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A Guide to Teaching Writing in Kindergarten

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A GUIDE TO TEACHING WRITING IN KINDERGARTEN

Thesis

A Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

Master Teacher

by

Pamela Lynn Wangsness

July 2009

ABSTRACT

A GUIDE TO TEACHING WRITING IN KINDERGARTEN

by

Pamela Lynn Wangsness

July 2009

Research was conducted on the topic of writing in kindergarten. Many different forms of teaching writing were researched and summarized in the literature review of this project. Curriculum that is designed for kindergarten is mostly written for full day kindergarten, not taking into account the time constraints of half-day kindergarten. The results of the research were combined in the form of lesson plans that a half-day kindergarten teacher could use to begin teaching writing.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Due to limitations of kindergarten writing curriculum it can be difficult for teachers to meet the Washington State standards. Most writing curriculums for kindergarten are written with a full-day program in mind. Teachers who teach in a half-day program have limited resources that were created with their half-day program in mind. The goal of this project is to give half-day kindergarten teachers a tool that helps them to teach young students how to write within the time frame of their program.

There is a significant difference between the six hours of instruction time in a full-day kindergarten class and the two and a half hours of instruction time in a half-day kindergarten class. During the instructional time in both a half-day and a full-day kindergarten programs there are multiple subjects that need to be taught daily and for a specific amount of time. Guidelines on how much instructional time is spent on a particular subject are set out by individual school districts.

Writing time is not listed separately, but rather it is included in the reading/language arts block of time. In total there are 255 minutes of instructional time accounted for in the table below for kindergarten. The Virginia school district, on which this table is based, had full day kindergarten for every child in the 2007-2008 school year, according to the school district's web site ("Students gain", 2006). There is a significant difference from the 150 minutes in a half-day kindergarten program and the 255 minutes in a full-day kindergarten program. The following table shows the required minutes spent on each major subject area in the Prince William County Public Schools in the state of Virginia.

	Reading/Language Arts	Mathematics	Science and Social Studies
Kindergarten	140 minutes	70 minutes	45 minutes
Grades 1 and 2	120 minutes	90 minutes	45 minutes
Grades 3, 4, 5	90 minutes	75 minutes	90 minutes (45 minutes each)

(Daily Core, 2008)

According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, kindergarten students receive only 45 minutes of reading/English language arts instruction per day in their half-day kindergarten class. This block of time also includes writing instruction time (“Minimum allocated”, 2008). There is great inequality of instructional time for writing between a full-day and a half-day kindergarten.

Kindergarten teachers are not only expected to teach students how to read and write, but there are standards in all subject areas that teachers must address. Writing is especially difficult to effectively include because there is little research on how to include writing, especially in half-day kindergarten. With curriculum being mainly written for full-day programs and not half-day kindergarten, it is difficult to teach writing with existing time constraints.

Some students come into kindergarten knowing how to write their name and identify some basic sight words, while others have never picked up a pencil prior to the beginning of school. It is challenging to know where to start instruction with the whole class. For these reasons there is a need for a unique writing curriculum that is designed to fit into a half-day kindergarten program that teaches students the skills from how to hold a pencil, write letters and numbers, writing a complete sentence. Such a program is

essential to meet state standards for every child.

When first year teachers start to plan a writing program for kindergarten, they are given a curriculum and told to adapt it to the students they are assigned and make changes as needed. The Washington State reading curriculum programs focus on teaching kids from pre-literacy through the reading development process. In most writing curriculum programs this is not the case. Authors of kindergarten curriculum programs assume that students entering kindergarten can form letters, write their names, and by the end of the year label a picture with a letter or short word. It is difficult to know what students specifically need to prepare them to meet the state standards. When the curriculum does not align with what the state is telling teachers, the students need to know before moving on to the first grade. There needs to be a writing curriculum that gives beginning teachers a tool box containing lessons that are sequential and teach students the skills they need to progress to first grade.

Purpose

Washington State has laid out specific academic goals that kindergarteners need to achieve in the area of writing before they progress to the first grade. The purpose of this project is to create a set of writing lesson plans that are specifically designed for teaching in a half day kindergarten program that meet the Washington State essential academic learning requirements (EALRs).

The following quote is the introduction to the Washington State EALRs on the Office of Public Instruction (OSPI) web site:

In kindergarten, students use pictures and print to convey meaning. They realize that ideas and thoughts are communicated in symbols. Students learn to form

letters and show increasing knowledge of letters, sounds, and patterns. They copy signs, labels, names, and words in environmental print. They draft simple sentences, often with the same structure repeated within a piece or used in several pieces. As they choose to write for their own satisfaction, much of their writing will be about themselves, their families, pets, and friends.

(K-10 Grade, 2005)

Washington State students are expected meet certain writing standards by the end of kindergarten. This project will give kindergarten teachers who teach a half-day program the necessary tools for teaching writing to students who have varying levels of academic ability. As stated previously, writing curriculum is usually written for a full day program. Teachers need methods of instruction that can be followed that will allow all students to meet the Washington State standards. This project is designed to provide teachers with the tools to allow students to progress from never having held a pencil or crayon to writing a complete sentence. They will be able to follow the complete writing process from pre-writing to publishing a written document.

Limitations/Scope

This project focuses specifically on writing instructional in half-day kindergarten programs in Washington State. The lesson plans that have been designed for this project are written primarily for first year kindergarten teachers and are a guide that will give these teachers an idea of how to get these students from being inexperienced in writing to being first grade level writers as identified by the Washington State EALRs.

This project may not be beneficial to teachers of grades higher than kindergarten because the skills that will be addressed may not be beneficial to other grade levels in general education. However, it could be used in an academic pre-school to give students

a head start for kindergarten. The lesson plans contained in this project could also be adapted for use with students with specific learning needs. Full day kindergarten programs could also benefit from this project by expanding on the lessons.

Definition Of Terms

Balanced Literacy: Balanced literacy is an approach to reading and writing that incorporates both whole language and phonics instruction (Education Oasis, 2009).

Conferencing: A teacher meets with students individually or in small groups to help them set goals and reflect upon their work. Documentation should be made of each conference held (Cecil County, 2009).

Grade Level Expectations (GLEs): Standards provide an overview of what students should know and be able to do in grades K-12 (Superintendent of Public, 2009)

Independent Writing: In independent writing, students write about literature or other topics on their own (Teaching Reading, 2003).

Interactive Writing: In interactive writing, the teacher helps groups of students compose and write text together, usually on large chart paper. With guidance from the teacher, individual students take turns writing, as classmates offer ideas and suggestions. Students practice writing strategies and skills modeled by the teacher, including letter formation, phonemic awareness and phonics, and concepts about print. Interactive writing is

sometimes called "sharing the pen" (Teaching Reading, 2003).

Metacognition: Metacognition is the awareness individuals have of their own mental processes and the subsequent ability to monitor, regulate, and direct themselves to a desired end. Students demonstrate metacognition if they can articulate what strategies they used to read and understand a text. Metacognition helps readers monitor and control their comprehension on an ongoing basis and adjust their reading strategies to maximize comprehension (Teaching Reading, 2003).

Mini-Lesson: The mini-lesson is part of Writers' Workshop and provides a short (5- to 10-minute), structured lesson on a topic related to writing. Topics are selected by the teacher and based on student need or curricular areas. These topics address aspects of the writing process or procedures for independent Writing Workshop time (Teaching Reading, 2003).

Modeled Writing: During Modeled Writing the teacher demonstrates how to write by "thinking aloud" as he/she composes and interacts with a text in front of the students. This allows students to hear the thinking that is going on during the writing process (Alpine School, 2007).

Shared Writing: Shared Writing is a cooperative instructional activity during which the teacher serves as the scribe. Students contribute their ideas and the teacher negotiates the text. Shared Writing provides an opportunity for students to see the relationship between reading and writing (Alpine School, 2007).

Units of Study: Units of study in writing are groups of lessons teaching students how to write in a particular genre or teacher a particular aspect of the writing process. They typically last from four to six weeks in length (Calkins, 2003).

Writer's Workshop: Writer's Workshop is an interdisciplinary writing technique which can build students' fluency in writing through continuous, repeated exposure to the process of writing (The Source of Learning, 2003).

CHAPTER II

LITURATURE REVIEW

What Is Writing?

“Writing is language and thought written down” (North Carolina, 1998). There are many different forms of writing and different purposes for writing. The following quote illustrates the many different reasons that we write.

Why do we write? “To amuse, entertain, and enjoy; to persuade; to establish and maintain relationships; to develop and maintain our own identity; to predict, hypothesize, and speculate; to impart knowledge, inform, and advise; to command, direct, and control; and to obtain what we need” (North Carolina, 1998).

What Is Balanced Literacy?

Balanced literacy is the combination of multiple types of instruction that are taught together to form cohesive literacy instruction. “There can be no reading development which does not involve writing development, and vice versa” (Gonfiantini, 2001). In a study conducted by Elsea (2001) students who were taught literacy in a balanced literacy model improved their writing from a 1.5 to an 8.389 out of a possible 9 on their writing assessment (Gonfiantini, 2001). This study illustrates the writing gains that can be made through a balanced literacy model of literacy and writing instruction. Balanced literacy is a “well rounded fluid approach to teaching communication arts” (Gonfiantini, 2001). This model for language arts instruction includes oral language, guided reading, shared reading, read aloud, independent/buddy reading, word study, modeled/interactive writing, independent writing, literacy and word study centers

(Elsea, 2001). Balanced literacy is a flexible curriculum that focuses on what literacy skills children need and how they may attain them. It is the combination of phonics instruction and whole-language instruction (Gonfiantini, 2001). By using a balanced literacy model of instruction, students are able to transfer the skills that they learn in guided and modeled reading to their own independent writing. Due to their balanced literacy instruction, (Elsea, 2001) they are able to write complete sentences using sight words from the word wall, using finger spaces, proper punctuation, and their knowledge of the letter/sound relationship.

What Is Interactive Writing?

Interactive writing is a form of writing instruction where the teacher and students use a “shared pen” to create a shared text (McCarrier, Pinnell, & Fountas, 2000). This form of writing instruction is a collaboration between the teacher and students to compose and construct a shared piece of writing. In preparation for interactive writing, the teacher prepares the text; it may change with the students’ help, but the teaching focus is planned ahead of time. Interactive writing lessons teach a number of writing concepts; they develop understanding of written language and concepts of print (Henry & Wiley, 1999). According to Gonfiantini (2001) there are four purposes of interactive writing: practice writing high frequency words, practice phonics and spelling skills, successfully write text that they could not do independently, and share their reading and writing experience with classmates. Students are able to demonstrate concepts of print, early writing strategies, and knowledge of how words work during interactive writing (Elsea, 2001). In a study done by Williams and Lundstrom (2007) students who had been taught

writing using interactive writing were able to make the link between word study skills and writing.

Interactive writing allows student to get involved in the writing process and gives them an opportunity to develop writing strategies from the beginning of their education in writing (Franzese, 2002). Writing and reading strategies are very much aligned and one of the purposes for using interactive writing in a kindergarten classroom is to create readable text that students can successfully read independently (McCarrier et al., 2000).

During an interactive lesson students are given the opportunity to write some of the letters and/or words on the collaborative text. The teacher chooses when to share the pen with a student depending on what the goal of the lesson is. The goal of the lesson can easily be associated with the form in which the interactive writing lesson is being taught. There are many different forms of interactive writing that can be used in the classroom: morning messages, class news, book retells, invitations, informational text, class rules, shared experience stories, and class books (Franzese, 2002). These interactive writing sessions can be accomplished in whole group or in a small group setting. The group composition is flexible and can be directed at specific learning targets for a small group of students with a specific need. Through these lessons students gain knowledge that will help them be successful in their own writing by giving them practice in creating different types of text for different audiences and for a specific purpose (McCarrier et al., 2000).

The benefits to interactive writing are significant for young writers. They are able to take in and practice different writing strategies and begin to understand how words work and how to apply the strategies taught in their own independent writing. Interactive writing is a time in the

short school day in which students can practice letter formation and letter-sound correspondence with guidance from the teacher. Conventions are also taught during interactive writing. It is a natural fit for teachers to teach punctuation, proof reading skills, and features of letters and words during this instructional time (Franzese, 2002).

What Is Shared Writing?

Shared writing is writing in which the teacher and the students compose a piece of writing together with students suggesting words or sentence ideas. The main difference between interactive writing and shared writing is in shared writing the teacher does all of the writing even though the students help with the composition of the text (Elsea, 2001; Gonfiantini, 2001). The purpose of shared writing is to demonstrate the writing process and provide strategies that students can then use independently. The teacher will often talk as he/she writes to inform the students what is going through his/her head while he/she is writing; this is often called “think aloud” (McCarrier et al., 2000). This gives students a chance to hear what their teacher is thinking while he/she writes so that they can come to understand the process involved in writing. While writing, a teacher might sound out a word to write the sounds in order to demonstrate that skill to his/her students. This helps students learn problem solving skills that can be applied to their independent writing (Franzese, 2002).

The roles of the teacher and the students are clearly defined in shared writing; the teacher is a scribe for both the teacher’s and the students’ thoughts. The teacher and students work together to compose a common text with the teacher doing all of the writing during shared writing. The group composition can be whole group or small group; this will depend on the goal

that the teacher has set forth for the lesson (McCarrier et al., 2000). Shared writing can be used with many different types of group writing: morning message, stories, class books, reference posters, and notes (Franzese, 2002).

Shared writing is a tool that teachers use in order to teach text features, text structures, spelling and conventions, letter formation and spacing (Martin, 2001; McCarrier et al., 2000). After the strategies are taught, students can review by reading the shared text at a later date and using it as a model for their writing. Because it is a shared piece of writing, students can read independently (McCarrier et al., 2000). Shared text can be posted in the room as a reference tool or can be put somewhere accessible to students during independent work times.

What Is Modeled Writing?

Modeled writing is when a teacher demonstrates good writing strategies with no input from the students. This form of writing is used almost daily and is the mini-lesson before students start independent writing. Specific strategies that the teacher wants the students to try in their writing are modeled here: sounding out words, inventive spelling, finger spacing, etc., are a few examples of what could be modeled during the writing mini-lesson before independent writing (Gonfiantini, 2001). According to Kissel (2008) teachers who write in front of their students have seen benefits in their students' written language. Modeled writing is an instructional process that gives students the opportunity to see what writing is supposed to look like and how it is created. This practice is done so that students may have greater success in their own writing.

What Is Independent Writing?

Students need to write for many different purposes, and independent writing enables teachers to give opportunities to students to practice skills that they have been taught. In a study done by Joshi et al. (2008) students' writing skills improved after a semester of having to use only written communication with their teacher and the other students in their study group. These students used their independent writing skills to communicate with others, and as a result their writing skills improved significantly.

Independent writing is student writing with very little teacher support with the composing or editing of the writing itself. The purpose is to provide students with multiple opportunities to write text individually for many purposes. This is students' opportunity to practice the strategies that they have been taught during mini-lessons, modeled writing, interactive writing, and shared writing (McCarrier et al., 2000). Students are encouraged to use inventive spelling when doing independent writing. This facilitates learning to spell as well as get their ideas down on paper without worrying about conventional spelling (Elsea, 2001).

Independent writing can be practiced in many different forms and for different purposes. Students can be working independently with a focus given by the teacher; for example students might be asked to respond to a book that they had just finished, label an illustration that they drew, compose an informational text, write an original story, write a letter, or retell a story in their own words (Gonfiantini, 2001). After students have completed their work, it may be displayed in the classroom as a celebration of completed work or kept in a portfolio for assessment at the end of the grading period. The purpose of doing independent writing is to give

students the opportunity to practice the skills that they have been taught and to develop their own voices as writers (McCarrier et al., 2000).

According to McCarrier et al. (2000) independent writing should take place after finishing a mini-lesson, shared writing experience, or interactive writing. This gives the teacher an opportunity to teach a new skill, review a previous lesson, or to address an issue before students are sent off to work independently. Students are expected to try on the skill or strategy when they are released to work independently; this is a time in which teachers are able to assess how students are mastering a particular skill that has been taught (Landry, 2000). Independent writing should take place two to three times a week in order to give students an ample opportunity to practice the skills that they need to master by the end of the year (Gonfiantini, 2001).

Writer's Workshop

What Is Writer's Workshop?

Writer's workshop is a program that teaches students the writing process. Through mini-lessons teachers teach conventions, grammar, planning, drafting, revising, and editing their own writing (Landry, 2000). The process of writer's workshop gives students multiple chances to practice and internalize what makes a good piece of writing and all of the work that the process entails (Landry, 2000). Writer's workshop gives students an opportunity to do authentic writing and write about what they know instead of writing to a prompt. According to research, children need three things to be effective writers: time to write, ownership of their writing, and response to their writing (Surray, 2000). "Writer's workshop gives children control over their own

writing and learning. When children are respected as writers and carefully led through the process, they are freed to write, and they do it gladly – with a sense of enthusiasm” (Kieczykowski, 1996).

In the past, kindergarten language arts programs focused on reading, phonics, and oral language development. However, in the 1980s whole language became the new thinking for instruction. Writing helps students improve their metacognitive skills, according to a study by Jacobs (2004). Therefore daily writing, as a part of whole language development, became an important part of curriculum (Kieczykowski, 1996). This was one of many benefits that have led to the writer’s workshop model. Another benefit of writer’s workshop is increased self-esteem among young writers. Because writer’s workshop is individualized and all students are authors, this gives students a greater sense of accomplishment, which boosts self-esteem. Students also feel empowered and more responsible for their own learning because they are able to make choices about the topics that they write about. The classroom is viewed as a risk-free environment in which students are free to make mistakes in the writing process and use inventive spelling to get their ideas down on paper. Writer’s workshop gives an authentic environment in which to teach and practice phonemic awareness. Another benefit to young writers is an increased fluency in reading and writing due to participating in writer’s workshop. They are more fluent because they are given the opportunity to publish their own writing. Students are given the chance to be exposed to more written language conventions through the writing process than through lessons alone. Lastly, a large benefit to teachers using the writer’s workshop model is they are given samples of authentic writing for assessing their student’s growth (Kieczykowski, 1996). According to Graham (2008) “students who struggle with writing are at a disadvantage in school, because it is the primary means by which teachers assess

students' content knowledge." Students who are at a disadvantage in school because they struggle in writing can benefit because using a writer's workshop model in the classroom environment gives young students tools that they can use in their future.

Structure

Writer's workshop is very routine, and the set up of the classroom is very important to ensure student success in writer's workshop. Giving students a specific area for different tasks will help students with the process of writer's workshop. For example having an assigned area for mini-lessons, peer conferencing, materials, folder storage, and sharing area will take away the guess work and the wasted to time used to find materials (Kieczkowski, 1996). Students must be taught the complete writing process and be able to work independently for it to work at any grade level. "Even as early as kindergarten, children learn the routines and practices that expert writers use in their writing" (Landry, 2000). There needs to be a set time during the day that writer's workshop takes place and a set amount of time, daily for 45 to 60 minutes (Landry, 2000). The writer's workshop time can be broken down into three sections: mini-lesson 5-10 minutes, writing and conferencing 20-25 minutes, and sharing 5-10 minutes (Kieczkowski, 1996). This gives plenty of time for students to get their ideas started and to get a good amount of writing done. Additionally, if children know that writer's workshop is going to happen every day, they will start to develop good writing habits, which make them better writers in the long run (Landry, 2000).

The structure of writer's workshop is very important. Students need to stay busy in order for other students to be able to focus on their writing. When students are waiting to conference with the teacher, they are given an option to work on while they wait. They can reread their

writing, skip the part that they want help with and continue writing, or ask a friend for help (Landry, 2000).

Mini-Lesson

The mini-lesson in writer's workshop is the part where the teacher can teach particular skills or model techniques that he/she want his/her students to try (Landry, 2000). For example a teacher in kindergarten may want to talk about using an upper case letter in the beginning of proper nouns. This would be the point in writer's workshop that this lesson would take place. Teachers choose to model strategies that they are seeing students struggle with or ones that they have not been exposed to yet. These strategies are modeled through a shared writing or interactive writing process (Laundry, 2000). The mini-lesson can be at the beginning of the lesson to launch the students into their writing or it can come at the end of writer's workshop to talk about a concern that the teacher noticed during workshop. The mini-lesson should not be more than five to ten minutes or it becomes a full lesson, and the students would not be given enough time to independently write or conference with the teacher. Mini-lessons should be recorded on chart paper and posted in the classroom for students to use as a tool to refer to later during independent writing (Landry, 2000).

Reading and writing are very closely tied, so for mini-lessons a teacher may choose to read a strong piece of literature that gives students an opportunity to make connections between the professional author's writing and their own writing or to a life experience that he/she could write about. Literature can also inspire, influence, and instruct young writers by providing examples needed for effective learning according to Surmay (2000).

Conferencing

Conferencing is a very important part of the writer's workshop writing model. This time with the teacher gives the students an opportunity to work out an issue in their writing and the teacher can help them see next steps or choices that he/she can make in their writing. This is not a time for the teacher to tell a student what he/she should do to make the writing better but instead to help the student enhance his/her writing or learn a new skill that the student can use to improve his/her writing (Landry, 2000). It can be difficult for a teacher to ignore an issue that he/she notices in the student's writing and only focus on what the student wants help with. However, a teacher's role in conferencing during writer's workshop is to help students make progress in his/her writing and help he/she through problems that the student feels that they want help with. If a teacher notices something that he/she really wants to address, he/she can have a mini-lesson on that topic with either a small group or the larger class group depending on the need of the students. Conferencing can also be done with a peer, who can help suggest solutions to issues that one student is having in the writing (Landry, 2000).

Sharing

Sharing writing is the final step to the writing process in writer's workshop. This gives students a chance to share what they have been working on with their peers, parents, and teachers. There are two purposes to sharing writing in writer's workshop: one is to give encouragement to the students' work, and two is to publically give the teacher a chance to conference with that student for the sake of the group and that student. Sharing does not have to

be finished work; it can be work that a student is still working on and needs help from the group (Landry, 2000).

Units of Study

Throughout the school year, a teacher will choose units of study that the students will complete. These units of study are where students learn the different forms of writing: personal narratives, biographies, expository, procedural, and persuasive (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). Units of study begin with the students planning what they are going to write. This could be done through an outline, graphic organizer, or story map (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). Students take their writing through the entire writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and sometimes illustrating (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997).

Conclusion

The purpose of writing is to practice and manipulate the language and its structure to express one's thoughts, ideas and information (North Carolina, 1998). A good writing program must include students writing from personal experience, be an extension of listening and speaking, give students real reasons to write, have a clearly defined audience, accept all writing efforts, and have a process approach to writing. In addition experience in reading must be the primary source of knowledge about how written language looks and sounds. Finally systematic, regular and direct teaching of phonics, direct teaching of handwriting, oral preparation for writing, and regular shared writing must be incorporated (North Carolina, 1998; Department of Education, 2001).

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Genesis Of The Project

In the summer of 2008 when the research for this project began, there was a need for a writing resource for kindergarten teachers. With the Washington Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) in mind, the research for this project focused on finding resources that kindergarten teachers in a half-day kindergarten program could use to meet the state's expectations for their students. The idea of putting together a set of writing lesson plans for half-day kindergarten came from the lack of specific resources found during the data collection phase of this project. The lesson plans are uniquely targeted to half-day kindergarten programs in Washington State. This project could also easily be used as a guide by full day kindergarten teachers with some small modifications.

Project Development

The collection of the resources needed for this project begun in the summer of 2008. The collection of resources took place in the CWU library, on the Internet using library search engines, looking at resources in Bow Lake Elementary School's book room that houses teacher reference books, and in my own classroom library. The first step of this project was talking with other kindergarten teachers about how they teach writing, what they need to teach writing effectively, and how they implement their writing program.

Once resources were collected the writer began the process of sorting and categorizing the resources. Resources were sorted into different categories according to what type of writing instructions they referred to and if they would be applicable for this. After the resources were collected and sorted, the writing began. This project is intended to be a resource for half day kindergarten teachers in Washington, so the lessons in this project are written to meet the Washington State GLEs and to be a comprehensive writing program for half-day kindergarten. With the guidance of Prairie Brown and Dr. Steve Nourse, this project was submitted for review in the summer of 2009.

