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WHEN COMPOSITION IS A REAL JOB

MAKING A STORY BOOK

AN ENGLISH COMPOSITION ACTIVITY IN
FIRST GRADE

I. *Situation*

ONE morning I gave to my class of 1B children in the Training School some folded sheets of paper fastened together. On these were printed a reproduction of a part of a story read the previous day. One child said, "This is a little book. May I take it home?" I asked, "Would any one else like to have a book to take home?" Every child wanted a book and one said, "Let us make some books."

They talked about making a book and what to put in it. They decided that the book must contain stories and pictures. They then decided to reproduce some stories from La Rue's *F-U-N Book*, because they were not allowed to take this book home.

II. *Purpose*

The teacher gave a little book to each child with the hope that it might stimulate an interest in learning to read. If they decided to make books they must be able to read what was printed in them.

The children wanted to make books to take home so that they could read to some one at home.

III. *Planning, Executing, and Judging*

After the class read a story entitled "Bunny in the Garden," they selected a part of it for reproduction. I wrote the sentences they gave me on the board; they

were then read aloud by the children. I then printed¹ a copy of the story for each child on manila drawing paper, nine by twelve inches.

The next day I wrote on the board sentences containing instructions to be followed in making the first illustrations such as,

Draw Mother Rabbit and Bunny Rabbit.
Draw Bunny Rabbit in the garden.

Each child made both these illustrations because he needed them for his own book.

A second story, called "The Little Tin Train," was read and reproduced in the same manner so that I could print it for their books. The class made pictures of "The Little Tin Train" and for a second picture each child chose what he wished to show about the story for his own book.

Other stories were read, parts reproduced and illustrations made. Finally each child chose his favorite Mother Goose rhyme and illustrated it. I then printed the rhyme for each child.

While we were talking about how to make our books one child said that real books were printed by machines. This talk led to their asking to go visit the job printing department of the town newspaper. There the print-shop superintendent showed them the different steps in making a book. He then made a blank book for each child. In doing this he folded and cut the paper, cut the cover, fastened cover and pages together, and trimmed the edges. After this the children visited the printing department where they watched the setting of type, the operation of a linotype machine, and ex-

¹I used a small printing set, Rubber Type No. 17 and a No. 48 three-line holder. The type is the same size as that of a Standard Primer. A hectograph could have been used.

amined the press upon which had been printed the morning paper.

The children were so interested in what they had seen that they were eager to talk about it. As soon as they returned to school they told the whole story to the other group of children in their room. They then made sentences for a story entitled "Traveling to the Printing Shop." I wrote these sentences on the board as they gave them. The children then asked me to print this story² in the little books the superintendent had made for them.

IV. *Knowledge and Skill Acquired Through the Project*

- A. Information about book making
 1. A book must have a name.
 2. The pages must be printed before the cover can be put on or the pages fastened together. The pages are sewed together on a machine. Sometimes wire is used.
 3. Machines also cut the paper and covers, and print the pages.
 4. The machines are run by electricity.
 5. The paper used to make books in Harrisonburg comes from other places. Some of it comes from Covington, Richmond, Baltimore, and Hagerstown.
- B. Reading skills emphasized
 1. Finding new words by noticing the initial consonant, and by considering the context.
 2. Reading in longer units.
 3. Reading to follow directions—as in making illustrations for the book.
- C. Arithmetic skills gained
 1. The children numbered the pages in their books after examining several books to see how the numbers were placed. In doing this they learned:
 - (a) To recognize the order in which numbers come
 - (b) To read the numbers
 - (c) To write numbers up to 25

²See end of article for the story.

V. *The Story the Children Wrote*

TRAVELING TO THE PRINTING SHOP

We went to the printing shop.

We asked a man where to go to see how they made books.

We went up three sets of steps.

The man who makes the books is named Mr. Hughes.

He showed us how to fold the paper.

He showed us how to cut the paper.

He cut the covers.

He cut the covers with a big machine.

Electricity makes the machines go.

He sewed the books.

He sewed them with wire.

Billy's daddy showed us how he could print.

Mr. Hughes made us each a book.

Then we went down stairs.

We saw a big printing press.

It had a newspaper on it.

We saw a man making type.

We saw a man getting something ready to print.

Then we came back to school.

Miss Borden is going to print the story about going to the printing shop in our books.

MARGARET A. BORDEN

THE SIXTH GRADE MONTHLY

AN ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION

I. *Things the Children Did*

- A. They planned the paper.
 1. They brought newspapers and magazines to class, discussed their contents, and the make-up of their staffs.
 2. They decided on the departments for their paper, and arranged the tentative contents in order.
 3. They selected a name for their paper.
 4. They elected a staff, consisting of the following members: an editor-in-chief, an art editor, a story editor, a poetry editor, a news editor, a so-

ciety editor, a health notes editor, a class notes editor, two class librarians, and a reporter from the A class. (The paper was made by the B class.)

