

## A TEACHER REFLECTS

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In Phase Two, I noticed some of my students were really beginning to see in their mind's eye the different lands that Gulliver visited. Other students were simply going through the mathematical motions by calculating the various measurements of the required objects. I really stressed size comparisons in Lesson 8 to help all of my students feel more connected to the story.

Before beginning the lesson, I collected a variety of smaller three-dimensional objects: buttons, a coffee cup, juice boxes, soda cans, an eraser, small toys, a shoe box. I then had students work in groups to find at least one Lilliputian object that was the same size as each Ourland object. I encouraged my students to think in 3-D and remember all the dimensions. I asked students who needed an extra challenge to come up with Lilliputian objects that would have the same volume, but not necessarily the same shape, as the Ourland objects.

My students wrote their estimates on separate pieces of paper and placed the appropriate Lilliputian object next to the Ourland object of the same size. It was interesting to see the variety of Lilliputian objects that students thought were the same size as a juice box. Estimates ranged from a Lilliputian desk to a Lilliputian car to a Lilliputian house. I then passed out one object to each group and had them check the work of their fellow students by measuring the Ourland object

and calculating the Lilliput to Ourland scale factor. Each group shared their findings by adding the correct items to a class chart.

As students developed an appreciation of the role comparisons can play in providing a good picture of people and things in Lilliput, they began incorporating comparisons into their own writing. This was especially helpful to some of my resource students. For example, I encouraged Peter to imagine the scene of his story in Lilliput and find Ourland objects that were about the same size as the objects in his story. The ability to build a small world of objects that can be manipulated helped him write a more accurate story.

Some of my students were so intrigued by their miniature worlds that they wanted to read more about people and places of different sizes. I went to our school librarian and she recommended the following books for independent reading: *Ralph S. Mouse*, by Beverly Cleary, *Stuart Little*, by E.B. White, *Ben and Me*, by R. Lawson, *Danny Dunn and the Smallifying Machine*, by J. Williams (additional books are listed in Curriculum Links on page 8 of this unit).

I found that taking the time to help my students truly see and touch their Lilliputian scene paid off in the final project. It made the difference between stories that were lists of measurements and stories that described a new and very different world.