Project Implementation

This project was designed to be used at Bow Lake Elementary School in the Highline School District. Because writing is a focus for the WASL in the district, getting students to become proficient writers at a young age is very important. The lesson plans in this project are designed to guide new kindergarten teachers in Washington to gain a better understanding of how to teach writing in kindergarten. It will also provide writing samples similar to those produced by young students so that teachers know what to expect from their students.

CHAPTER IV

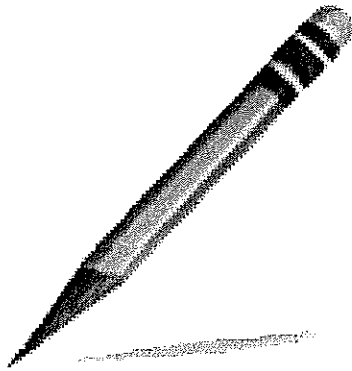
WRITING IN KINDERGARTEN

Introduction

This project is designed for teachers who may be new to teaching writing in the kindergarten classroom. The collection of lesson plans in this project is a valuable resource for a teacher who wishes to know what he/she can expect from kindergarten writers. It can also show teachers how to effectively teach the skills that kindergarten students in Washington State are required to know. This project does not address everything about writing or every form of writing utilized in kindergarten classes. These lesson plans are designed to be a guide that enables new kindergarten teachers to start teaching writing from the beginning of the school year. They include black line masters of all of the forms used in this project as well as students and teacher examples to give new teachers a better understanding of what they can expect to see from kindergarten students. Teachers will be able to use these lesson plans as a template for writing instruction. Teachers can build upon the lessons in this project as students progress in writing.

Welcome to Kindergarten Writing!

Letter writing, name writing, sentence writing, modeled writing, shared writing, interactive writing, and writer's workshop



A Guide to Teaching Writing in Kindergarten

Pam Wangsness

Bow Lake Elementary

Highline School District

July 2009

Dear Kindergarten Teacher,

Welcome to teaching writing. I think you'll find that kindergarten is a wonderful age group. Every writing lesson you teach will help build your students' knowledge of writing, which they use for the rest of their lives. The lesson plans that I have compiled are examples of what lessons can look like in the kindergarten environment. They are models that can be adapted to your unique style as well as your students. In each lesson plan I include dialog so that you can see what responses you can expect to receive from your young learners. I have included multiple student and teacher examples following each lesson to give you a sense of what you can expect from your students' writing. They are typical responses generated to exemplify kindergarten student writing. Please use the black line masters that I have included to get started. I hope you enjoy teaching writing to your young kinders!

Good Luck,

Pam Wangsness

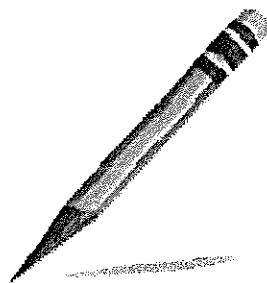


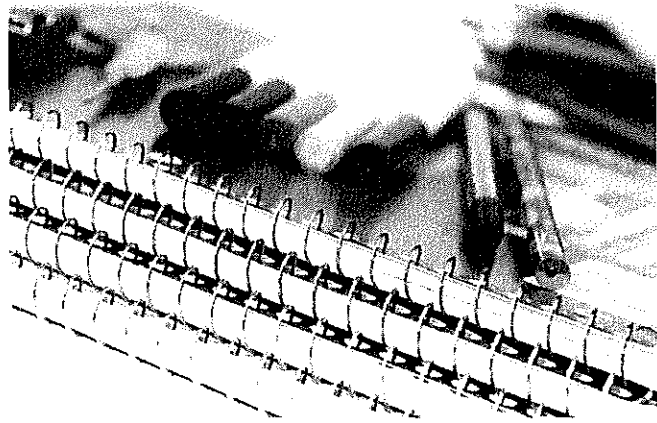
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Suggested Supplies:

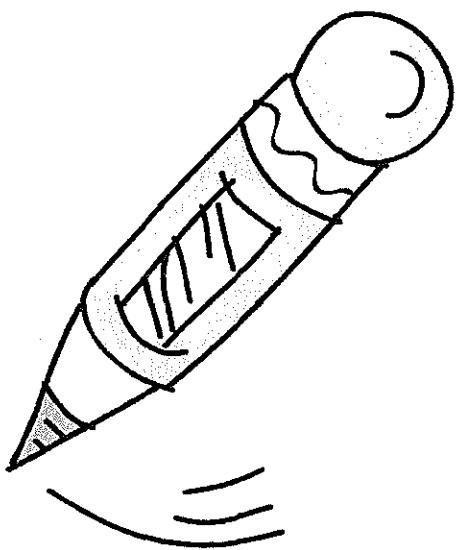
- Sharpened pencils
- Erasers
- Colored pencils
- Crayons
- Post-it notes
- Correction tape
- Overhead projector/ELMO
- Chart paper
- Lined paper
- Unlined paper
- Copies of all student masters
- Picture books for students to get ideas from
- Picture file for students to get writing ideas from (these can be pictures from magazines, books, ones you have taken, or artistic photos)
- Student dictionaries
- Writing folders for each student to house their work-in-progress in
- Easel
- Dry erase markers/chalk
- Individual white boards/chalk boards
- Erasers for dry erase boards/chalk boards
- Markers (Mr. Sketch are preferred because they don't bleed through paper, they don't smear, and they smell great.)
- Authors chair (a special chair where students can share their work with the class)
- Meeting place large enough for every student to sit comfortably



Schedule	Fall	Winter	Spring
8:40-8:50	Morning Message: Shared Writing	Morning Message: Shared Writing	Morning Message: Shared Writing
8:50-8:55	Calendar	Calendar	Calendar
8:55-9:20	Literacy	Literacy	Literacy
9:20-9:35	Read Aloud	Read Aloud	Read Aloud
9:35-9:45	Writing: Monday: Modeled Writing Tuesday: Interactive Writing Wednesday: Interactive Writing Thursday: Modeled Writing Friday: Interactive Writing	Writing: Introduction of writer's workshop when class is ready. Monday: Modeled Writing Tuesday: Interactive Writing Wednesday: Independent Writing Thursday: Modeled Writing Friday: Interactive Writing	Guided Reading
9:45-10:00	Recess and Snack	Recess and Snack	Recess and Snack
10:00-10:30	Literacy Centers/Guided Reading This includes independent writing as a center. As well as letter writing practice.	Literacy Centers/Guided Reading This includes independent writing as a center.	Writer's Workshop
10:30-11:10	Math	Math	Math

Introduction to Writing Your Name Lesson:

This lesson is designed to teach students how to write their first name. Some students will already be able to write their name with no help, others will need minimal help, and other students will need a lot of help and practice to write their name in the beginning of the school year. This lesson is designed to help the teacher know who can write their name and who needs practice. After the sheet has been introduced it can be given as homework, an entry task, or be a one-on-one activity for students who need it. The individual student name sheets can be made by hand with the lined paper attached to the lesson plan or they can be typed using the font from the resource page. Saving a master to be copied as needed is helpful for those students who need to practice. For an extension activity students could use this same process to practice writing high frequency words or their last name.



Title of Lesson: Writing Your Name Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: Students will be able to trace over their own name when provided with a dotted outline of their name.

GLEs:

- 2.4.1 Knows important personal information.

Length of Time Needed: 10 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Dotted outline page for each student with their name (They can be hand made with the lined paper at the end of the lesson or you can use the font listed in the resources: 50 Plus School Fonts)
- Dotted outline page with teacher's name on it
- Overhead or Elmo
- pencils

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "Today we are going to practice tracing over our names. This will help you to be able to write your own name without my help."

Procedures:

Teacher: "Here is my paper with my name outlined on it. What you need to do is take your pencil and hand write over the dots to spell your name. I am going to use a marker so you can see what I am doing better. I start at the beginning of my name with the first letter. I am going to write on top of the dots." Teacher models tracing over the dots to write her name. "Now you are going to get a paper with your name on it to practice with." Teacher passes out papers and students go to their tables to practice tracing their names. While students are doing this the teacher is walking around watching for struggling students and pencil grip issues.

Closure:

Teacher: "You did a great job with your names. We will continue practicing our names until we do not need the dots anymore."

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

Students who can follow the dots easily can be given one line of dots and the other lines can be blank so they can practice on their own. These practice sheets can be laminated and reused with an overhead pen for students who need a lot of practice. They can also be sent home as homework.

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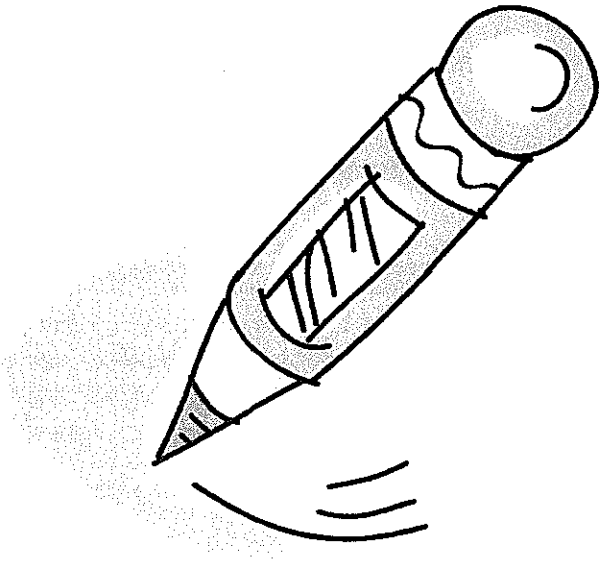
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Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of four sets of three horizontal lines (top, dashed middle, bottom).

Introduction for Letter Formation Lesson

This lesson is designed to be an assessment as well as provide practice for students on writing letters in isolation. This will be a good indicator of fine motor skills as well as how much experience students have had with writing letters in the past. For some students this will be review, and they will not need a lot of further practice. For other students, this will be the first time they have written the entire alphabet and they will need a lot more practice. These sheets can be used for homework in the future as well as learning center activities. The sheets can also be adapted to only practice certain letters or a few at a time depending on needs. It was created using the font in the Resources section or could be made by hand. Having a master to keep will save energy later for the students who will need more practice.



Title of Lesson: Letter Formation Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: Students will be introduced to how to write each letter and worksheet will be used as an assessment for the letter writing abilities of each student.

GLEs:

- 3.3.1 Understands and applies directionality and spacing of letters.

Length of Time: 20 minutes: Students may need a stretch break in the middle.

Materials Needed:

- Lined paper with dotted letter
- Overhead or Elmo
- pencils

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "Today we are going to practice writing letters the correct way. Before we start writing I want to teach you a rhyme to help you remember where to start writing your letters. So I want you to repeat after me." (This rhyme is to the tune of "Happy and You Know It.")

Where do you start your letters, at the top...

Where do you start your letters, at the top...

If you want to write a letter, than you better, better, better,

Remember to start them at the top!

Teacher: "Where do we start writing our letters?"

Students: "At the top."

Procedures:

Teacher: "Yes always at the top. Today we are going to practice writing all of the letters. I have a piece of paper for each of you and we are going to do it together

as a group. So please do not go ahead of the rest of us. Also so you can see what I am doing, I am going to use a marker; you need to practice writing using a pencil." Teacher hands out paper with all of the letters on it to be traced and written alone. "I want you to follow along with me. We are going to start with the upper case A. Start at the top trace the dots down, jump back up to the top, down the other side, and cross in the middle." Teacher is writing on her paper at the same time so that the students can see. Continue this process with each letter.

Closure:

Teacher: "You have done a great job practicing writing your letters. Now, for review let's sing our rhyme again.

Where do you start your letters, at the top...

Where do you start your letters, at the top...

If you want to write a letter, than you better, better, better,

Remember to start them at the top!

Where do we always start writing our letters?"

Students: "At the top."

Teacher: "Great job. We will continue practicing writing our letters every day."

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

Once this assessment has been completed, individual homework can be assigned for students who need more practice. Letters should also be reviewed on an individual basis when they are introduced in reading.

Name Ms. W

A A A a a a

B B B b b b

C C C c c c

D D D d d d

E E E e e e

F F F f f f

G G G g g g

H H H h h h

I I I i i i

J J J j j j

K K K k k k

L L L l l l

M M M m m m

N N N n n n

O O O o o o

P P P p p p

Q Q Q q q q

R R R r r r

S S S s s s

T T T t t t

U U U u u u

V V V v v v

W W W w w w

X X X x x x

Y Y Y y y y

Z Z Z z z z

43 Name Student

A A A a a a

B B B b b b

C C C c c c

D D D d d d

E E E e e e

F F F f f f

G G G g g g

H H H h h h

I I I i i i

J J J j j j

K K K k k k

L L L l l l

M M m m

N N n n

O O o o

P P p p

Q Q q q

R R r r

S S s s

I I i i

U U u u

V V v v

W W w w

X X x x

Y Y y y

Z Z z z

Name _____

A A a a

B B b b

C C c c

D D d d

E E e e

F F f f

G G g g

H H h h

I I i i

J J j j

K K k k

L L l l

M M m m

O O o o

Q Q q q

S S s s

U U u u

W W w w

Y Y y y

N N n n

P P p p

R R r r

T T t t

V V v v

X X x x

Z Z z z

Where do you start your letters, at the top...

⁴⁷Where do you start your letters, at the top...

If you want to write a letter, than you better, better, better,

Remember to start them at the top!

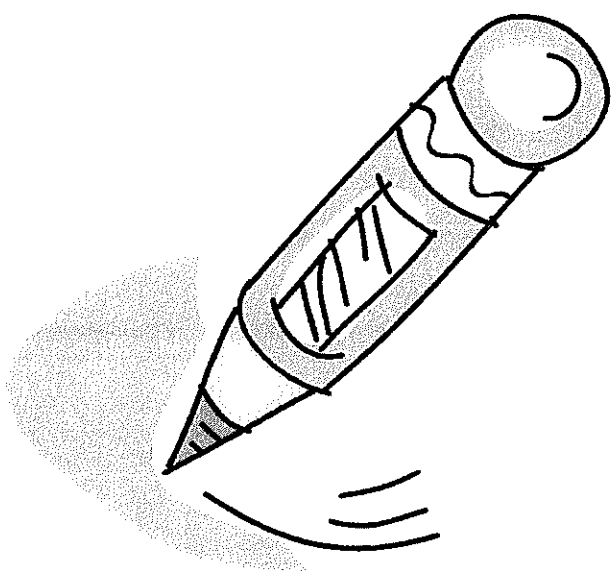


ABC

Introduction to Sentence Stem Lesson:

This lesson is designed to be the first of many books and sentence stem writing activities done in a half day kindergarten class. Sentences stems are simply sentence starters that students use to write sentences by filling in the blank. This is an example of what a sentence stem lesson could look like in your classroom as well as some examples of what you can expect from your students. Other sentence stems could include:

- Here is_____.
- I like _____.
- We have a _____.
- I eat _____.
- We go to the _____.
- Where is the_____?
- I have 1 _____ . I have 2 _____ . I have 3 _____ . (counting book to 5 or 10)
- _____ is red. _____ is orange. _____ is yellow. (Book of colors with something that is that color for each of the colors of the rainbow.)



Title of Lesson: Sentence Stem Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: Students will be able to complete a given sentence stem by using inventive spelling or sketch.

GLEs:

- 3.1.1 Analyzes ideas, selects topic, and adds detail.

Length of Time: 30 minutes: 10 minutes to model and 20 minutes for student work time

Materials Needed:

- Overhead or ELMO
- Sentence stem book copied, cut in half and stapled into books for each student and teacher
- Extra copies of sentence frame pages
- Pencils
- Crayons

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "Today we are going to make our own 'I see' books. You are going to get to write your ideas and illustrate your writing."

Procedures:

Teacher puts up a blank book to show the students what their book will look like.

Teacher: "This is the book that you all are going to work on today. It has three pages that all say 'I see' with a line after. What you are going to do is pick three things that you see at school that you would like to write about in your book. They should be your favorite things that you see at school. I will show you on my book."

Teacher: "First I need to write my name on the front cover. I am going to write using a marker so you can see it better on the screen; when you write you are going to use a pencil." Teacher writes her name on the front cover of the book. "Then I

need to fold back the cover to see my first page. The first thing that I like to see at school is students. So I am going to write students on the line next to I see." Teacher writes students on the line and also draws a quick drawing or sketch next to the word.

Teacher: "On my line I wrote the word and I also drew a sketch of students. In your book you can choose to do the word or draw a sketch. If you would like help spelling a word, I will help you or you can write the sounds that you hear in the word. Now I need to do my illustration." Teacher draws picture above the sentence.

Teacher: "On my next page I am going to write 'I see letters.' I love learning the alphabet, so I am going to write the word letters on my line." Teacher writes the word letters and writes an upper case ABC next to the word letters.

Teacher: "On my line I wrote the word letters and wrote ABC so I can remember what I wrote." Teacher writes the alphabet for her illustration.

Teacher: "For my last page I am going to write 'I see pencils.' I love writing, so I am going to write the word pencil on my line and draw a picture of a pencil for my illustration." Teacher writes the word pencil with no sketch and draws a pencil above the sentence for the illustration.

Teacher: "On this page I didn't need to draw a sketch because I wrote the word pencil by copying it off of the label for the pencil box in the classroom. Now I want to read my book to you. 'I see students. I see letters. I see pencils.' My book is finished."

Teacher: "Now it is your turn to make your 'I see' book. Before I give you your book, I want you to think of at least one thing that you are going to put in your book. I will give you 30 seconds to think." Teacher waits 30 seconds.

Teacher: "Now I want you to tell your neighbor your idea."

Teacher: "Okay when I hand you your book please tell me your idea for your book." Teacher hands out books as the students tell their ideas. While students are working, the teacher is walking around helping students who need help spelling or

thinking of ideas for their book. It is a good idea to have extra pages for the students who will finish early.

Closure:

Teacher: "Please bring your books with you to the rug." Students come to the carpet with their books.

Teacher: "I am going to choose three students to share their books with the class." Teacher chooses three students to share with the class.

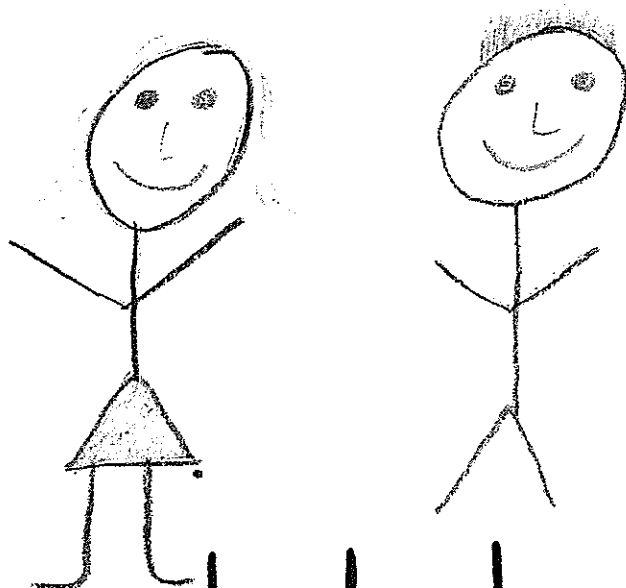
Teacher: "These books can now go in your book bag to read whenever you want."

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

Students can make many different sentence frame books, or they could just make a sentence frame paper instead of a book. Sentence frames can also be used with white boards/chalk boards where the students simply copy a sentence stem and fill in the blank.

Ms. W's

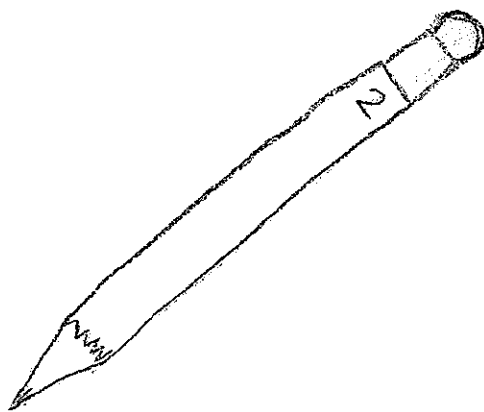
I see book.



I see students & &.

ABC

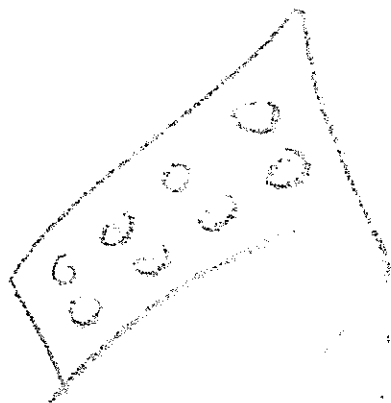
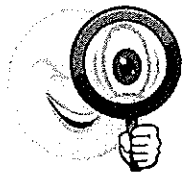
I see letters ABC.



I see pencils.

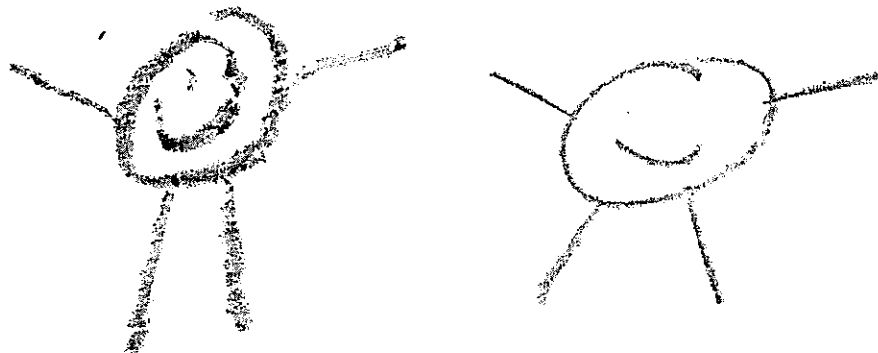
student's

I see book.

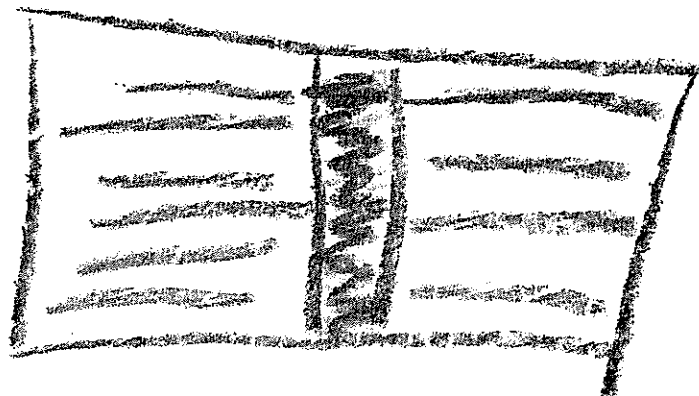


I see

TOYZ.



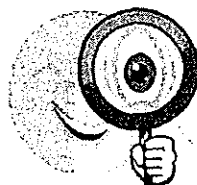
I see KIDZ.



I see DUX.

_____ 's

I see book.



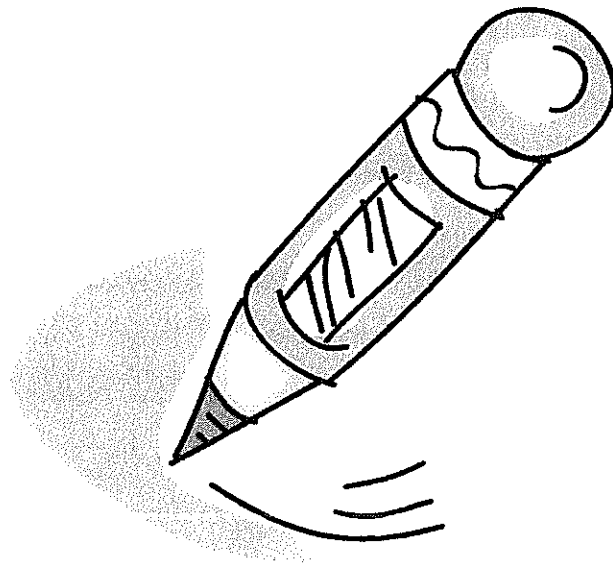
I see _____.

