration

Use captions, speech bubbles, and sound effects.

Assessment

Formative

- Class discussion
- Mystery Investigation Organizer
- Group collaboration
- Reading observations

Summative Writing Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Ideas	Creative and detailed	Clear	Developing	Limited
Organization	Well organized	Mostly organized	Some organization	Difficult to follow
Text Evidence	Strong support	Some support	Minimal support	No evidence
Conventions	Few errors	Some errors	Frequent errors	Many errors

Exit Ticket

Students answer one question:

- Which teammate would you most like to work with? Why?
 - What clue was most important in solving the mystery?
 - How did teamwork help solve the problem?
 - What makes someone a good detective?
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Differentiation

Support

- Sentence starters
- Graphic organizers
- Partner reading
- Teacher-guided discussion
- Visual vocabulary cards

Extension

- Compare *The League of Little's* with another mystery or graphic novel.
 - Rewrite a scene from Chester the hamster's point of view.
 - Design a new League mission complete with maps, gadgets, and secret codes.
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Cross-Curricular Connections

STEM: Introduce the scientific method and compare it to solving a mystery by making observations, collecting evidence, and drawing conclusions.

Art: Design a secret headquarters or create a comic strip featuring an original League adventure.

SEL: Discuss how trust, communication, and cooperation help groups solve problems more effectively.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Connection

Students reflect on:

- Teamwork
 - Responsibility
 - Leadership
 - Problem-solving
 - Empathy
 - Helping others
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Big Idea

The League of Littles shows that everyone has unique strengths to contribute. By working together, thinking creatively, and helping others, even the smallest heroes can solve big problems and make a meaningful difference.

Do you like this personality?