I see _____.

I see _____.

Introduction to Modeled Writing Lesson

This lesson is designed to begin to teach students how to write down their ideas and how sentence structure works. This is the introduction lesson of a routine that will continue throughout the school year. The learner outcomes will change from lesson to lesson depending on what you are noticing in your students' writing and what new strategy you are introducing or practicing. This model can be used for all forms of writing and as a general design for any mini-lesson in writing.



Title of Lesson: Modeled Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: To demonstrate how to write a letter using appropriate capitalization and spacing rules for kindergarten.

GLEs:

- 2.2 Writes for different purposes.
- 2.3 Writes in a variety of forms/genres
- 3.3 Knows and applies appropriate grade level writing conventions.

Length of Time: 30 minutes: 10 for modeling and 20 for student work time

Materials:

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Meeting place in classroom where the whole class can sit and observe comfortably

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "Today we are going to learn how to compose a letter to a friend. We are also going to practice using an upper case letter in the beginning of the sentence, a period at the end of our sentences, and using finger spaces between our words. I am going to model for you how to write a letter. Then you are going to write a letter to a friend. I am going to use a marker so you can see what I am doing. When you write, you are going to use a pencil."

Procedures:

Teacher: "When we write a letter, we always address the letter to whom we are writing. Today I am going to write a letter to Mrs. Carmichael. On my paper at the top on the left I need to write *Dear Mrs. Carmichael*. This is the address on my letter."

"The next thing I need to do is write the message section of my letter. I want it to say: *How are you Mrs. Carmichael? I hope you are having a great day.*"

"I start by going right below the address of my letter and putting a large space or indent to begin my message. Then I start writing my message: First I need to write the word how, /h/ is the first sound that I hear so I need to write an h, but it is the first letter in my sentence so I need to write an upper case H." Teacher writes on the chart paper the word *How*.

"I don't want to forget my finger spaces between my words." Teacher writes: *are you Mrs. Carmichael* on the chart paper.

"I am asking Mrs. Carmichael a question, so I don't put a period at the end of my sentence. I need to write a question mark." Teacher writes a question mark at the end of the sentence on the chart paper.

"I is the next word I need to write, and I know that the word I is always uppercase." Teacher writes an *I* on the board making sure to use finger spaces. Teacher continues writing the sentence on the chart paper while saying each word slowly out loud: *hope you are having a great day*

"This sentence is not asking a question, so this time I can write a period." Teacher writes the period on the chart.

"The last thing that we need for our letter is the signature. And in a letter you want to say a closing before you write your name to complete your letter. For this letter I am going to write Love, Ms. W. I write my closing on the right side of my paper below the last line of my message, right here." Teacher points to where the closing needs to be, and writes *Love,*

"And now you go down to the next line and write your signature, or your name." Teacher writes her signature: *Ms. W.*

"Now good writers always reread their writing to make sure it says what they want it to and that there aren't any errors that they need to fix."

Dear Mrs. Carmichael,

How are you Mrs. Carmichael? I hope you are having a great day.

Love,

Ms. W

"My letter has capital letters at the beginning of my sentences, I have punctuation at the end of both of my sentences, and spaces between all of my words. I am ready to share my letter with Mrs. Carmichael."

Closure:

Teacher: "Today kids you are going to get to write your own letter to a person you care about. You can choose anyone that you would like, and you can write them a letter using the paper that I am going to give you. You need to fill in their name, your message and your signature at the bottom of the page. I will be here to help if you need help. Are there any questions before we get started?"

Teacher then passes out paper with letter template printed on it.

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

This same template can be used to write letters to anyone and for any purpose. This same format of writing a letter could be used for cards, persuasive letters, and for letters to the teacher. Follow-up activities would be continuing to write letters. A possible extension is taking away the template paper and having them write a letter on lined paper without the words dear and love pre-printed on the paper.

Dear Mrs. Carmichael,

How are you
Mrs. Carmichael? I
hope you are having
a great day.

Love,

Ms. W

Dear MOM,

I LOVE YOU.
CAN WE GO TO THE
PARK.

Love,

student

Dear Mom,

I luv you. Can
we go to the
park?

Love,

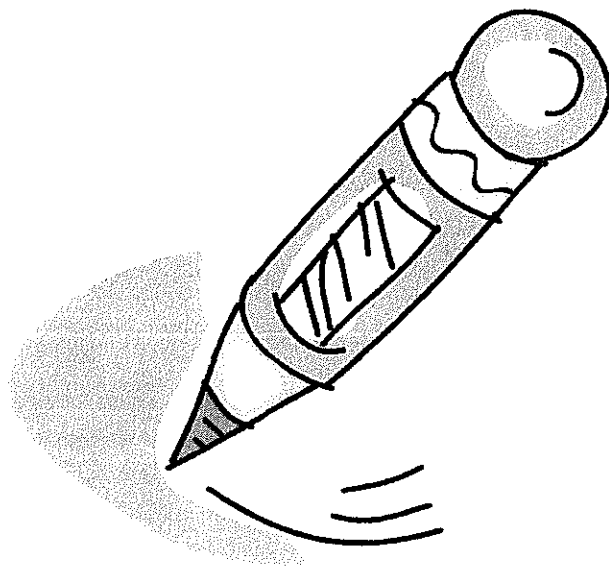
student

Dear _____,

Love,

Introduction to Shared Writing Lesson

Shared writing is a very important routine in a kindergarten classroom. The pieces of shared writing done in kindergarten can become a shared reading and an independent reading as well. The learner outcomes will change depending on what skills you are teaching and what form of writing you are teaching. Sharing the ideas for the writing gives students a greater sense of ownership of the writing and they will be more involved in reading the writing later. After the shared writing routine is taught, shared writing can be done very quickly and can create living pieces of writing that are revisited later.



Title of Lesson: Shared Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: To practice using the sounds in words to write a shared text.

GLEs:

- 3.3 Knows and applies appropriate grade level writing conventions.

Length of Time: 15 Minutes

Materials Needed:

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Individual white boards and markers for each student or chalk boards and chalk
- Picture of a fish

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher passes out white boards or chalk boards with established routine.

Teacher: "Today for shared writing we are going to practice using the sounds we hear in words to write a sentence. First what I want you to do is look at this picture and think of a sentence describing it. I am going to have some of you share your ideas."

Procedures:

Teacher: "Raise your hand if you have a sentence that you would like to share."

Student 1: "Here is a blue fish."

Teacher: "Good job, *here is a blue fish*, is a great sentence."

Student 2: "The fish is swimming."

Teacher: "Great sentence! I like how you used an action word. One more sentence."

Student 3: "The fish has four fins."

Teacher: "Good job kids, let's put two of the sentences together to make one sentence. Here is a blue fish swimming. Let's say our sentence. Here is a blue fish swimming. Can you tell me how many words are in our sentence?"

Student 4: "6"

Teacher: "Yes there are six words in our sentence, *Here is a blue fish swimming.* On our paper where do we start writing? Can someone come up here and point to where we begin writing?"

Student 5: Comes up and points to the top left corner.

Teacher: "Great job. Now we are going to begin writing now so everyone get your pens ready to write. What is our first word?"

Students: "Here"

Teacher: "What is the first letter in the word here?"

Student 6: "h"

Teacher: "Ok let's write an upper case *H* on our boards. Please write the next sound that you hear in the word here."

Students all write the next sound; some will write *ere* because they know how to spell here already and others will write the letter *r* because that is the next sound that most students can hear.

Teacher: "I see that we hear different sounds in the word here. Can someone please tell me what you wrote on your board?"

Student 7: "I wrote an *r*."

Teacher: "Good job. There is an *r* in the word here, but before the *r* there is an *e*." Teacher writes the rest of the word on the board. "Okay now that we have our first word, what is next in our sentence? *Here is a blue fish swimming.*"

Students: "is"

Teacher: "Yes, let's write the word *is* on our boards. What letter says /i/?"

Student 8: "i"

Teacher: "Yes, I says /i/." Teacher writes an *i* on her board. "What sound do you here next?"

Student 9: "/z/"

Teacher: "Yes, you do here a /z/ sound but in the word *is* the letter *s* makes the /z/ sound." Teacher writes the letter *s* on her board. The next word is *a*. Please write the word *a* on your board. "Next is the word *blue*. What does the word *blue* start with?"

Students: "/b/"

Teacher: "Yes, the letter *b* is the first sound. Please write a *b* on your board." Teacher writes a *b* on her board. "What is the next sound you here in *blue*?"

Student 10: "I hear a /l/ sound so we need to write the letter *l*."

Teacher: "You are correct. Please write the letter *l* on your board." Teacher writes an *l* on their board. "The /ue/ sound is spelled with an *ue* in the word *blue*, so please write them on your board." Teacher writes the rest of the word *blue* on her board. "So far we have *Here is a blue*; what is the next word?"

Students: "Fish"

Teacher: "Let's say the sounds in *fish*. /f/-/i/-/sh/ Write the first letter that you hear." Teacher watches while students write, and then writes the letter *f* on her board. "What is the next sound that you hear in the word *fish*?"

Student 11: "/sh/"

Teacher: "There is a /sh/ sound in the word *fish* but before that is another sound, the sound /i/ which is made by the letter *i*." Teacher writes an *i* on her board. "After the /i/ sound is the /sh/ sound and that sound is made by two letters *s* and *h*." Teacher writes *sh* on her board. "The last word in our sentence is *swimming*. On your board please write the first sound that you hear in *swimming*." Teacher

watches students while they write, and then writes an *s* on her board. "I am going to show you how I sound out words when writing larger words like swimming. First I say all of the sounds: /s/-/w/-/i/-/m/-/ing/; then I write them as I say them slowly." Teacher writes out the word *swimming* while saying each sound slowly and out loud so students can hear.

Teacher: "Our sentence is almost finished. What do we need at the end of our sentence to show us that the sentence is finished?"

Student 12: "a period"

Teacher writes the period on the board.

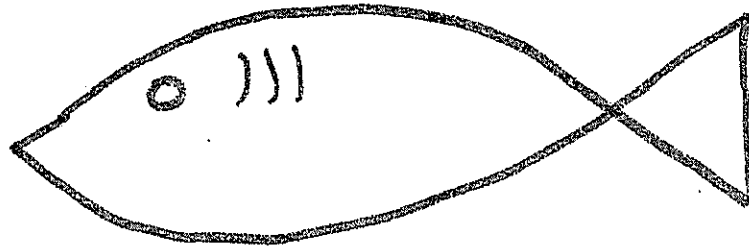
Closure:

Teacher: "Please put your pens down so we can read our sentence together; you can follow on your board. Here is a blue fish swimming. Let's read the sentence one more time. Here is a blue fish swimming. You did a great job sounding out the words in this sentence, during your independent writing time I want you to try to say the sounds in words to help you spell words that you don't know."

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

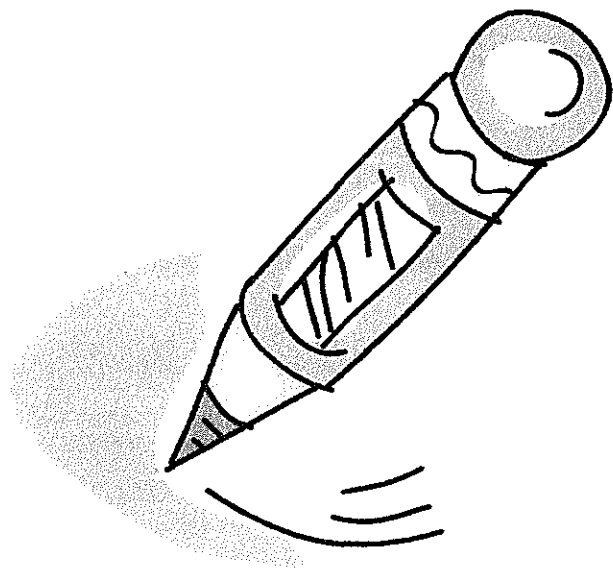
This lesson can be repeated with any picture or by using imagery and not showing students a picture but telling them a word instead.

Here is a blue
fish swimming.



Introduction to Interactive Writing Lesson

Interactive writing is an example of writing instruction that can be very powerful in a kindergarten class. The shared pen gives students a great sense of ownership over the piece of writing that is being created as well as a wonderful piece of their own writing to read later as a shared reading or independent reading. Students help to generate the text as well as write parts of the text during independent writing. The learner outcomes will change depending on what skills that you are teaching to your students or what skills in which your students need further guided practice. As you will see in the examples following the lesson, interactive writing pieces are student writing with very little teacher writing by the end of the year. In the beginning of the school year the teacher will do more of the writing, and gradually the students will take over more of the writing responsibility as their skills grow and their writing ability increases. Interactive writing can be used for many different forms of writing and can be used by a whole group or in a small group working on a particular skill. The length of time varies depending on the lesson but it is important to keep the pacing up to keep students engagement during this type of lesson.



Title of Lesson: Interactive Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: To practice directionality of print and spacing between words.

GLEs:

- 3.3.1 Understands and applies directionality and spacing of letters.

Length of Time: 10 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Individual white boards and markers for each student or chalk boards and chalk

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "We are going to write our morning message about music today. I want you to think of something the we could say about music class to write together."

Procedures:

Teacher passes out white boards or chalk boards using pre-established routine.

Teacher: "Who has a sentence about music that they would like to share. I am going to have three of you share today."

Student 1: "I like going to music."

Student 2: "We are going to music today."

Student 3: "Music is my favorite."

Teacher: "All of your sentences are great and they all talk about music class. Today we are going to write "I like going to music." That sentence has some words we know so that will help us write our message today. First we need to practice saying our sentence so we know all of the words that we are going to write. I like

going to music. Let's count how many words there are in our sentence." Teacher holds up fingers as they count and say the sentence. "I like going to music. How many words is that?"

Student 4: "5"

Teacher: "Correct, there are 5 words in our sentence. Let's begin writing. What is our first word?"

Students: "I"

Teacher: "Ok write in on your board."

Students write the word I on their boards; the teacher watches that students are writing the word on the left side of their board and have written an upper case I. Teacher then picks a student to come up to the group paper and write the word.

Teacher: "Okay before we start writing on our chart paper, where are we going to start? Can you point to where you are going to write the word I?"

Student points to the right side of the paper.

Teacher: The teacher points to the correct place. "We need to start over on the left side because that is where we always begin writing, just like in our books. So can you write the word I over here please?"

Student writes the word *I*.

Teacher: "Great job. Let's say our sentence again. I like going to music. What is the next word that we need to write?"

Student 5: "like"

Teacher: "Yes, let's say the sounds in like. /l/-/i/-/k/; please right *like* on your board."

Teacher is watch for students to write the sounds or write the correct spelling if it has been introduced as a sight word already.

Teacher: "I see a lot of students writing the sounds in like on their board."

Teacher chooses a student to come and write the word on the board. "What do we need before we write the work like?"

Student 6: "A finger space." Student holds up two fingers to hold the space and writes *lic*.

"You did a great job writing the sounds that you heard. Like is one of those tricky words that has an e at the end. And there are 2 letters that say /k/ and in the word like it is the k that says /k/." Teacher takes correction tape and covers the c, and has the student write a *ke* to replace the c. "Great job. What word is next?"

Student 7: "going"

Teacher: "Going is a new word for us. We know how to write go, so first can you write the word go. Make sure to use a finger space on your board." Teacher chooses a student to come up and write *go* on the class chart paper. Student uses his fingers to hold the space and writes *go* on the chart paper. "Great job, we now have the word go but for our sentence we said going to music. There are three letters that make up the sound /ing/. They are i-n-g." Teacher writes i-n-g on the paper finishing the word going. "So far we have *I like going*, what is our next word?"

Student 8: "Music"

Student 9: "No we need to write *to* before music."

Teacher: "That is correct; we need the word *to* before music. Please write the word *to* on your board." Teacher is watching students to make sure that they are using finger spaces and are writing from the left to the right. Teacher chooses a student to come write the word *to*. "Don't forget your finger space." Student holds up two fingers to hold the space and writes *to* on the chart paper. "We have only one word left, *music*. Let's say the sounds in *music*. /m/-/u/-/s/-/i/-/c/. What is the first letter in the word *music*?"

Student 10: "m"

Teacher: "Correct. Come up and write an m on our board please. Everyone else write it on your board." Student comes up and writes an m on the chart paper. "Thank you. The next sound is /u/, which is the letter u." Teacher writes the letter u. "Then we hear an /s/ sound. What letter is that?"

Students: "s"

Teacher: "Yes, write an s on your board." Teacher writes an s on her paper. "Then we hear an /i/ sound. What letter says /i/?"

Students: "I"

Teacher: "Good, write an i on your board." Teacher writes an i on her paper. "What is the last sound in music?"

Students: "/k/"

Teacher: "What letter is that?"

Student 11: "k"

Teacher: "K does say /k/ but for the word *music* it is a c. Can you come up and write a c on our paper?" Student comes up and writes a c on the chart paper. "What is the last thing we need to complete our sentence?"

Students: "Period"

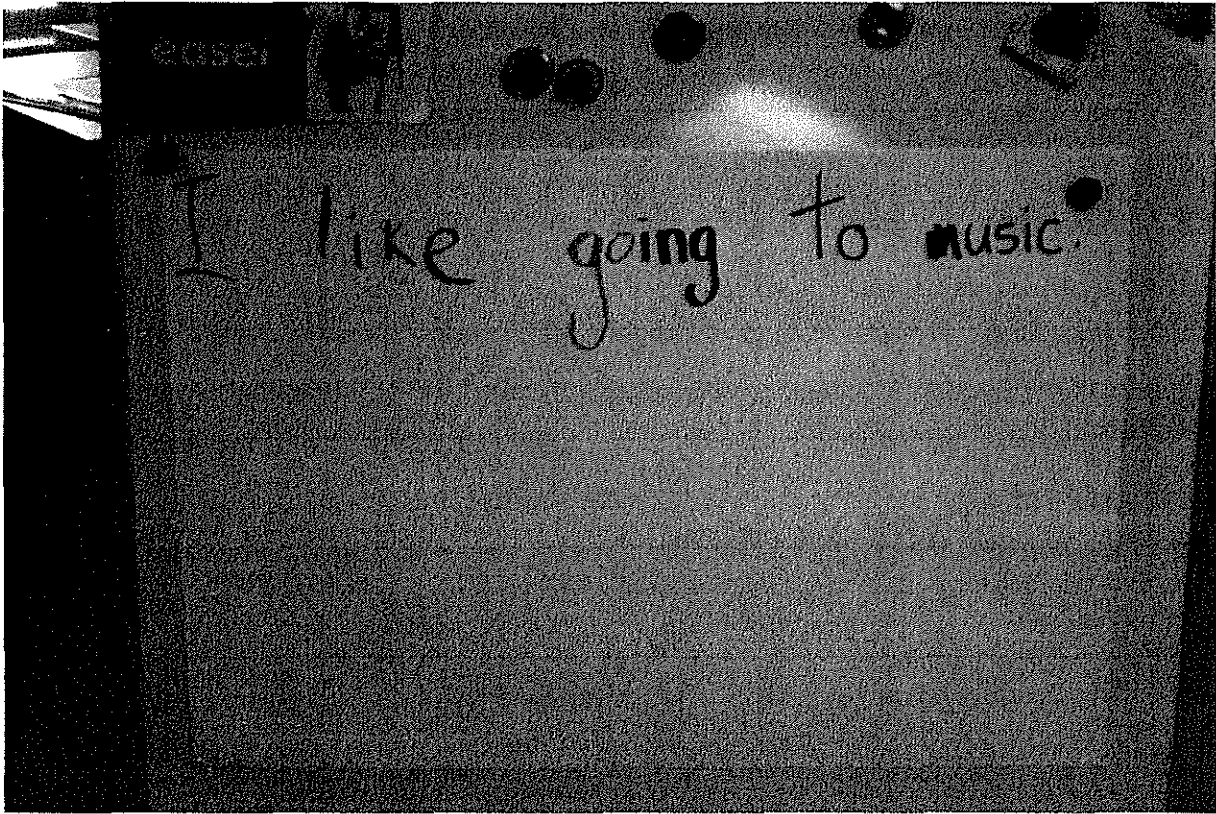
Teacher: Writes a period at the end of her sentence.

Closure:

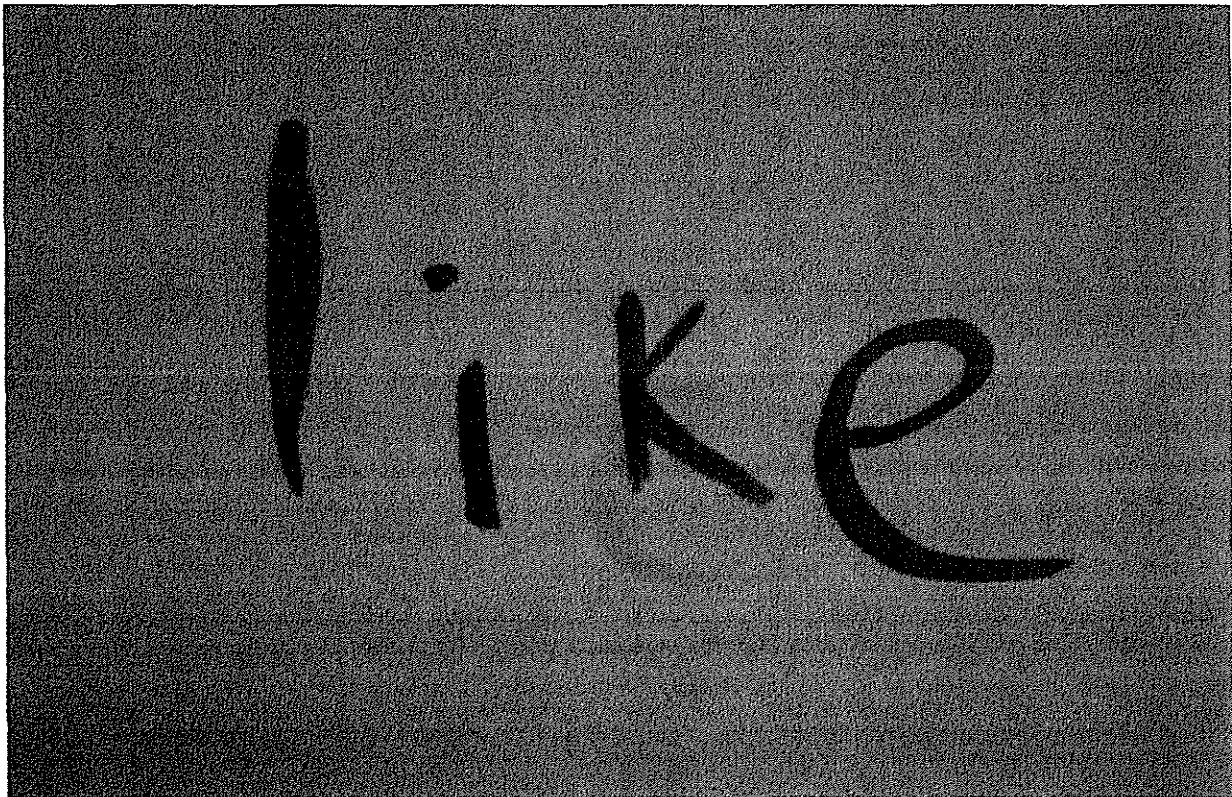
Teacher: "Let's put our pens down and read our sentence. Please put your finger under the first word on your board. *I like going to music.* Good let's read it one more time. *I like going to music.* Great job, we have all written our messages from left to right and we remembered to use finger spaces. Please put your boards away."

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

The following day the message can be expanded or a new message can be started. Messages should be posted in the room or kept to be pulled out later for shared reading.

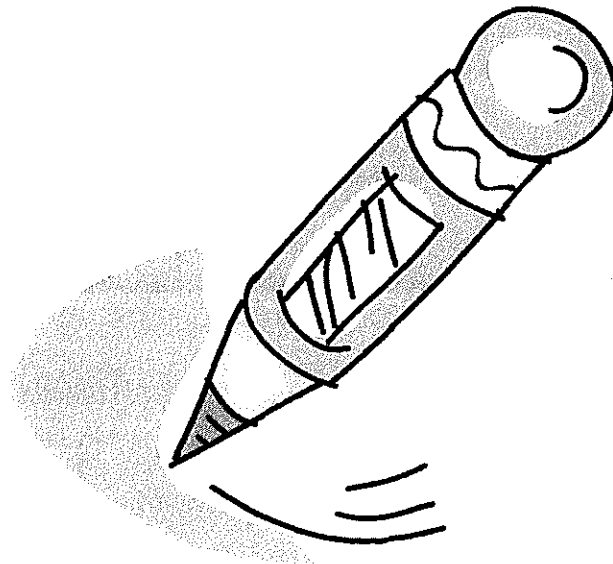


(Below is a close-up of the correction tape over the letter c that was replaced with ke.)



Introduction to Writer's Workshop

The writer's workshop lesson plans are designed as an introduction to the classroom routine of doing writer's workshop. They are the introductions to what will become an ongoing writing routine in the classroom. When you are introducing writer's workshop, students will struggle with the routine and what they are supposed to do next. Following each lesson I have put the teacher model example as well as student examples so you can have an idea of what to expect from your students when they are going through this process. It will more than likely be tough at first for your students to get the routine down, so it is very important that the classroom have picture directions up for students to follow and a lot of supplies ready for them to use, such as extra pencils, paper, and pictures for students to get writing ideas from. Having the structure down is the most difficult part of this writing routine, so know that it will take a while for the class to be productive and to be able to stay on task while waiting to conference or ask a question. But the results that you will see are worth the struggle.



Unit: Writer's Workshop Lesson #1

Title of Lesson: Pre-Write Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: Students will make a plan for their independent writing.

GLEs:

- 1.1.1 Uses pictures and talk for thinking about and planning writing.

Length of Time: 30 minutes: 10 for modeling and 20 for student work time

Materials Needed:

- Kindergarten Mind Map worksheet: a copy for every student (extras are good to have on hand)
- Pencils
- Overhead or Elmo

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "Today we are going to start learning how to write our own stories. You are going to be able to choose what you want to talk about and be able to illustrate your own writing. I want you to start thinking of a great story that you could write. It could be something that you like, a place that you have been or maybe a funny story that has happen to you."

Procedures:

Teacher: "First what I want to do is hear some of your ideas. So please turn to your neighbor and tell them what story you are thinking about." Teacher walks around and listens to what the students are telling their partners.

Teacher: "Okay eyes on me. I heard a lot of great story ideas. I heard one student say that they would like to write about going to the park yesterday. And another student said that they would like to write about their dog. These are both wonderful ideas. Today you are going to make a plan for your story by using a mind map." Teacher puts a copy of the mind map up for the class to see.

Teacher: "I am going to use a marker so that you can see my writing easily. When you write, you are going to use a pencil. What we need to do is figure out what we are going to write about first and put that in the middle. I am going to write about my dog playing the backyard. I am going to draw a picture of my dog in the backyard so I will remember what my story is about. Then I need to think of details for each of the three bubbles. My dog likes to play fetch, so I am going to put that in one of the bubbles. She also likes to lay in the sun and she likes to chew on her bone in the grass. Those are the three details of my story that I am going to put in my bubbles." Teacher draws a sketch and writes the sentences in each bubble while the class is watching.

Teacher: "Today, I want you to plan out your story, so first you need to choose a story and put that in the middle. Then think of details or things that happen that you could put in your story. I am going to give you a mind map and I want you to go to your table and get started. I will be walking around if you need help." Teacher passes out papers and helps students as needed.

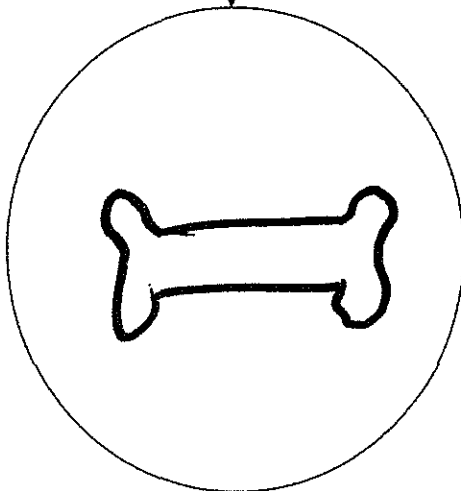
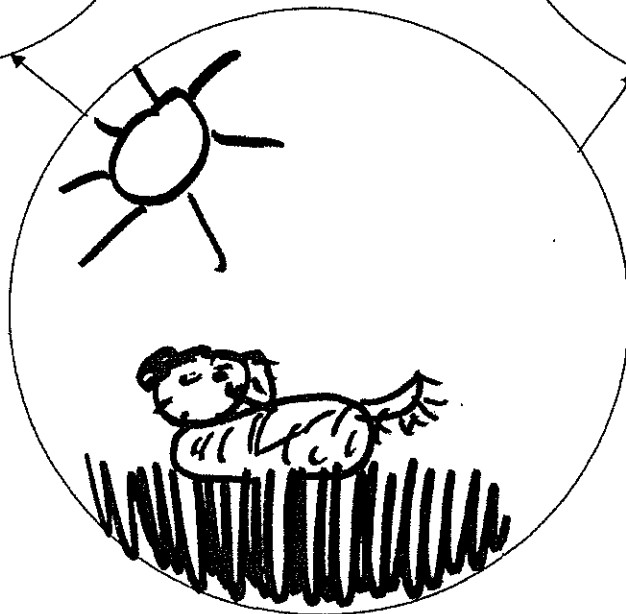
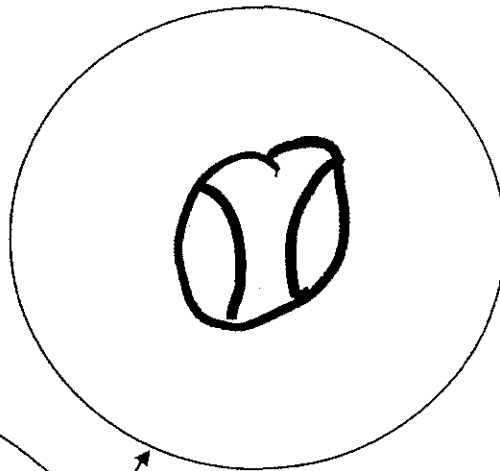
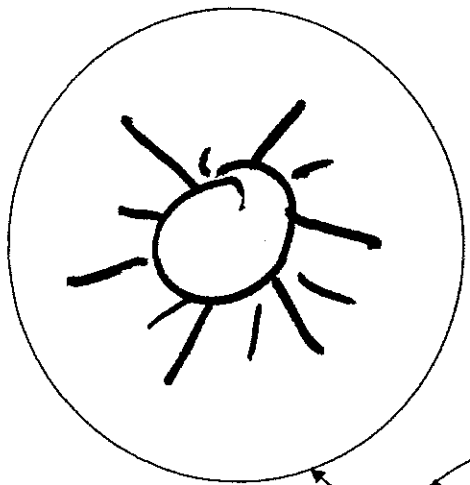
Closure:

Teacher: "Please bring your paper back to the carpet. I would like you to share your plan with your neighbor; tell them what your story is about and what your three details are." Students turn to their neighbor and are each given a turn to share, about 1 minute each. The teacher then can choose two or three students to share out to the whole group.

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

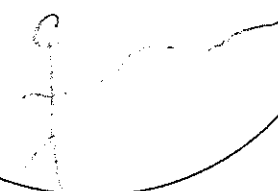
Drafting the story will follow in an upcoming writing lesson.

Name Ms. W




Name student 1

me PLAYING
 WITH MY
 RACE CAR


Me playing
 WITH STICK FIGURE


me play
 WITH MY
 TOYS


PLAYING
 WITH


Name student 2

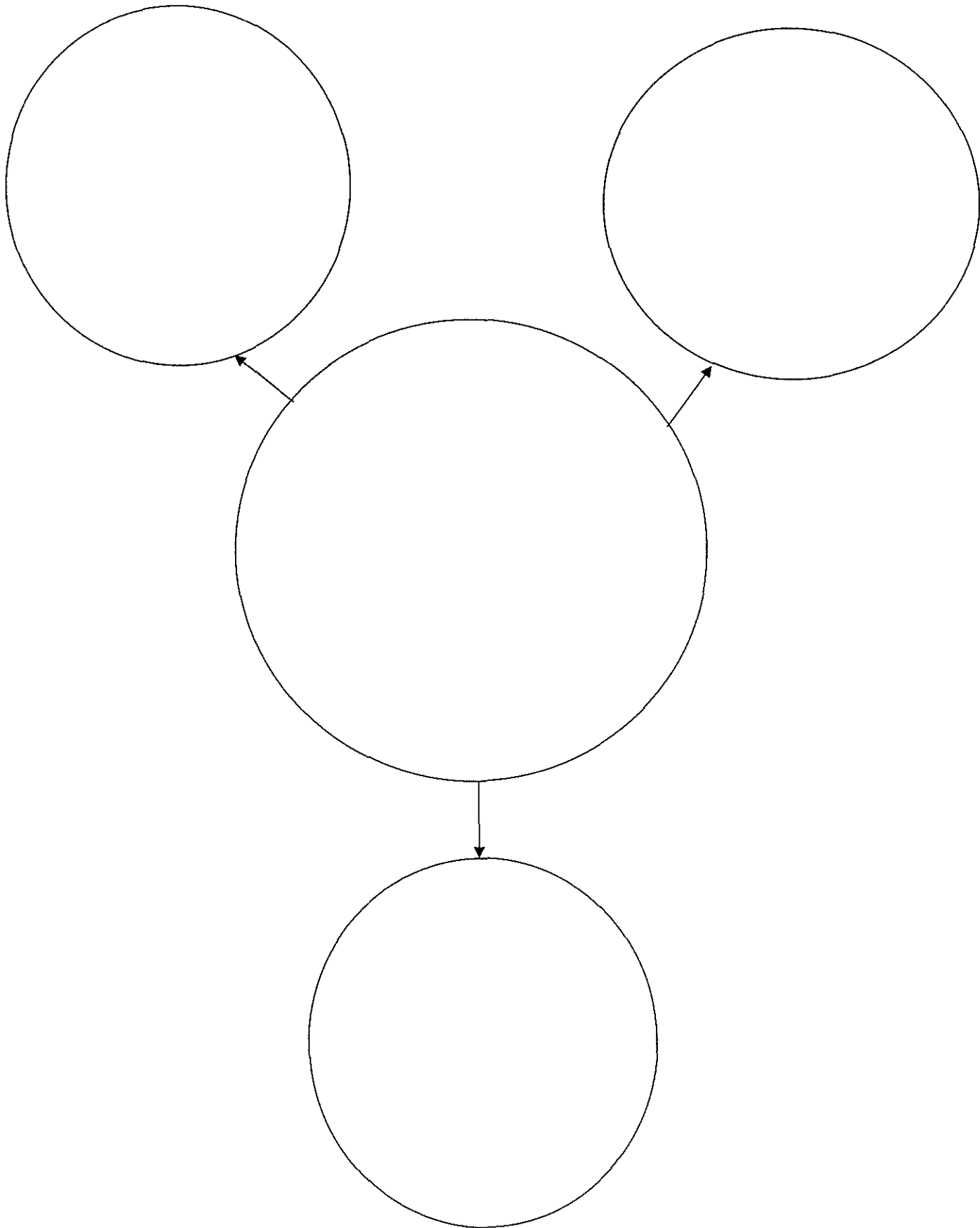
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AND
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POD

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to the
homs
RAS

PANI
50+
RAS

Name _____



Unit: Writer's Workshop Lesson #2

Title of Lesson: Drafting Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes:

GLEs:

- 1.2.1 Produces a draft of words, captions, and/or sentences.

Length of Time: 30 minutes: 10-15 to model and 15-20 for student work time

Materials Needed:

- Draft Paper at least 3 copies per student
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Overhead or Elmo

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "Yesterday we made a plan for our writing using a mind map. Today you are going to write the story. You are going to make a draft. This is when you write the story for the first time and you are not worried about spelling or mistakes. You just want to get your ideas on paper."

Procedures:

Teacher: Teacher puts up the mind map that she created in the previous lesson. "This is the mind map of the story that I am going to write about my dog in the backyard. Remember, I am going to write in marker so that you can see it better; you will be using a pencil. My first bubble is my dog playing fetch, so my first page of my draft is going to about my dog playing fetch." Teacher writes sentence on the line with some common mistakes while talking aloud in front of the class. "I want to write *my dog likes to play fetch.*" Teacher writes: *my dog licx to pla fetc*

Then the teacher reads what she has written. If a student notices a mistake the teacher can either address it then or can say that she will fix it later.

Teacher: "My second bubble is about my dog laying in the sun. I want to write that she likes to lay in the sun." Teacher writes: *she Licx to IA in the SUN*

Then the teacher reads what she has written on the page.

Teacher: "My last bubble is about my dog chewing on her bone in the grass. I want to write *Maddy likes to chew on her bone in the grass.*" Teacher writes: *Maddy licx to cu on hr bon in the gras.*

The teacher reads what she has written on that page.

Teacher: "I have written about all of my three ideas from my mind map. I am going to read all of it not. *My dog likes to play fetch. She likes to lay in the sun. Maddy likes to chew on her bone in the grass.* My draft is finished. Now it is your turn to write your draft."

Teacher: "I am going to give you the first page to write your first bubble sentence. I will be here to help you sound out words but I will not spell words for you. I want you to practice writing the sounds that you hear. When you are finished with the first page of your draft please come and show me and I will give you your next page. Come and get you mind map and your first draft paper."

Teacher passes out mind maps that were completed in the previous lesson and a blank draft paper. When students are ready for their next paper they need to read what they have to the teacher first. This will take more than one day for most students. Those who finish early can think of another detail that they could write and add pages to their story.

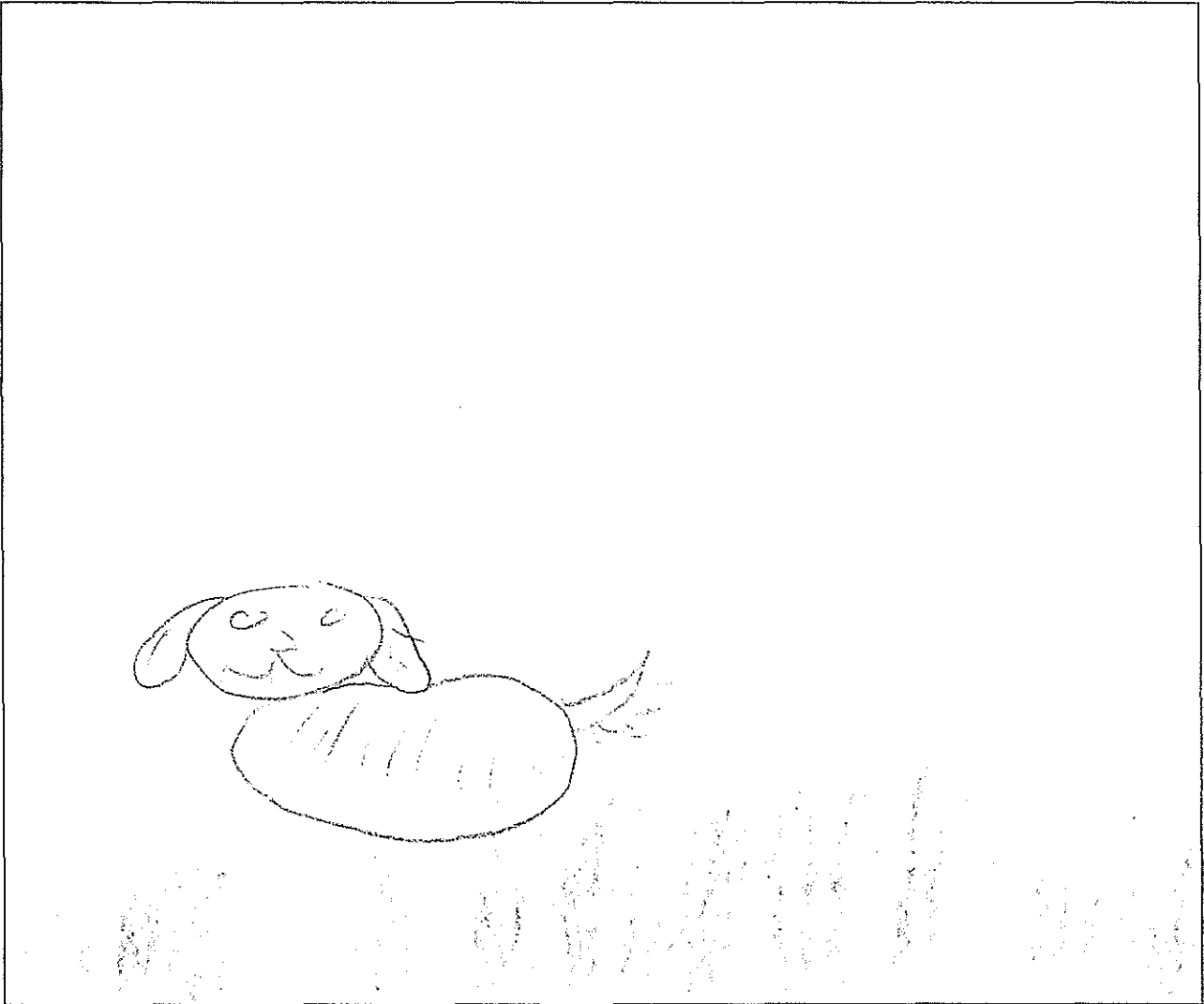
Closure:

Teacher: "Please bring all of your pages to the carpet. I want you to share your story with your neighbor." Students read their draft to their neighbor while the teacher walks around and listens. "I heard a lot of great stories. I am going to have two of you share you drafts with the class." Teacher chooses two volunteers to share their draft with the class.

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

In future lessons students will be revising and editing their stories, so spelling and other conventions are not a concern at this point.

Name Ms.W



my dog licx to
pla fetc

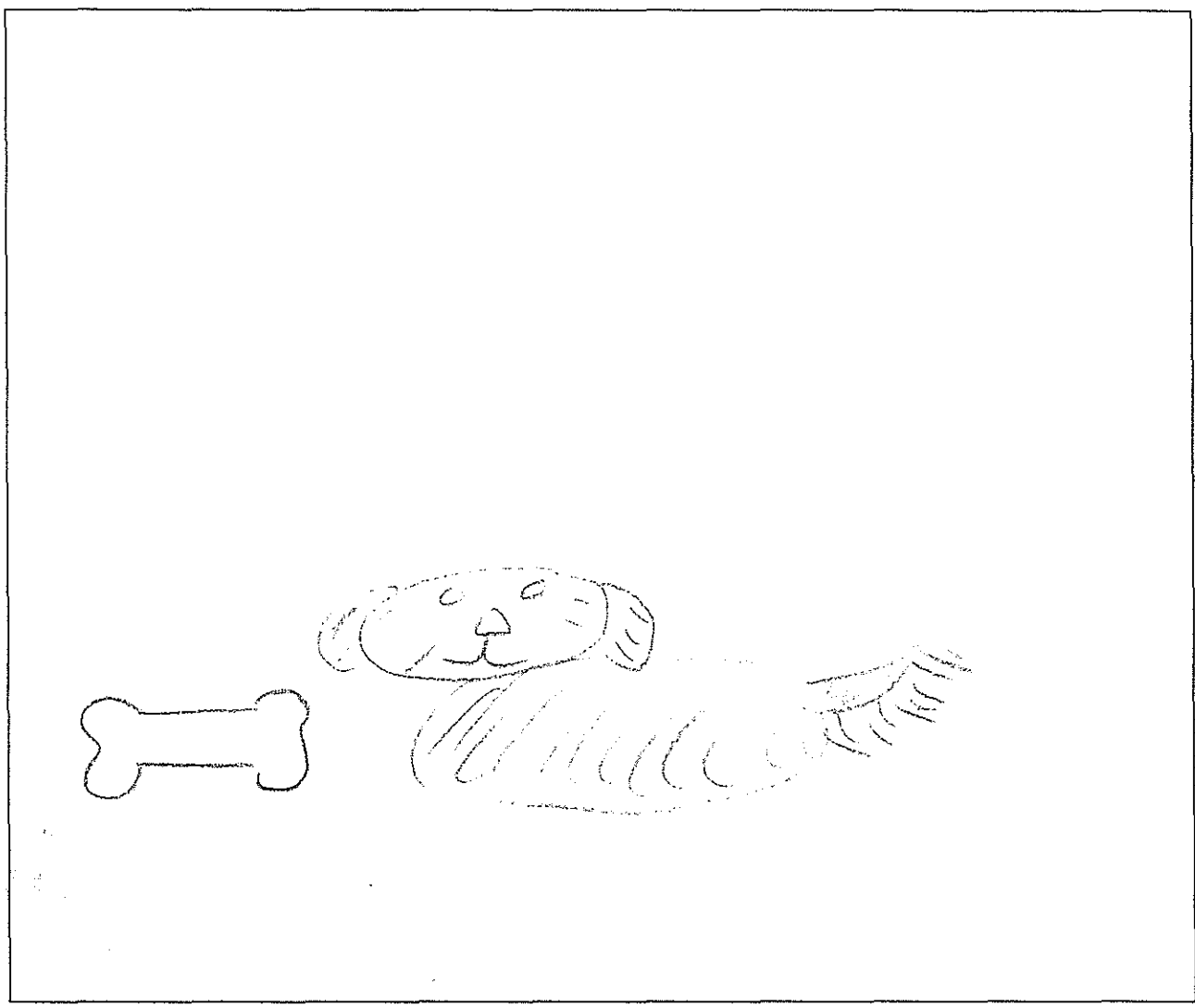
Name Ms.W



she Licx to IA

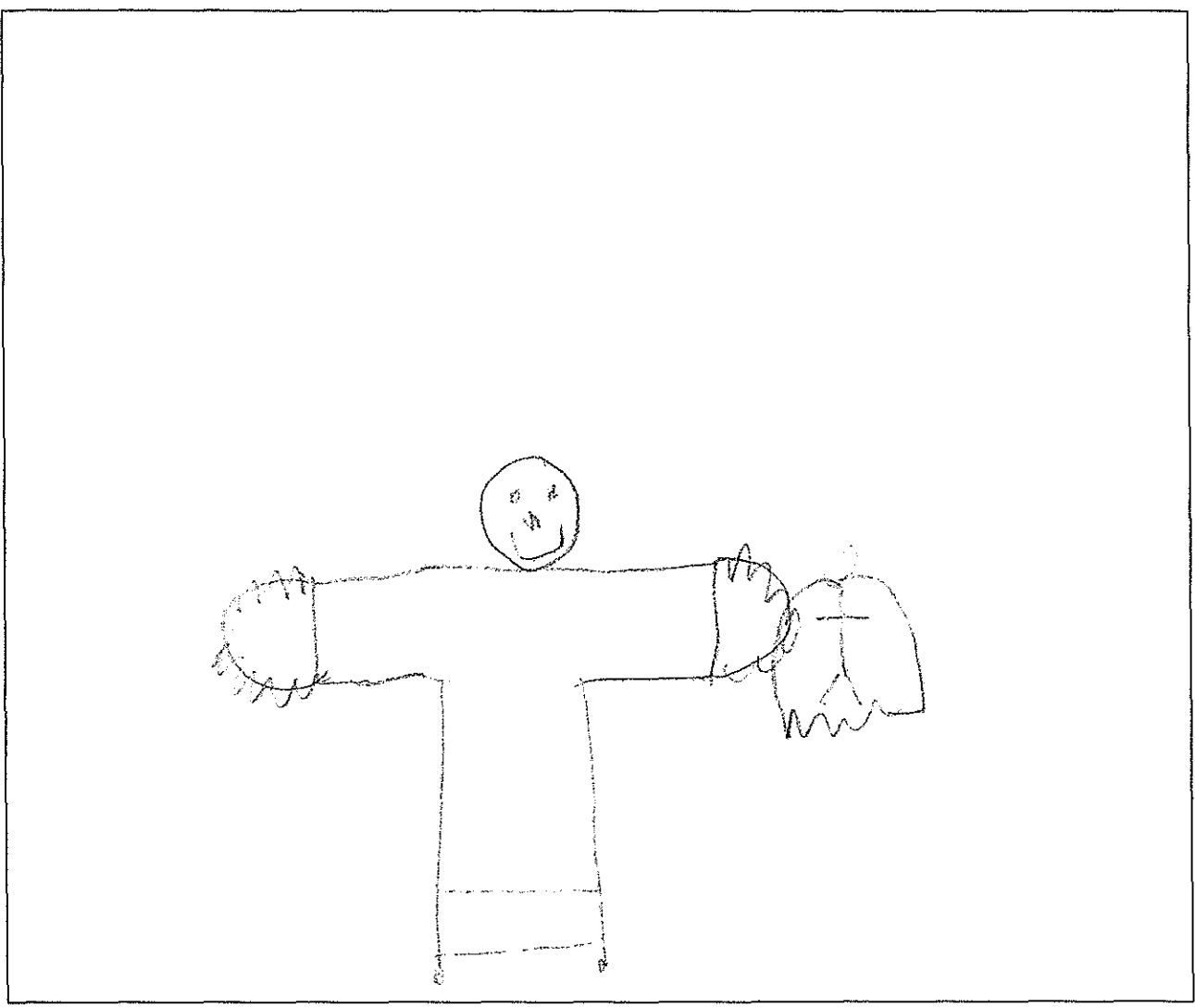
in the SUN

Name Ms. W



Maddy licx to cu
on hr bon in the gras.

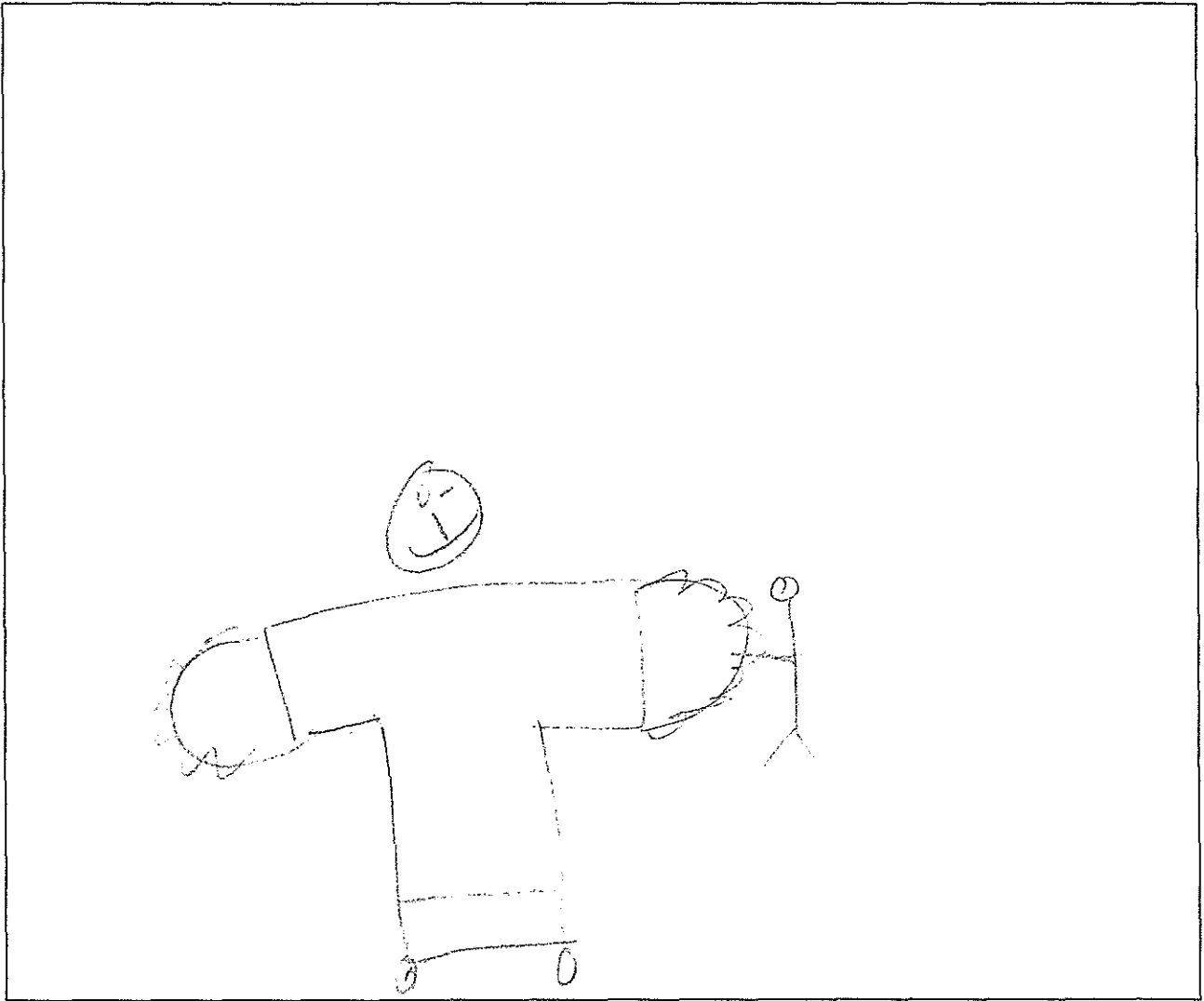
Name student 1



I like to pl-

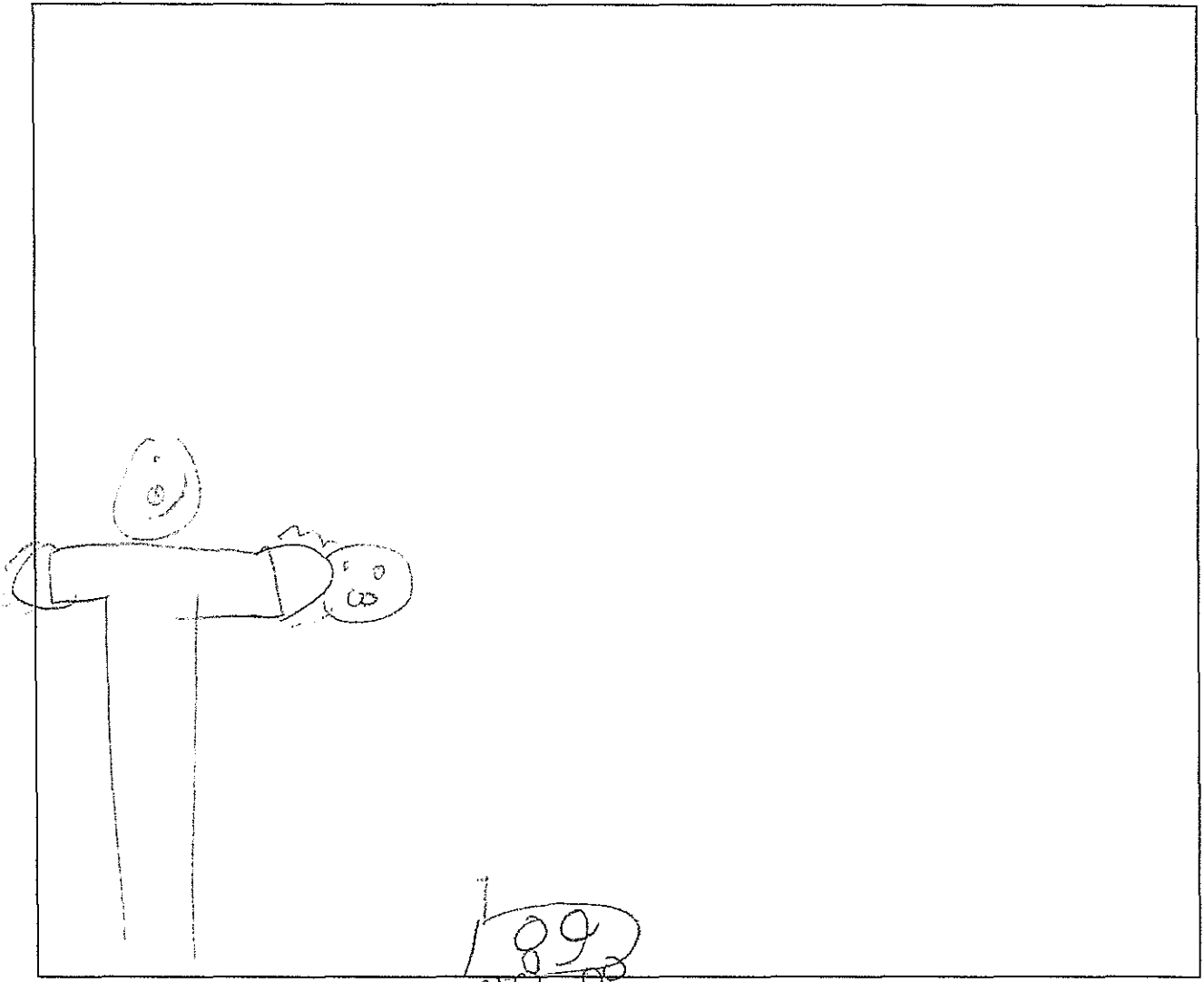
with sat m-

Name student 1



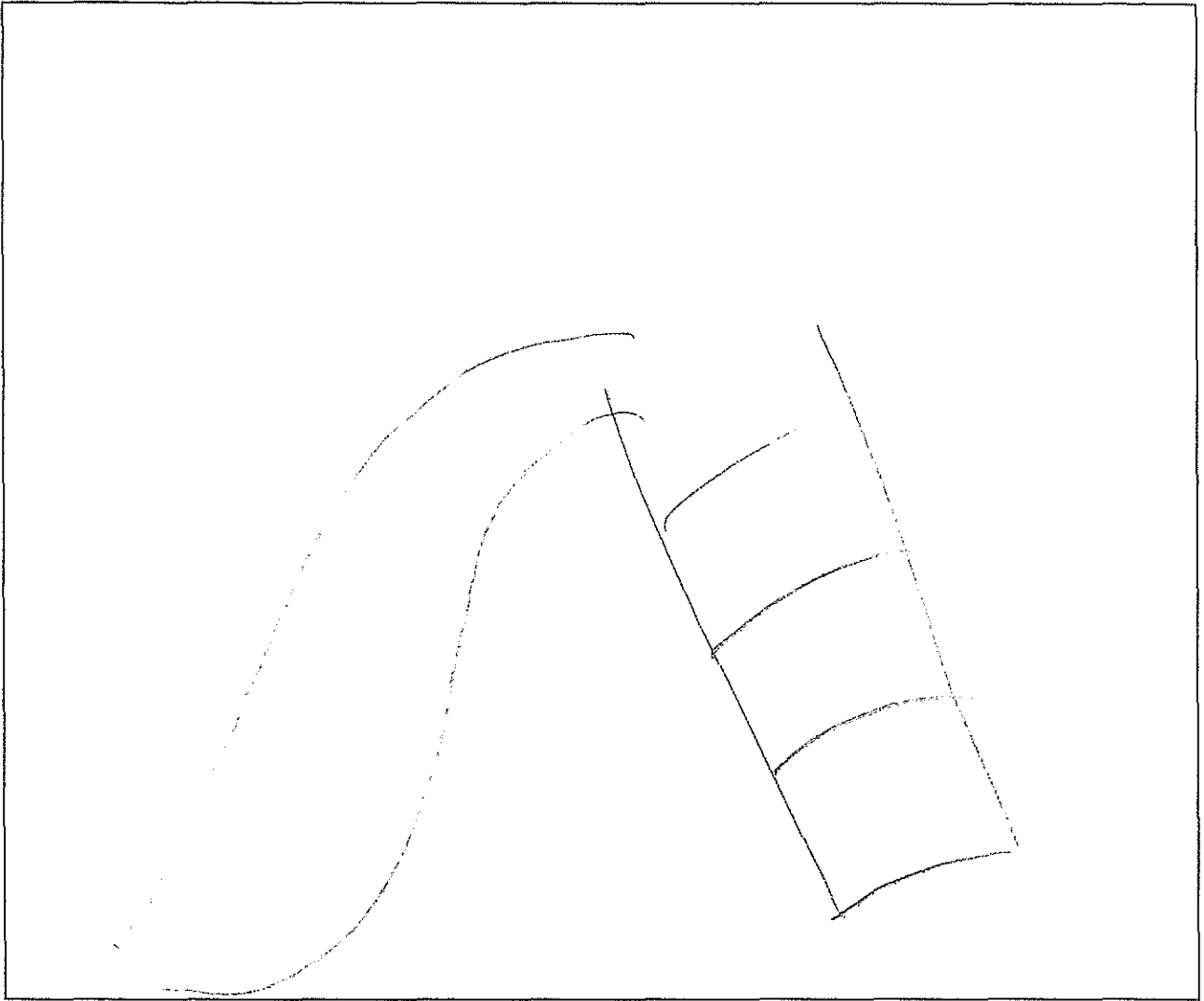
I love TO
PLAY with SPIDERMAN.

Name student 1



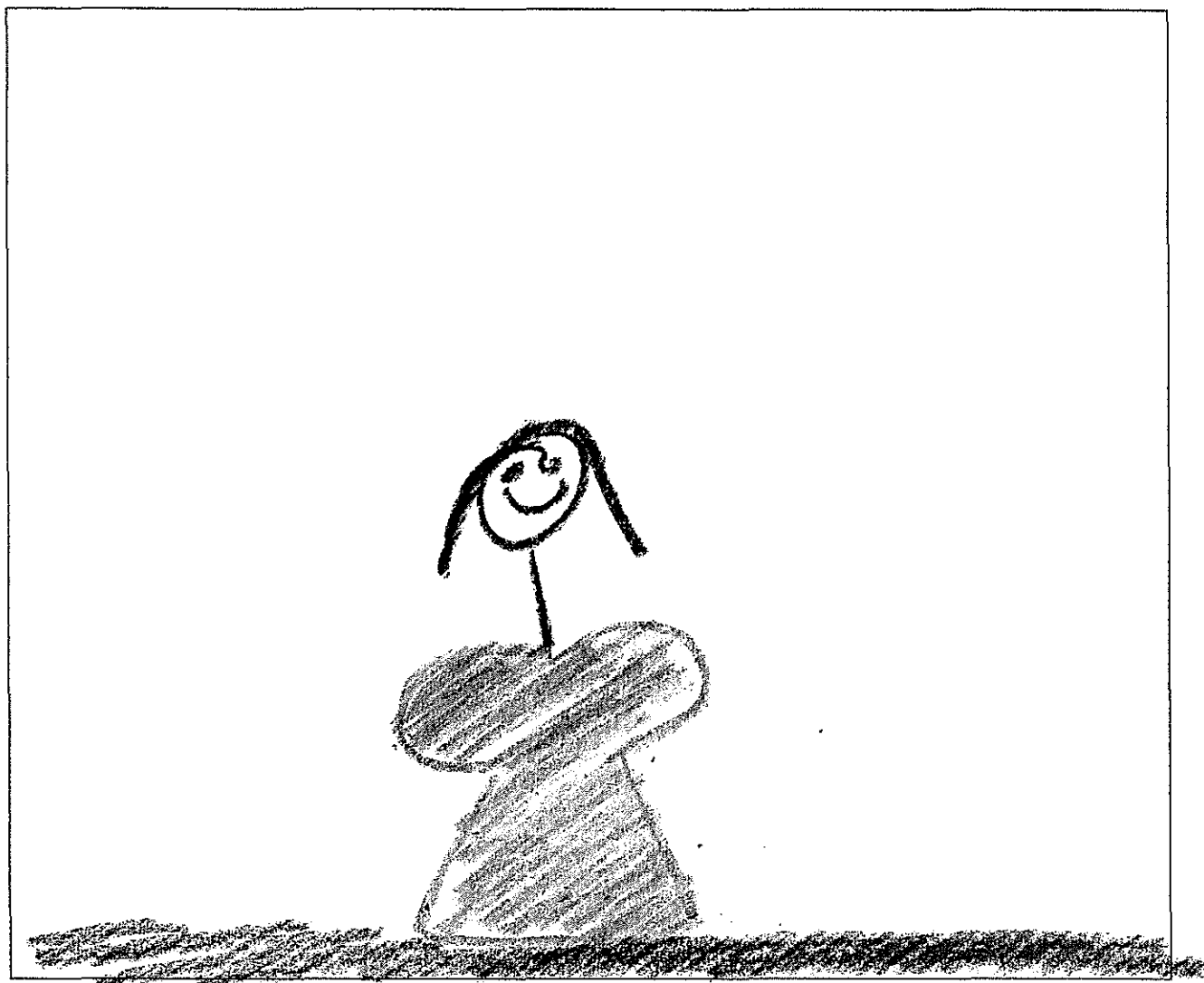
I like TO PLAY
 WIF MY RICE.

Name student 2



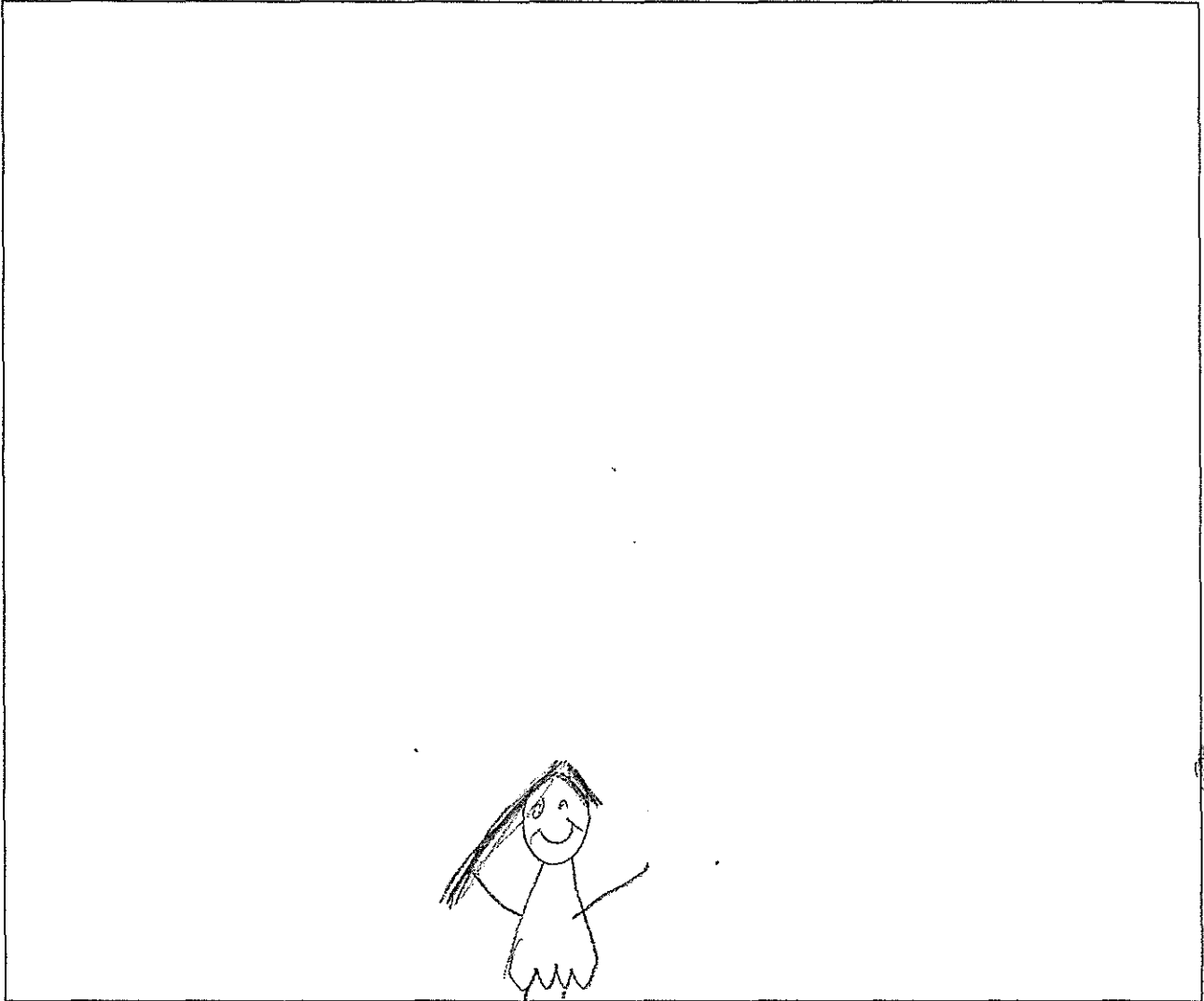
I went on the
SID

Name student 2



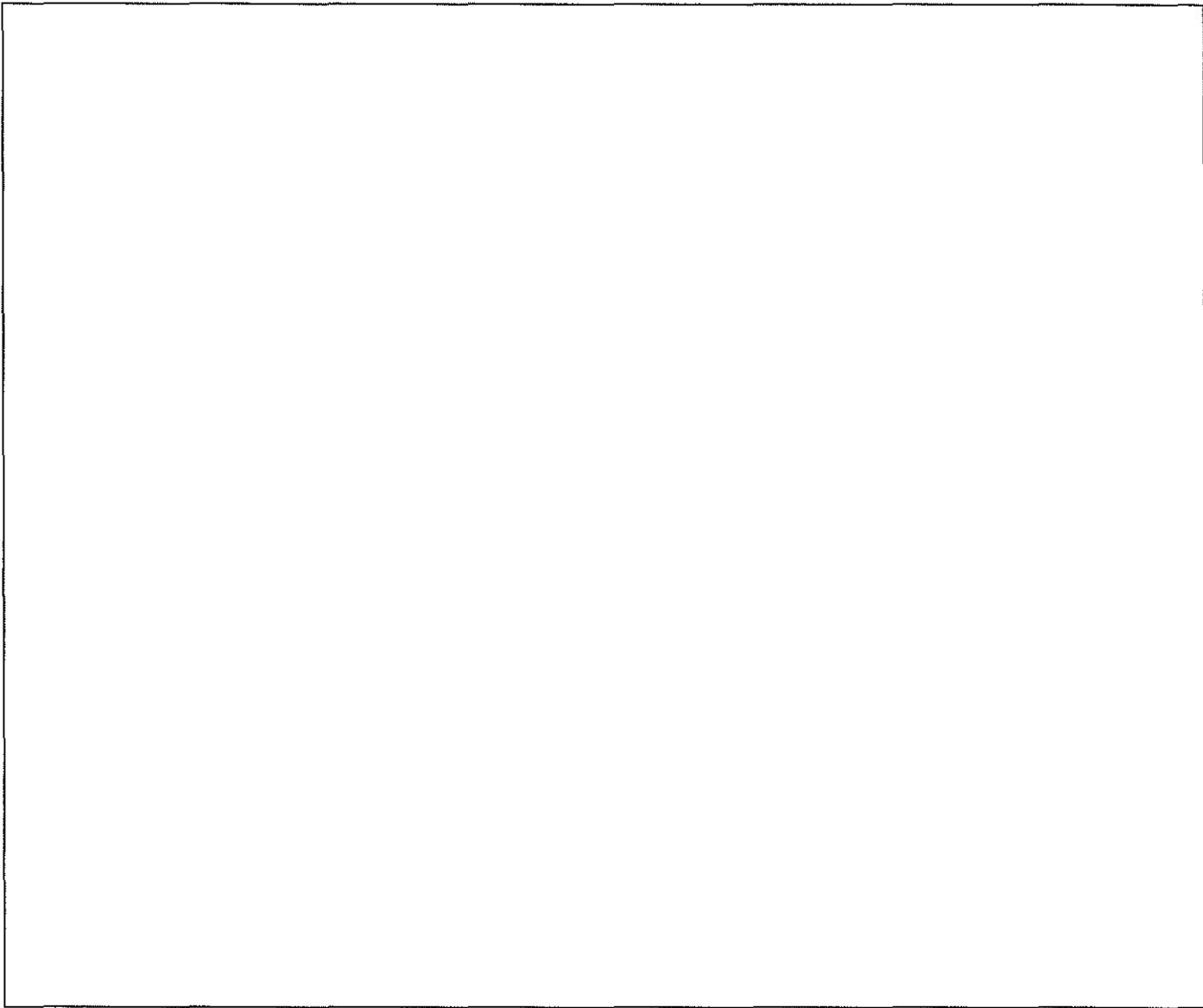
I PAT MY FAS

Name student 2



I like popcorn

Name _____



Unit: Writer's Workshop Lesson #3**Title of Lesson:** Revising and Editing Writing Lesson**Grade Level:** Kindergarten**Learner Outcomes:** Students will be able to revise and edit their own writing with help from the teacher.**GLEs:**

- 1.3.1 Understands that writing can be changed.
- 1.4.1 Understands that there are conventions of punctuation and capitalization in writing.

Length of Time: 30 Minutes: 10 for modeling and 20 for students to work**Materials Needed:**

- Student's written drafts
- Colored pencils
- Student dictionary

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "Today we are going to work on revising and editing our drafts that we have been working on. Revising is changing your writing to make it better and editing is fixing spelling and conventions like capitals and punctuation. I will show you on my draft about my dog."

Procedures:

Teacher: "This is my story about my dog playing the my backyard. It says: *My dog likes to play fetch. She likes to lay in the sun. Maddy likes to chew on her bone in the grass.* Now I want to revise my writing, so I am going to think about anything that I could add to make my story better like describing words or fancy words."

Teacher: "I know I could add that she likes to play fetch with a tennis ball; that gives more detail. I could also add that she lays in the shade when it is hot on the other page." The teacher then adds the next words and sentence on the draft

using a different color pencil so the students can see the changes easily. Then the teacher reads the new story to the class.

Teacher: "*My dog likes to play fetch with a tennis ball. She likes to lay in the sun. But when it is hot she lays in the shade. Maddy likes to chew on her bone in the grass.* Now that I have made my story better I want to work on editing my story for spelling and punctuation." The teacher changes to a different color pencil to make the editing changes.

Teacher: "I see in the beginning of my sentence that I didn't use an upper case letter so I need to fix that." The teacher changes the letter by writing over the letter with the colored pencil. See examples for clarification. Teacher goes through the entire story making spelling changes, capitalization corrections, and fixing punctuation.

"During independent writing time I am going to be working with students on revising and editing. If you are ready to see me, please come and write your name on the board and I will call you over. While you are waiting you can add more to your writing or your pictures. Please do not interrupt me working with another student."

Teacher releases students to work independently while she works with one student at a time to revise and edit their writing. However, it is important to remember that this is their writing, so it is the teacher's job to help when the students want help but not to fix their writing for them. If the teacher notices something that is incorrect and if the student doesn't want to fix it that is their choice. It can be addressed in a mini-lesson later or in a small group. The goal is to get students to edit and revise their own writing, and they will miss things.

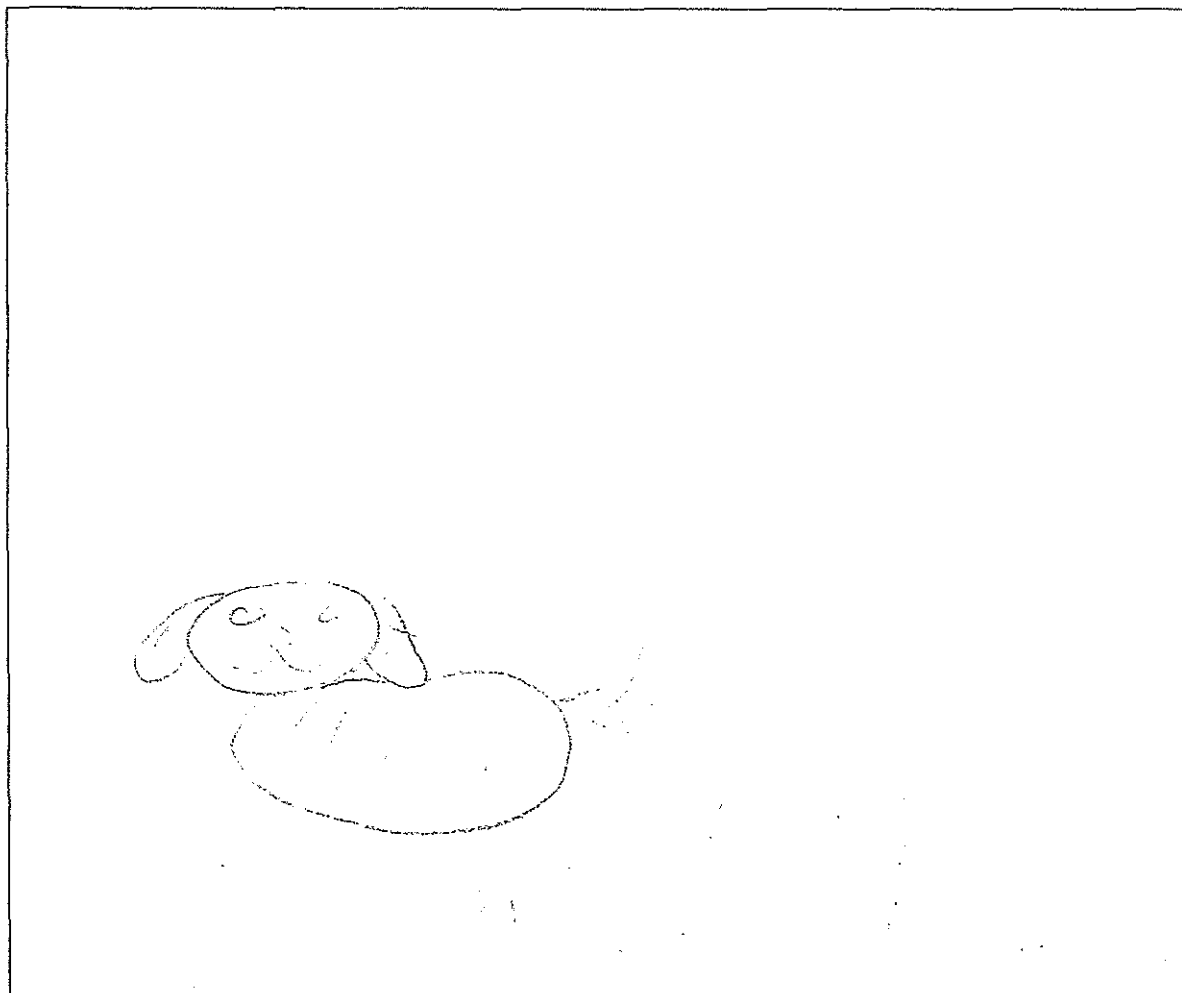
Closure:

Teacher: "Please bring your writing to the rug. I would like you to share what you were working on today with your partner." Students take turns reading to their partner while the teacher is walking around listening to their reading. "I would like two students to share what they are working on. Who would like to share?" The teacher chooses two students to come up and share their work.

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

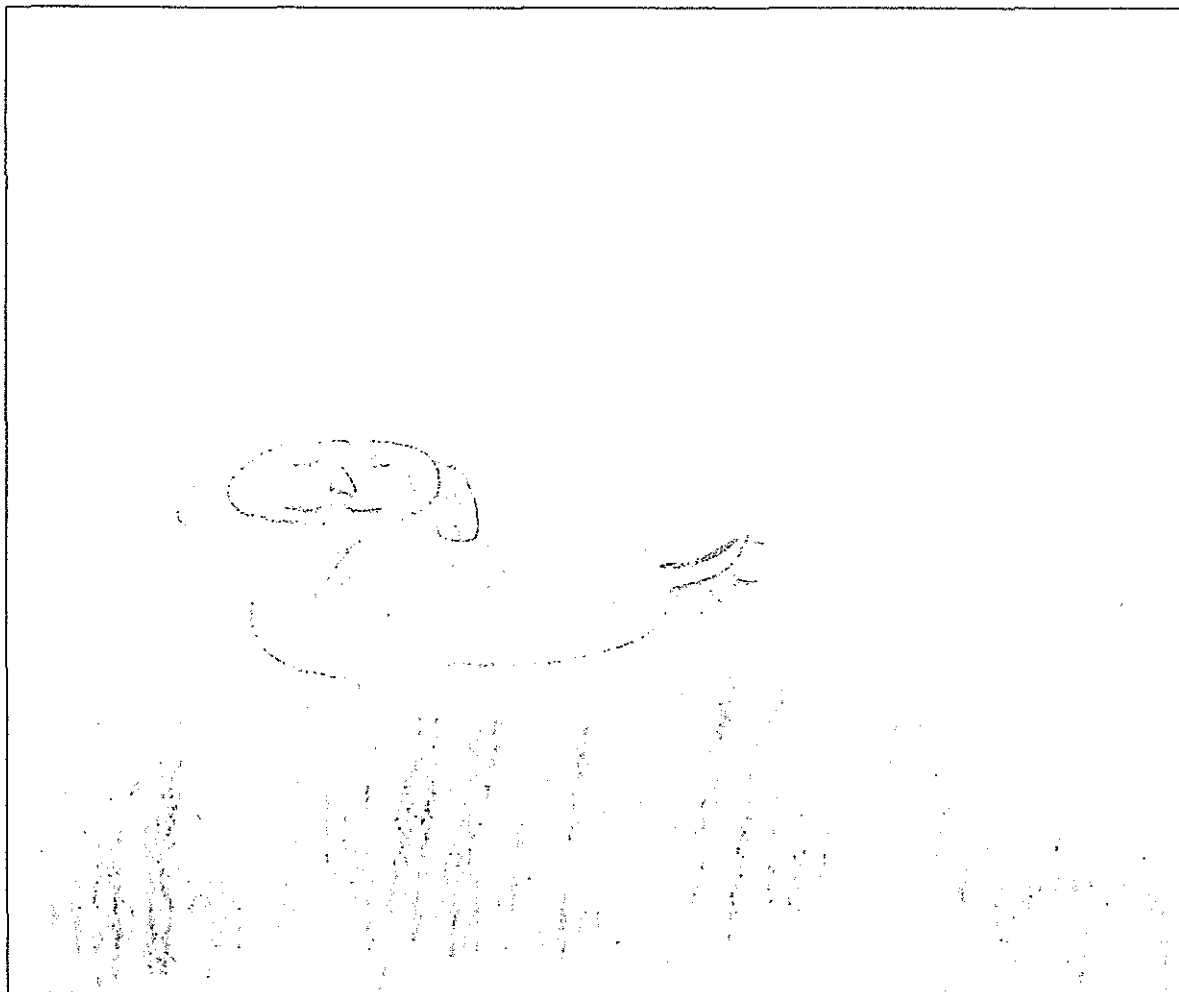
Students will be drafting and revising/editing for multiple days before they have completed their story and are ready for publishing. Publishing will be a mini-lesson in a following lesson.

Name Ms.W



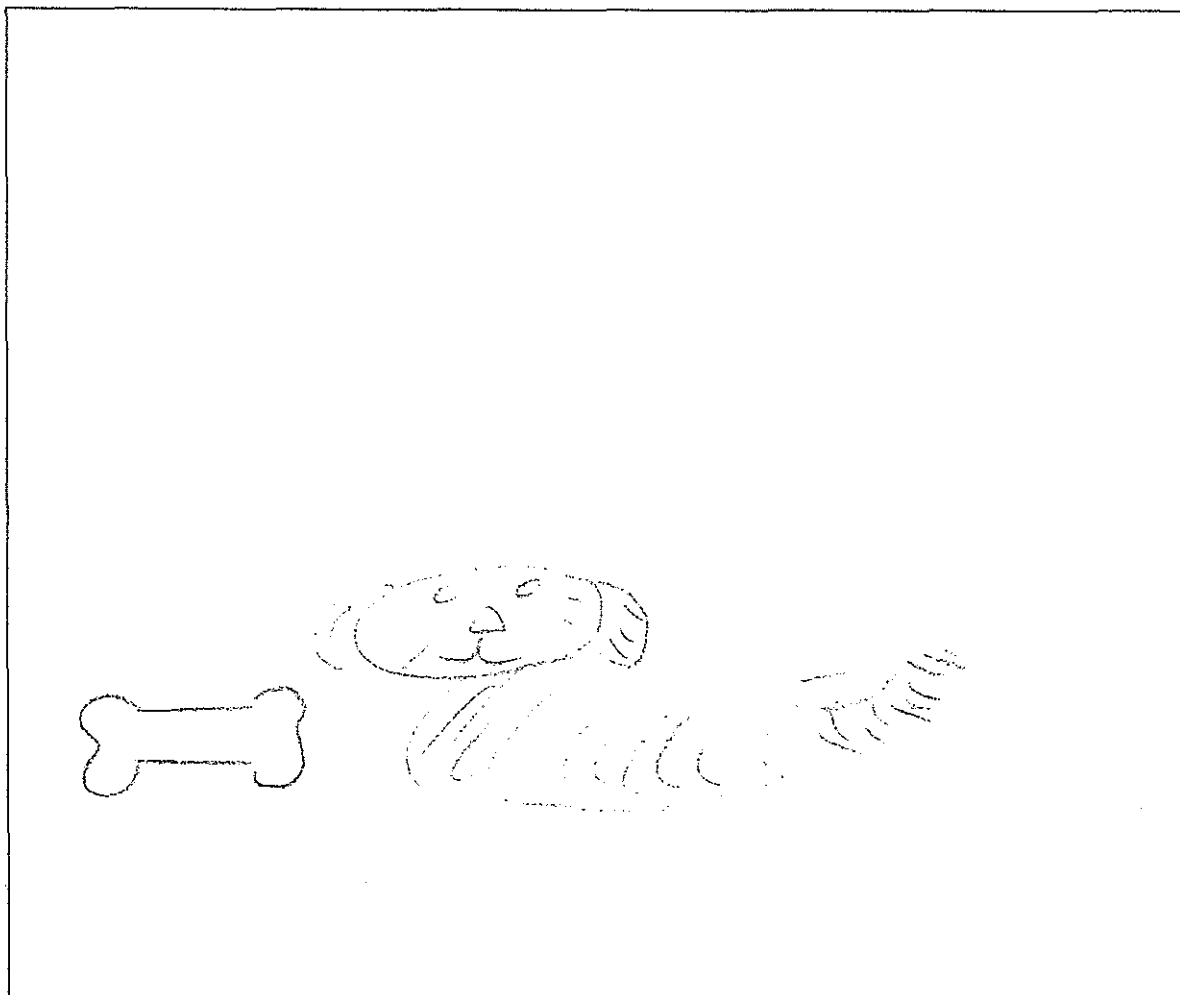
My dog ^{likes} ~~lies~~ to
play fetch with a
tennis ball.

Name Ms.W



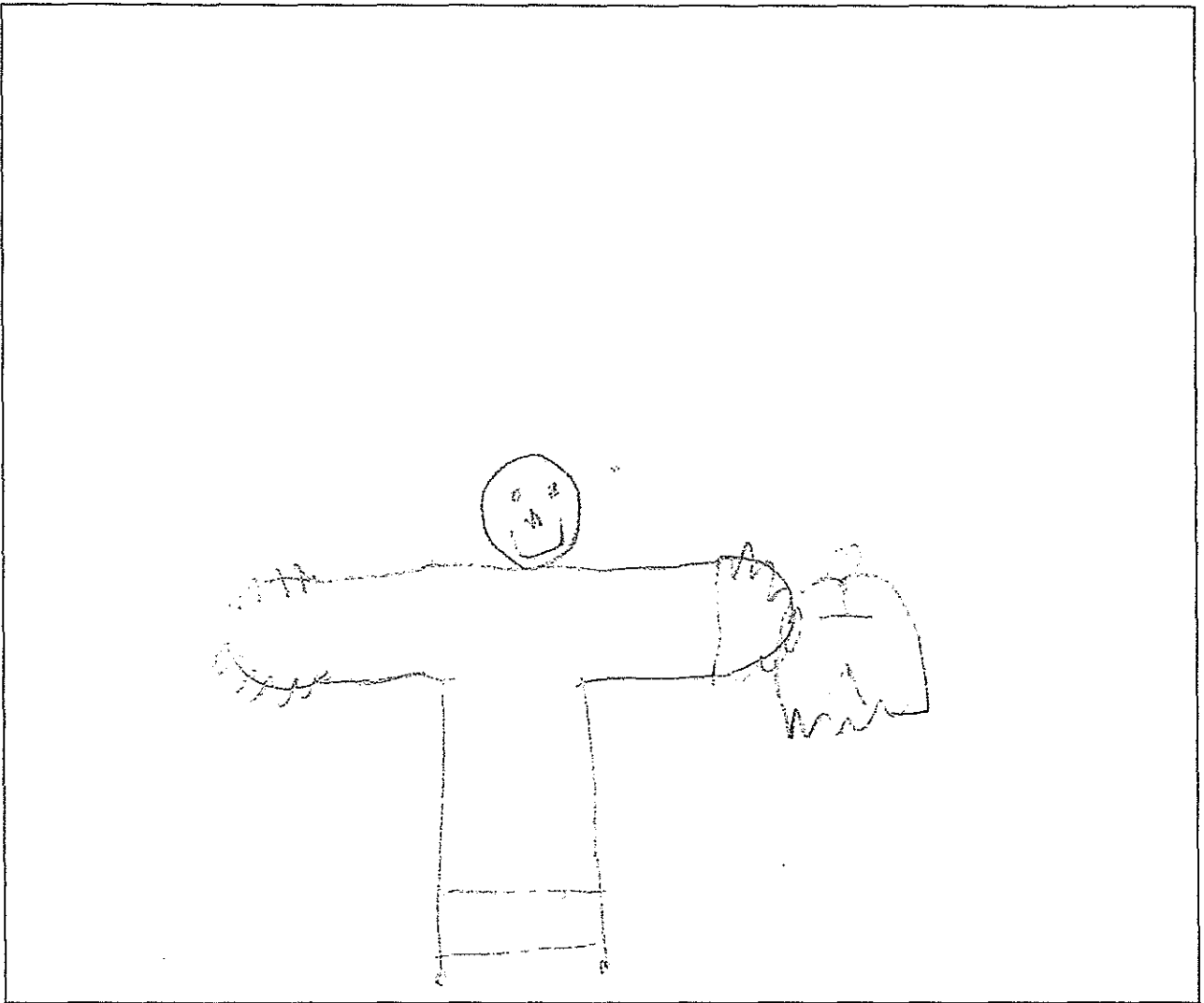
She likes to lay
She ~~Lies~~ to ~~LA~~
in the ~~SUN~~ sun. But
when it is hot she
lays in the shade.

Name Ms. W



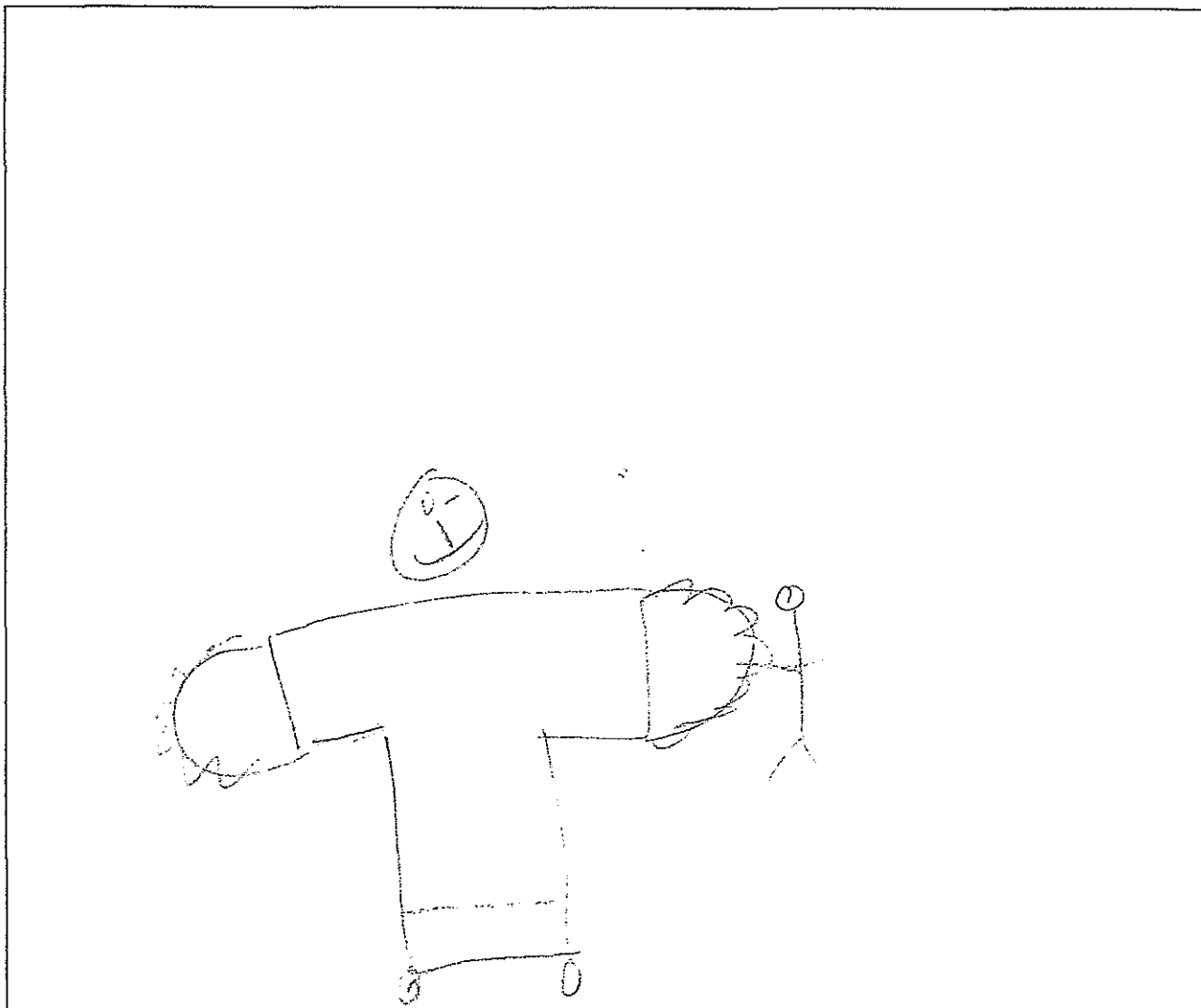
Maddy ^{likes} ~~likes~~ to ^{chew} ~~on~~
~~on~~ ^{her} bone in the grass.

Name student 1



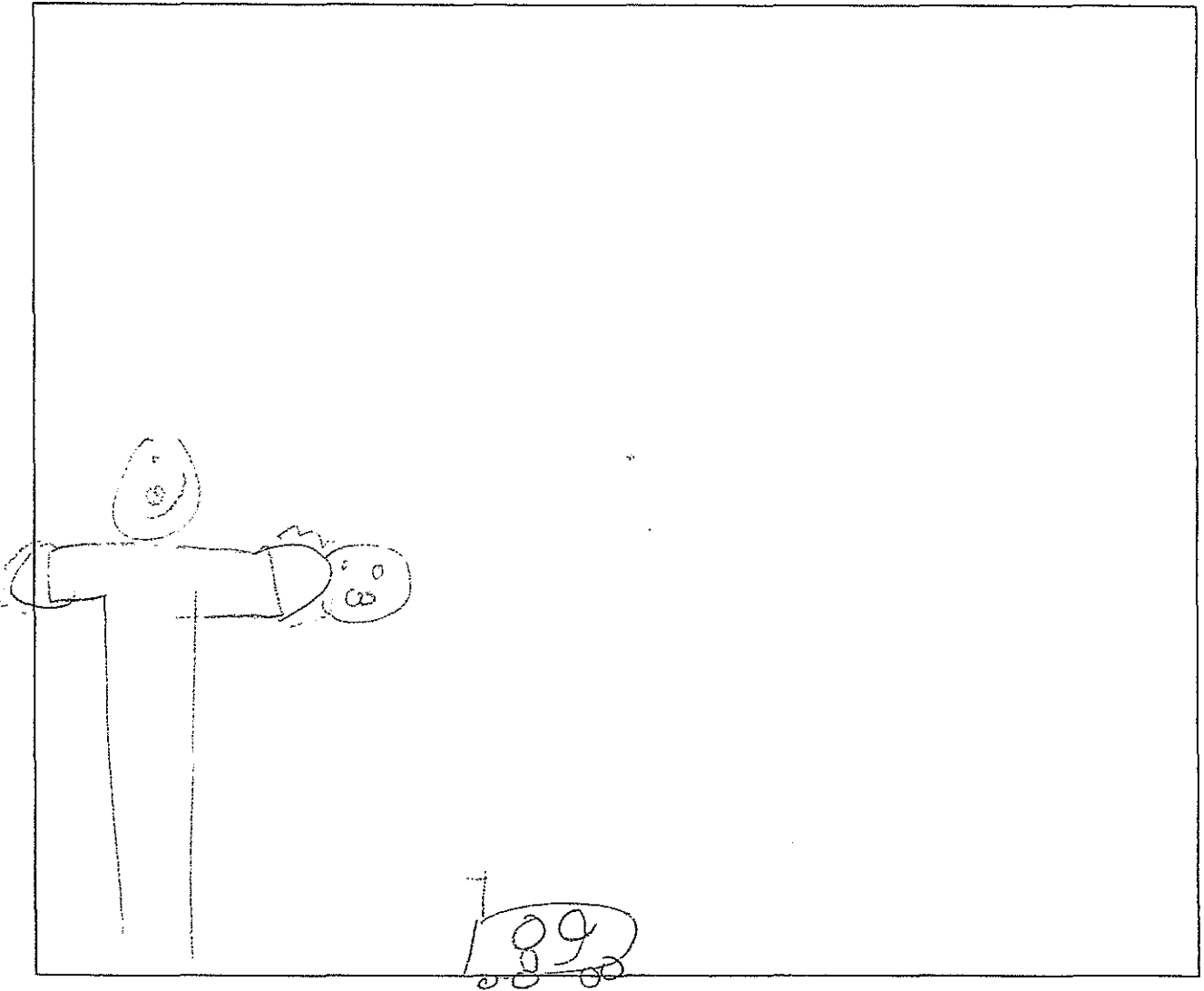
I like to play
with batman.

Name student 1



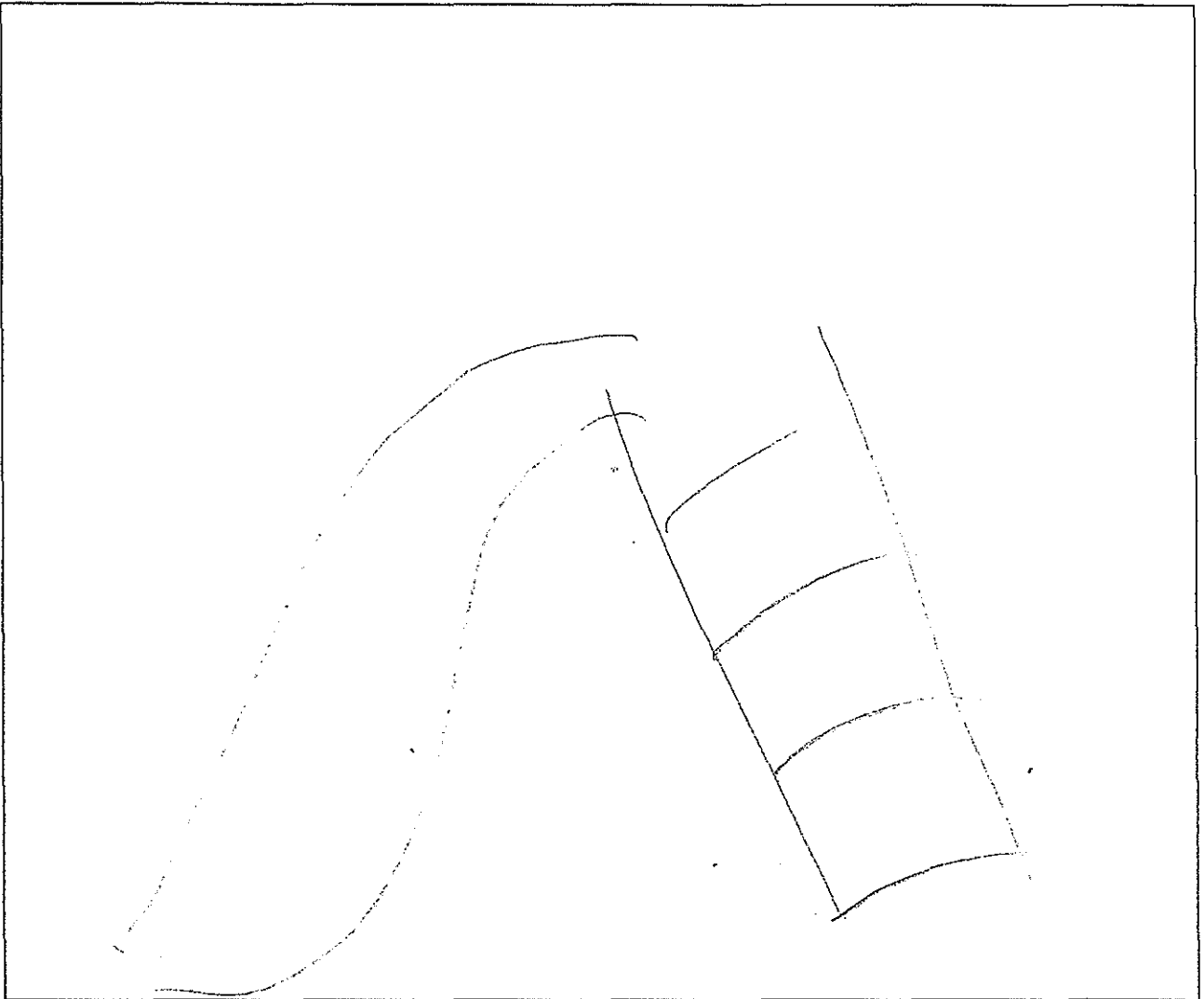
I love to
PLAY with Spiderman.

Name student 1



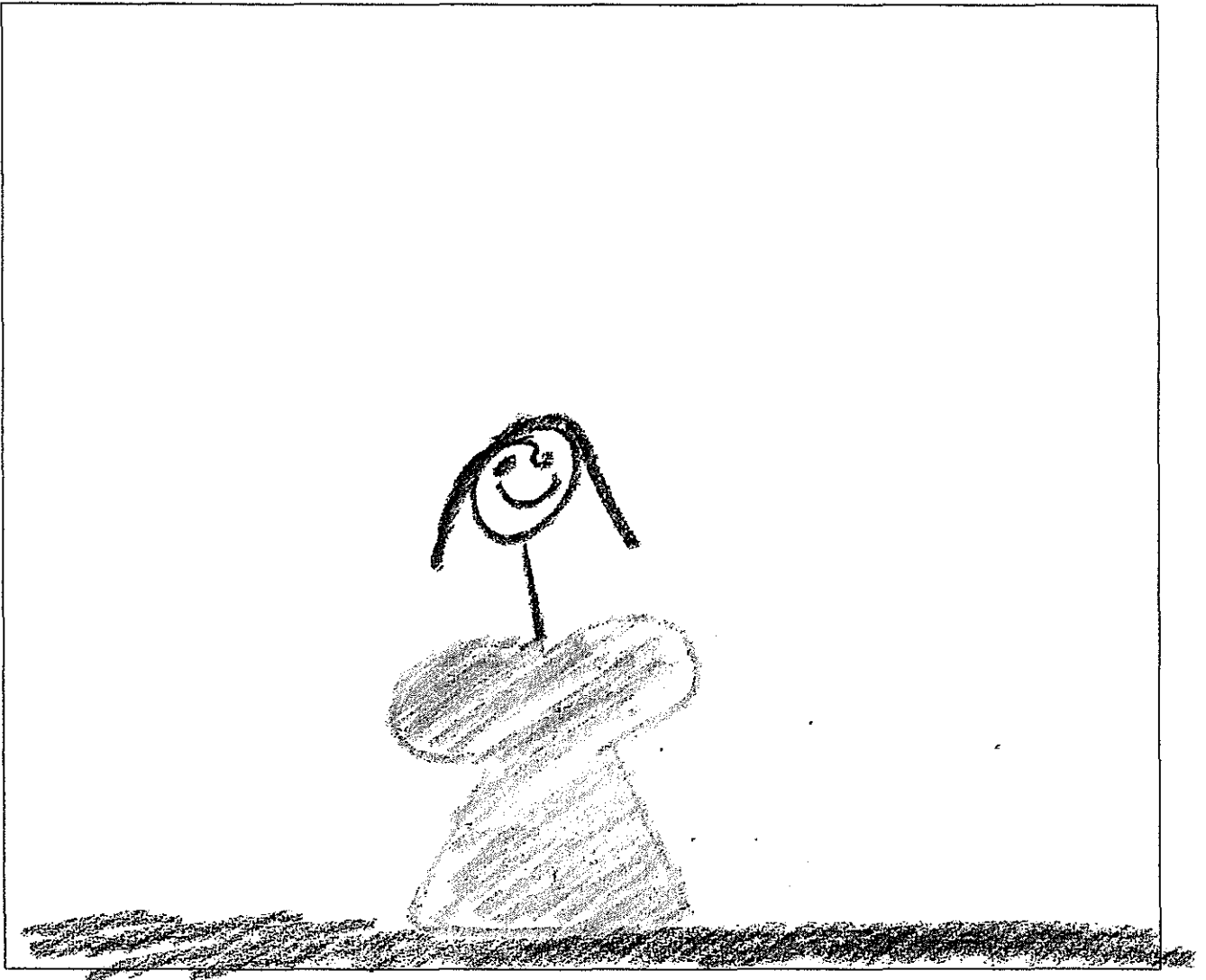
I like TO PLAY
~~with~~ my RACECAR
with

Name student 2



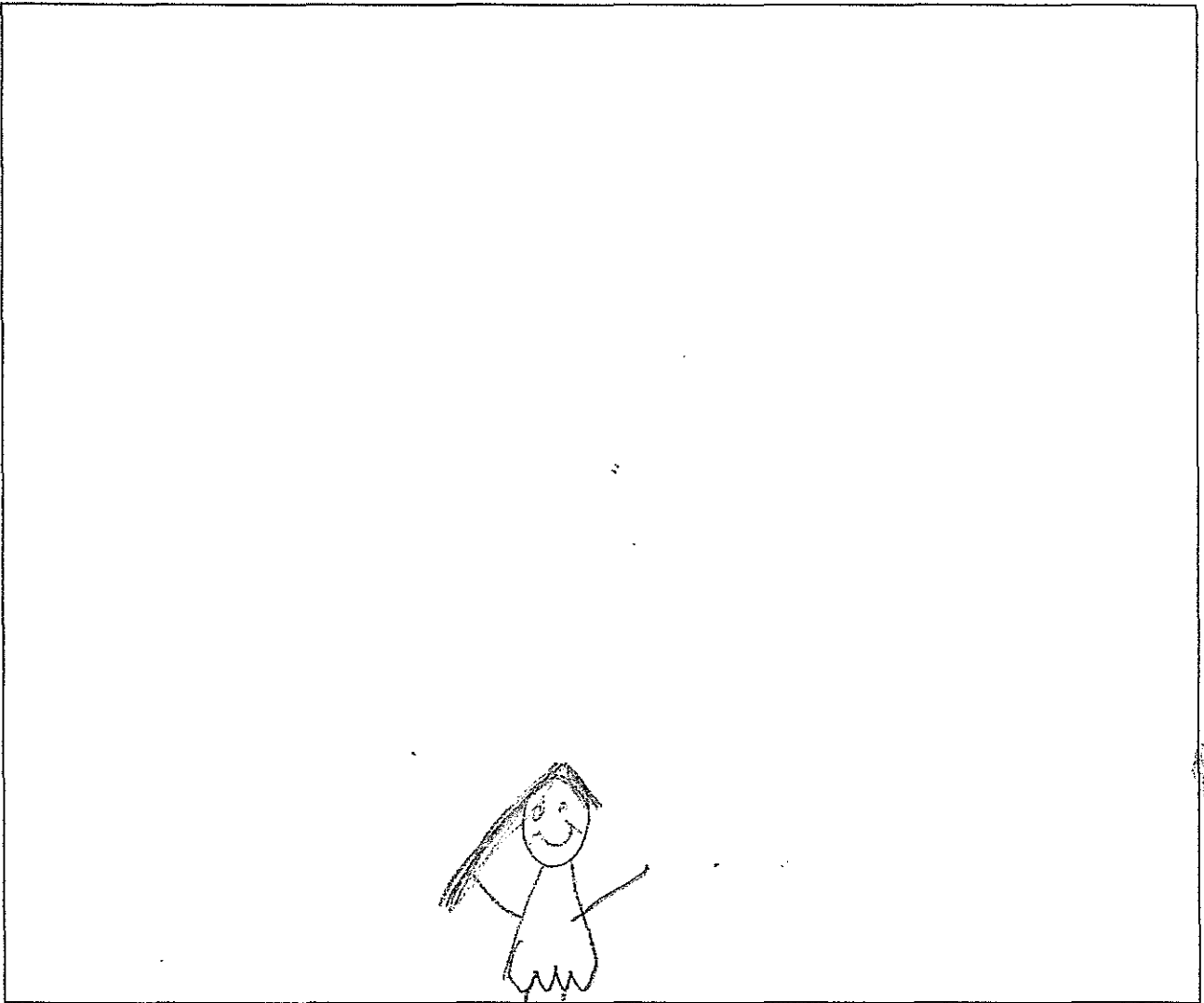
I went on the
~~SD~~ slide.

Name student 2



I ~~PAINT~~ MY ~~FACE~~
PAINT MY FACE.

Name student 2



I like

~~POPKA~~

popcorn.

Unit: Writer's Workshop Lesson #4

Title of Lesson: Publish Writing Lesson

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Learner Outcomes: Students will be able to share the writing that they have developed through the entire writing process.

GLEs:

- 1.5.1 Publishes own writing.

Length of Time: 30 minutes: 10 for modeling and 20 for students to work

Materials Needed:

- Authors chair
- Publishing paper 5 copies per student
- Published piece of student writing
- Published piece of teacher writing
- Overhead projector or Elmo

Anticipatory Set:

Teacher: "We have been working on revising and editing our drafts and now it is time for you to publish your writing. Publishing means that you have made all of the revisions and edits to your writing and are ready to make a clean copy of that piece of writing to share with the class and your family. I am going to show you what a published piece of work looks like." Teacher holds up a book. "This is a published book. The author did several drafts and revisions and editing and when it was ready she shared it with others. That is what we are going to do with your writing."

Procedures:

Teacher: "I am going to show you what that looks like with my story about my dog in the backyard." The teacher takes out the edited and revised draft and puts it up for the class to see.

Teacher: "Now that my story is ready, all I need to do is copy my story on new paper, in my best handwriting with all of the corrections that I have made on my draft. I am going to use a marker so you can see what I am writing; when you publish you are going to use a pencil. I want to remember to use finger spaces and copy all of my words from my draft copy." The teacher then puts up a blank piece of writing paper and starts to copy her draft very carefully.

Teacher: "A good strategy when copying your draft is to cross out the words that you have written so you don't lose track. That is what I am doing so that I make sure to copy all of my words." The teacher finishes copying all of the draft onto the published piece.

Teacher: "After all of my words are on my published piece of writing, I need to do my illustrations to match my writing. On the first page of my story, I need to draw a picture of my dog playing fetch with a tennis ball, because that is what my words say so I want my picture to match." Teacher draws the pictures to match all three pages of her story.

Teacher: "Now I am ready to share my published story with the class." Teacher then reads the story to the class and asks for positive feedback.

Teacher: "Now that I have read my story does anyone have anything they would like to say about my story?" The teacher chooses three students to say something about the story.

Student 1: "I like that is was about your dog."

Student 2: "I like your picture."

Student 3: "I like the whole thing."

Teacher: "Thank you. Today you are going to start working on publishing your writing. I have made a schedule so each of you will share on a particular day each week. Not all of you will get to share today, but you will get a chance to share what you have been working on." Teacher releases students to get to work.

Closure:

Teacher tells the students whose day it is to share ahead of time so they can be prepared. Each student will come up to the front of the class and share their writing while the class is being a good audience. Then each student will get to chose three other students to say something about their writing. And then the published piece of writing can be posted in the class for everyone to see as a celebration.

Lesson Extension and Follow-up Activities:

Sharing in the author's chair will now be a daily routine where students can share their writing. It doesn't have to be published; it can also be a work in progress.

My Dog

by

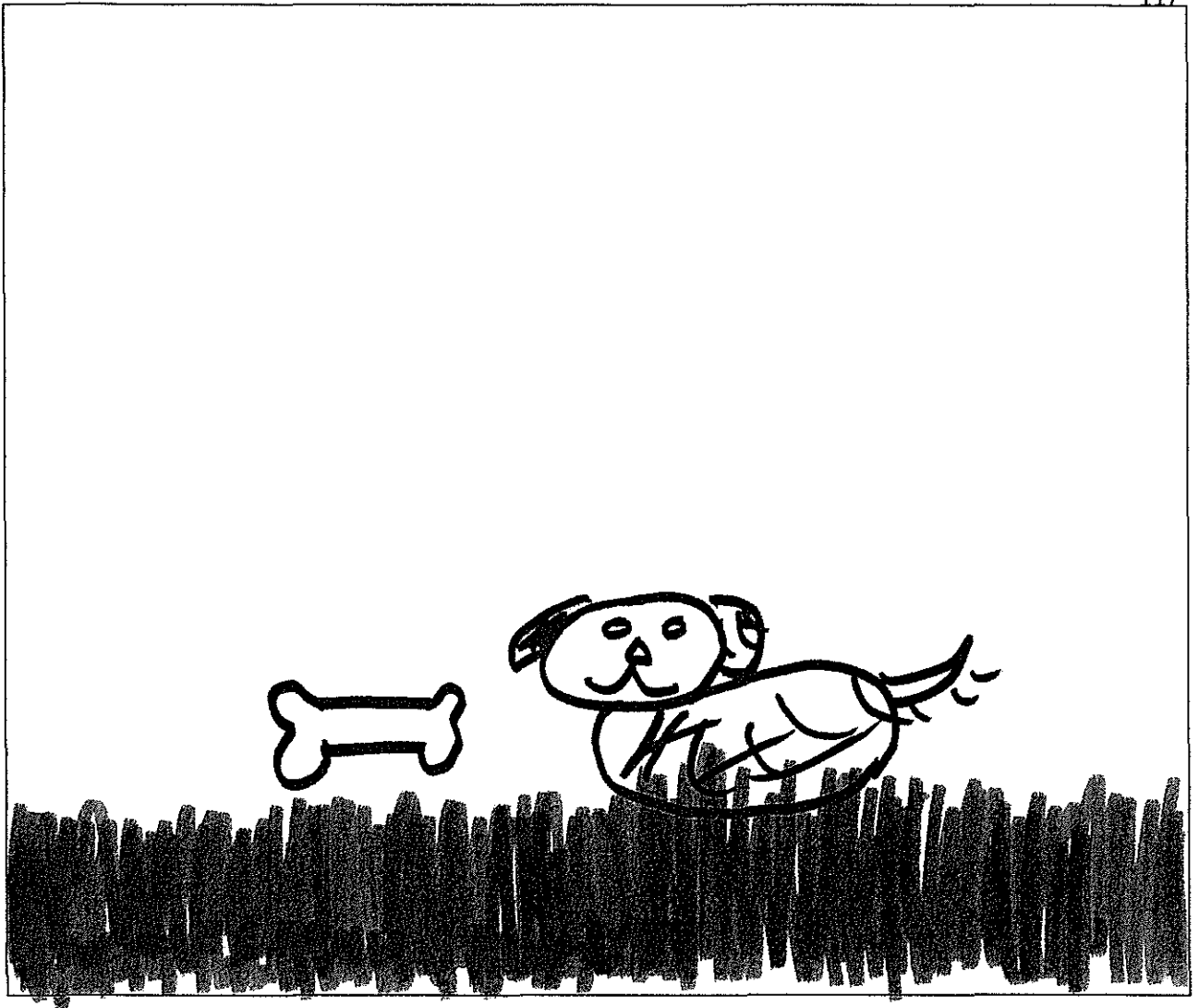
Ms. W



My dog likes to play
fetch with a tennis
ball.



She likes to lay in the
sun. But when it is hot
she lays in the shade.

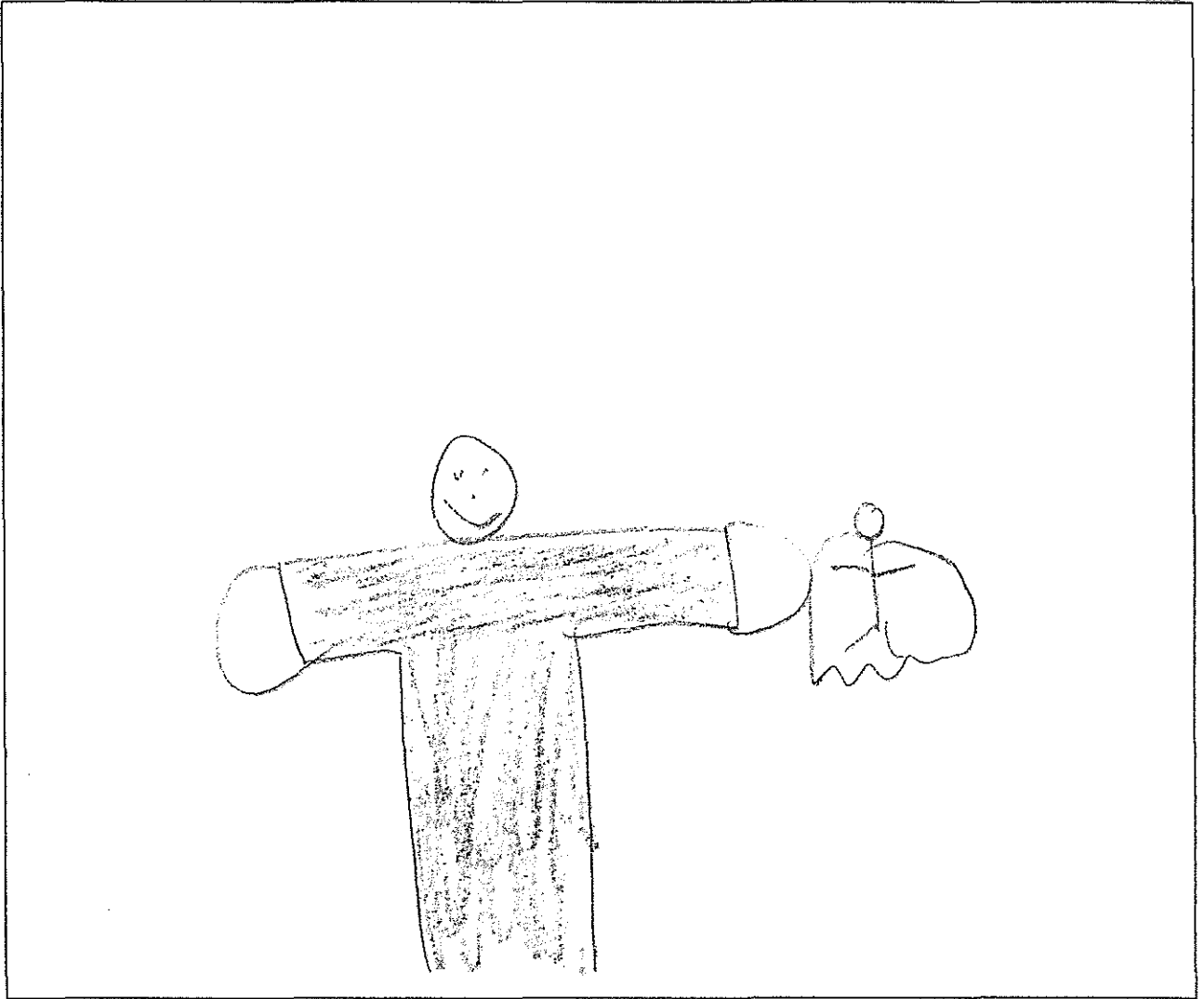


Maddy likes to chew
on her bone in the
grass.

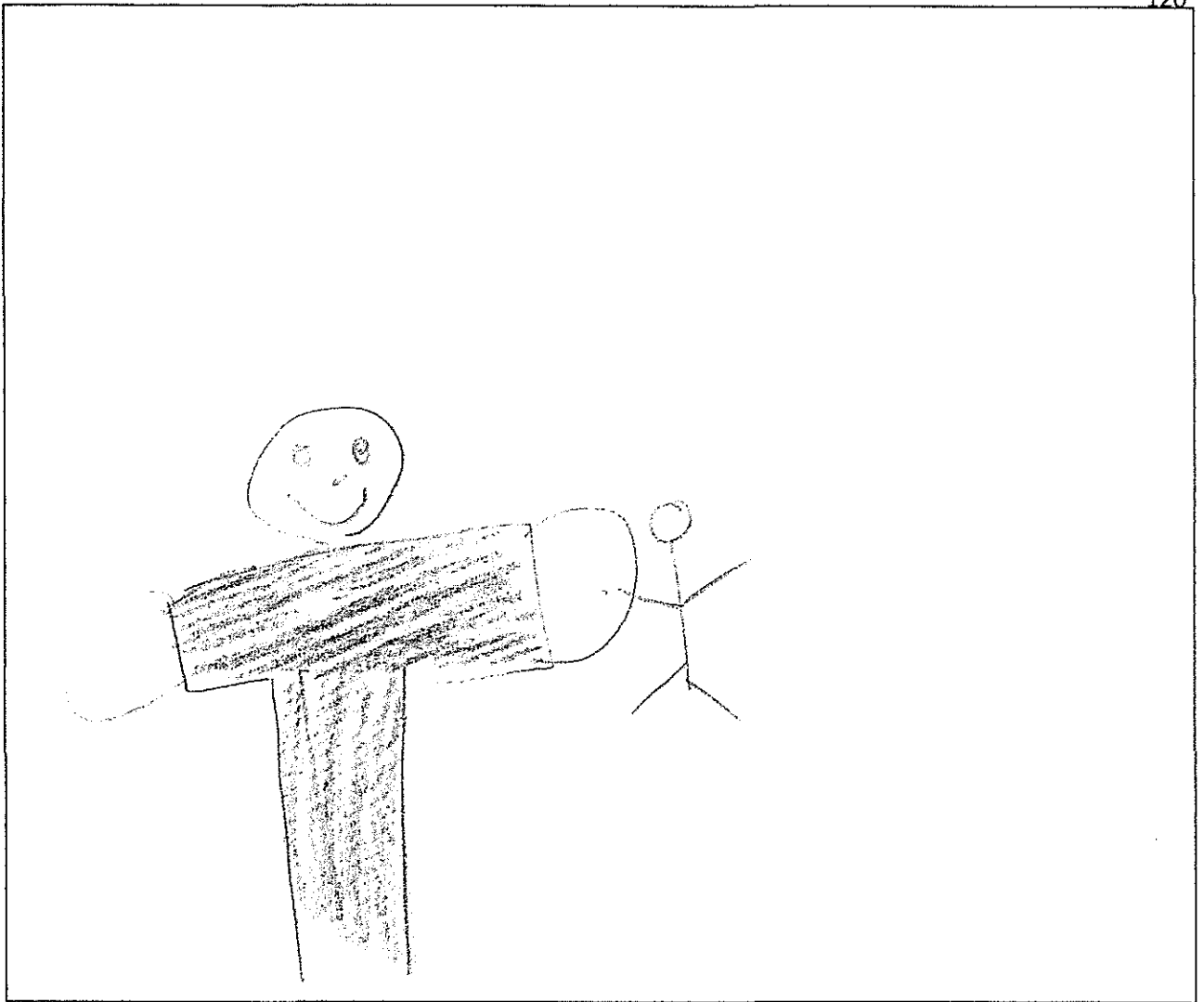
my TOYS Are the BEST

by

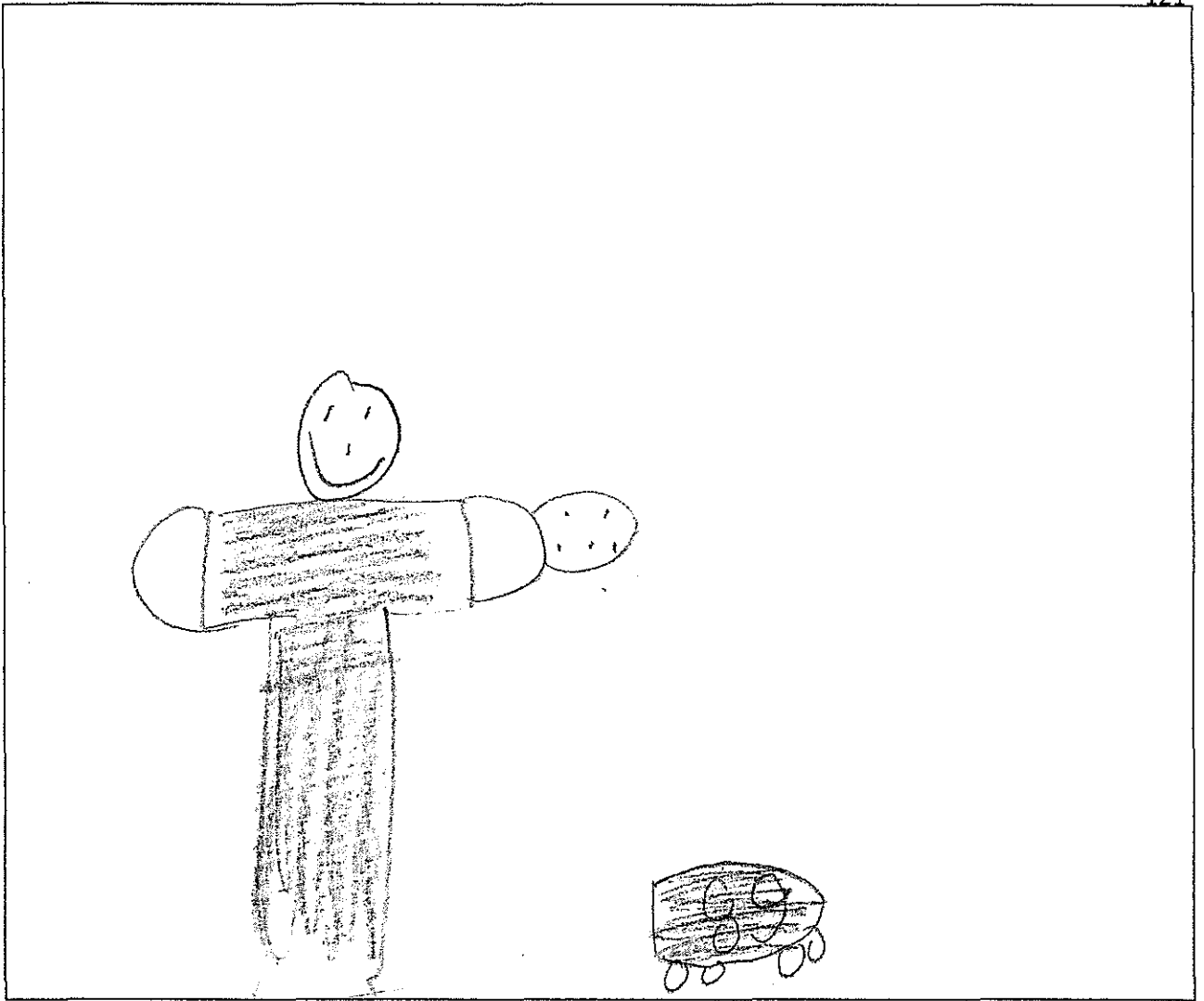
student 1



I like to play
with BATMAN.



I love To
PLAY WITH SPIDERMAN.

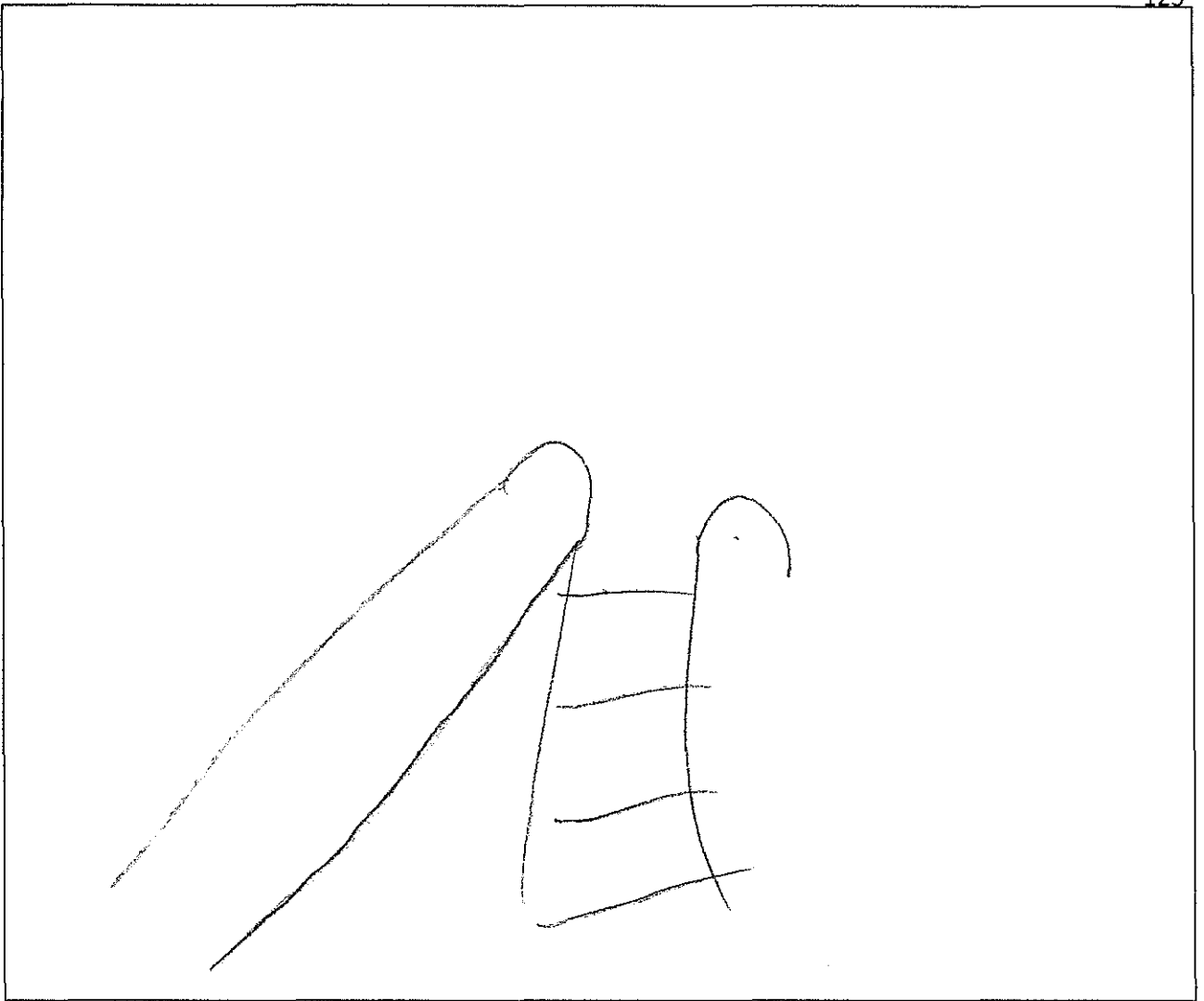


I like To PLAY
With My RACECAR.

The house rAS

by

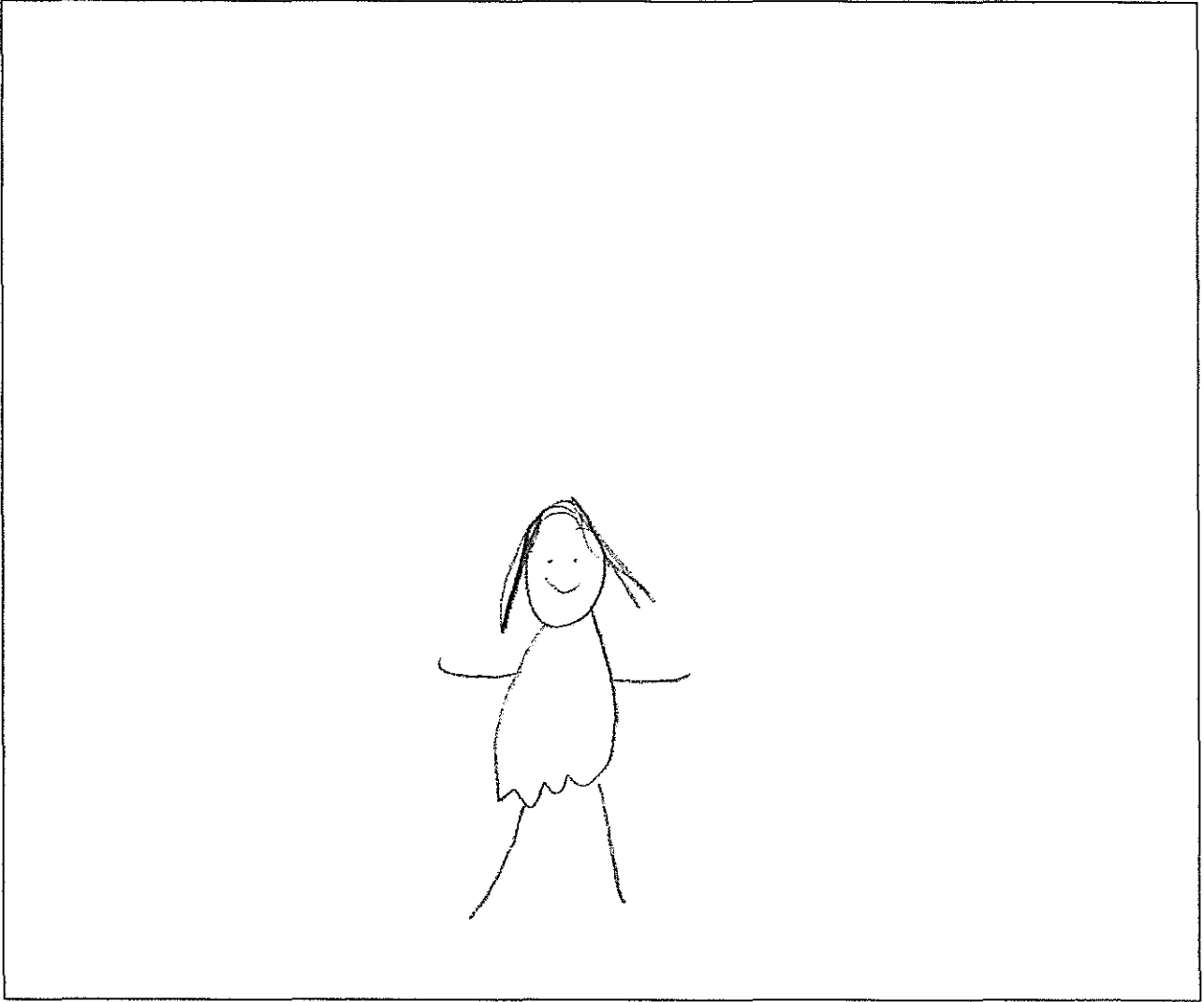
student 2



I went on the
SLIDE.

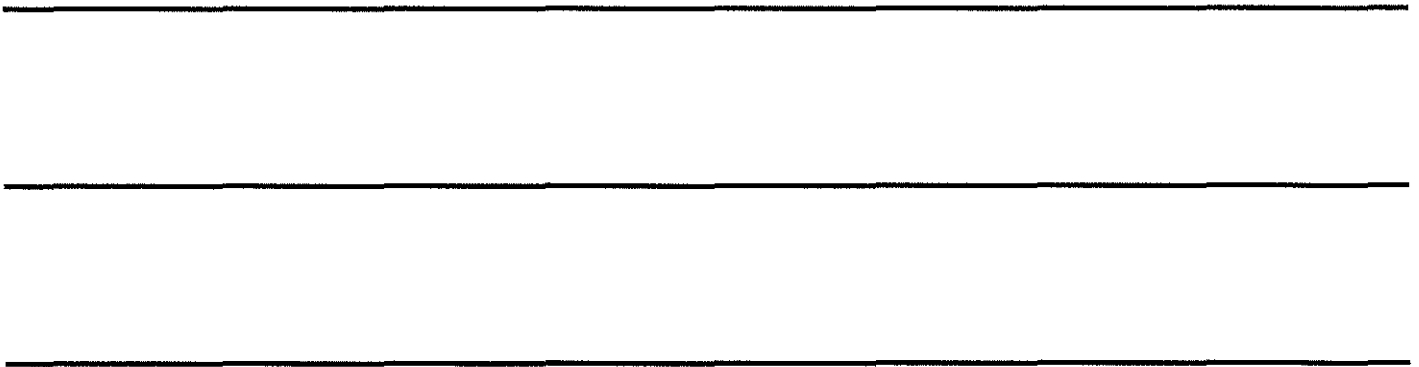
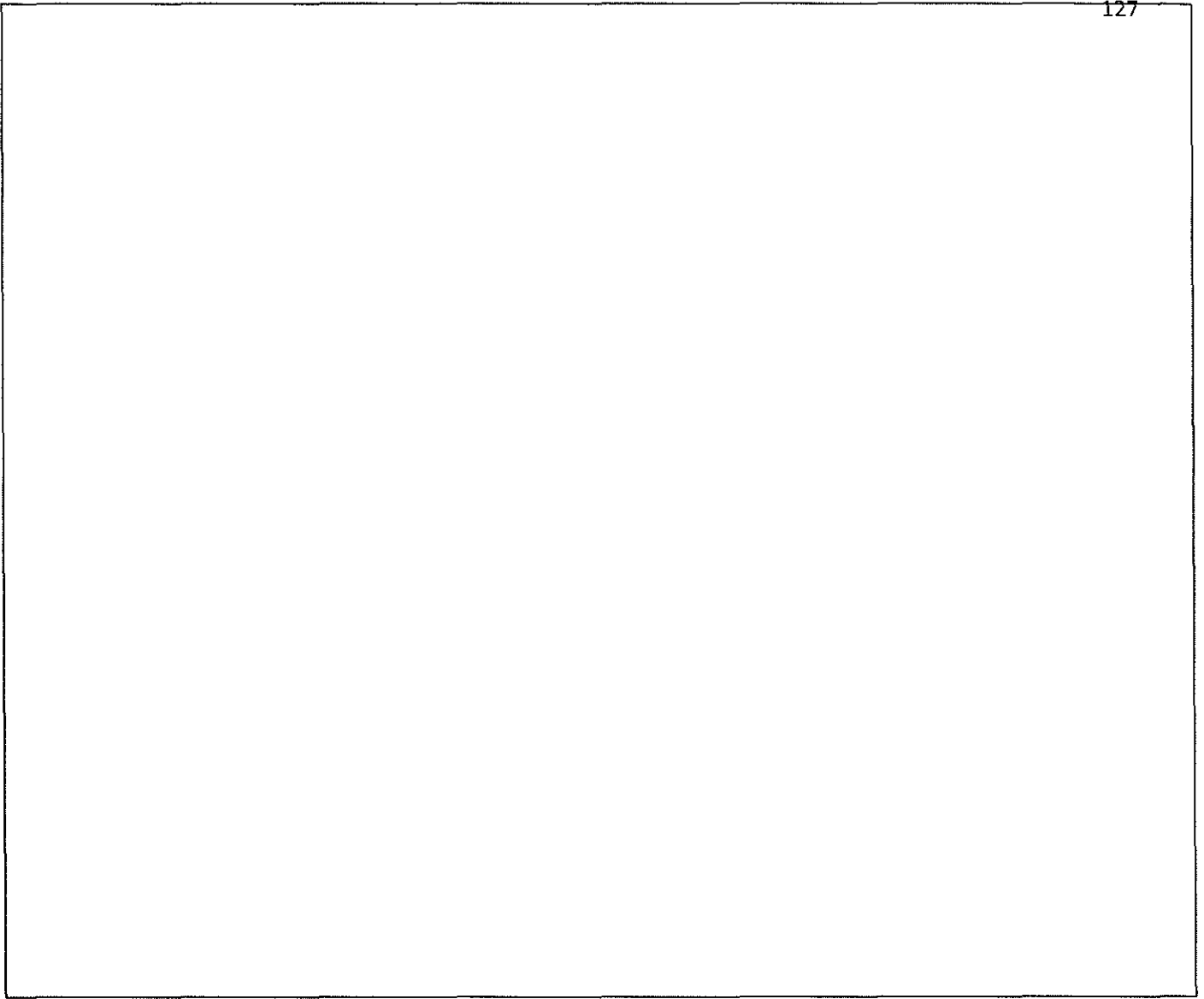


I paint my face



I like popcorn.

by



Resources

50 Plus School Fonts [Computer software]. Teacher created resources.

Boushey, G., & Moser, J. (2006). *The daily 5: Fostering literacy independence in the elementary grades*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Calkins, L. (2003). *Units of study for primary writing: A yearlong curriculum*. Portsmouth, NH: Firsthand.

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Franzese, R. (2002). *Reading and writing in kindergarten: A practical guide lessons and strategies that help young learners develop literacy skills through shared reading, guided reading, interactive writing, read-alouds, and more*. New York, NY: Scholastic Professional Books.

McCarrier, A., Pinnell, G.S. & Fountas, I.C. (2000). *Interactive writing: How Language & literacy come together, K-2*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

After conducting research on the topic of writing by kindergarten children, it became clear that there is not a lot of curriculum in a level that has been designed for a half-day kindergarten program. There is research and literature on writing practices. For this project the focus was on the beginning stages of writing. This included giving new kindergarten teachers an easy to use guide for implementing writing instruction under the time constraints of half-day kindergarten. Writing areas that this project focused on includes modeled writing, shared writing, interactive writing, and writer's workshop. The goal of this project was not to plan units of study but to instead give a new kindergarten teacher a framework that he/she could adapt to his/her own classroom's needs.

Each of the lessons included in this project was designed to paint a picture of what the different types of writing instruction look like in a classroom. Each lesson plan included typical dialog that I have heard in my kindergarten classroom. As a result of using these lesson plans a new kindergarten teacher will develop skills that will allow them to accurately predict student writing levels of proficiency. In the lesson plan for shared writing I wrote examples how a typical kindergarten student might respond and what, in turn, my response would be. In developing this set of lesson plans, I attempted to make certain that a new kindergarten teacher would be able to visualize clearly the lesson by reading the example lesson plans and being able to adapt them to their own needs.

Conclusions

After researching this topic I learned that all students can achieve a high level of proficiency in writing if they are given consistent and well thought out writing instruction. Students need writing instruction that is carefully aligned to their prior knowledge and moves their skills in the direction of becoming a proficient writer. Writing curriculums need to be written with half-day kindergarten time constraints in mind. These curriculum need to address all of the Washington State standards that students in kindergarten are expect to meet and be able to be built upon in higher grade levels.

Recommendations

After reading this guide, it is recommended that teachers work together to try different strategies to implement effective writing instruction in their classroom. They should determine what works best for their particular style of teaching. Creating units of study would be a wonderful addition to this project. These lesson plans were created with real classroom situations in mind and with understanding of the Washington State standards. It is also recommended that a professional resource library on the topic of writing be established in every classroom and building. Some wonderful titles to begin a professional library are: *Units of Study for Primary Writing: a Yearlong Curriculum* by Lucy Calkins, *The Art of Teaching Writing* by Lucy Calkins, *About the Authors: Writing Workshop With Our Youngest Writers* by Katie Wood Ray, *Interactive Writing: How Language & Literacy Come Together, K-2* by Andrea McCarrier, Gay Su Pinnell & Irene C. Fountas, *Reading and Writing in Kindergarten: A Practical Guide* by Rosalie Franzese, and *The Daily 5: Fostering Literacy Independence in the Elementary Grades*

by Gail Boushey & Joan Moser. These are wonderful books to have in any kindergarten teacher's classroom, to be able to refer to and to allow children to build new ideas for writing and literacy development.

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