5. They decided to have the editor-in-chief go before the A class to tell of the paper and to conduct the election of the reporter.
 6. They offered suggestions to individual members of the staff as to their duties.
 7. The members of the staff made short talks on what they wanted for the paper and on their idea of co-operation from each member of the class.
- B. They gathered the material for the paper.
1. They collected jokes, riddles, and favorite poems. These were passed in to the editors for approval.
 2. They studied fables¹ and then wrote original ones, selecting the best for the paper.
 3. They wrote stories on topics assigned by the editors. The story editor had the five best stories read aloud in each case, so that the class might choose the best one for the paper.
 4. They wrote original poems.
 - (a) They studied their favorite poems for rhythm, beauty, and thought.
 - (b) They suggested topics for poems, such as Spring, March, and The March Wind.
 - (c) They made up lists of descriptive and rhyming words.
 - (d) The poetry editor selected the best poems, using the method that the story editor had used.
- C. They assembled the paper.
1. They made a cover. They voted on the color of paper to use, on a picture for decoration, on the words to be printed on the cover.
 2. They copied the material for the paper. Each editor was responsible for the work of his department being copied. The class selected one child to see that all the work was neatly and correctly copied before it was turned in to the editor-in-chief.
 3. They arranged the work for the paper. The editor-in-chief arranged the work according to departments, wrote all notes and explanations, and submitted the work to the class for approval.
 4. They made a title page, and a table of contents.
- D. They planned the next issue of the paper.
- (a) They wrote a letter to a class at the College that had examined the paper asking for criticism before the next issue.
 - (b) They discussed the suggestions made by the College class, and
5. They wrote book reports. These were on books read outside of class assignments, for the purpose of interesting other children in the books.
 6. They collected news from various sources; the A class, their own class, the Manual Training and Domestic Science departments.
 7. They collected suggestions for improved classroom behavior. The editor arranged an honor roll in penmanship. (The class was making a campaign for better penmanship this year.)
 8. They collected pictures to illustrate their poems and stories, and ones to be voted on for a cover. The staff brought kodak pictures of themselves to be used in the "staff wheel."

¹*Æsop's Fables*, by J. H. Stickney. Ginn and Company, New York.

Chinese Fables and Folk Stories, by Davis and Chow-Leung. American Book Company, New York.

outlined a policy for the second issue.

II. *Values the Children Derived from Making the Paper*

- A. Values in information and skills.
 - 1. They had practice at a high level of interest in the following things:
 - (a) Rules for capitalization and punctuation.
 - (b) Sentence and paragraph structure.
 - (c) Make-up of a page, indention, margins, good spacing.
 - (d) Use of the dictionary to check their own spelling.
 - 2. They learned the following things:
 - (a) To tell the difference between a fable and a story, and the similarity between a poem and a song.
 - (b) To judge stories in the light of plot, unity, and coherence.
 - (c) To judge poems for rhythm and beauty.
- B. Values in personal and social habits.
 - 1. Co-operation:—They worked in groups with individual editors; they worked outside the classroom trying to find materials the editors asked for.
 - 2. Independence:—They contributed original ideas to the class. The class as a whole worked with little reference to similar papers made by other children.
 - 3. Leadership:—The editors talked before the class, and took charge of the work within their own departments.
 - 4. Judgment:—They learned to formulate standards for the best work of any type. They learned how to consider the points necessary for a good editor for any department, and to choose the child best suited for the job.

III. *Table of Contents of Sixth Grade Monthly, March, 1925*

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MILDRED REYNOLDS

THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PRINTS
ITS YEARBOOK

AN EIGHTH GRADE ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH
COMPOSITION

I. *Things the Children Did*

- A. They planned to make their issue of *Chatter* an improvement over the issues of the preceding years.
 - 1. A committee studied the contents of the preceding issues of *Chatter* and

- of other school magazines and newspapers.
2. The chairman reported that the *Chatter* could be improved by:
 - a. Making it a "memory book" of the 8A grade.
 - b. Raising the standard of the material contained.
 - c. Inviting other rooms in the Junior High School to contribute.
 - d. Having *Chatter* printed.
 3. They decided on the departments of their magazine and the qualifications necessary to the editors of the various departments.
 - a. They voted on the following members of the staff: editor-in-chief, assistant editor-in-chief, business manager, assistant business manager, story editor, poetry editor, news editor, editorial editor, art editor, and joke editor.
 4. They planned the financing of the *Chatter*.
 - a. The business manager interviewed the printer, and brought to class sample pages with the price of each.
 - b. They decided on the size of the page.
 - c. They decided that if we could get two pages of ads, eight ads to a page, each bringing in \$1.25, we could have sixteen pages.
 - d. Under the supervision of the business manager the members of the class got ads from the business men of the town.
 - e. The girls planned to make pop corn balls in their cooking class and sell these at baseball games, while the business manager had charge of selling ice-cream and pop.
- B. They gathered material for their magazine.
1. They studied short stories.
 - a. I told them a typical short story.
 - b. They decided that a good short story is marked by the following characteristics: A single predominating incident, a single predominating character, imagination, plot, compression, organization, and unity of impression.
 - c. They wrote original short stories on topics suggested by the class and gave these to the story editor, who selected, corrected, and handed back the best ones to be rewritten.
 2. They studied editorials.
 - a. They read and discussed editorials from other school magazines and newspapers, giving special attention to those in the *Static*, published by a sister class, the 8B.
 - b. They decided that good editorials are written on topics of present interest, express only those opinions that are backed up by good grounds for judgment, and are breezy, pointed, and clever.
 - c. They wrote editorials on topics of interest to the Junior High School.
 3. They studied the form of news articles.
 - a. They decided that news articles are judged by their accuracy, content, and terseness.
 - b. They discussed and wrote up the outstanding events of the Junior High School this year.
 4. They studied poems.
 - a. They studied poems selected by the class for their rime, beauty, rhythm, and color.
 - b. They scanned poetry.
 - c. They wrote original poems on topics suggested by the class, giving these to the poetry editor, who selected the best ones.
 5. They collected jokes from the Junior High School.

6. They voted on "Who's Who in 8A."
 7. They read forewords in other school magazines, and suggested that in our forewords we should mention that we were carrying on work started by an eighth grade several years before, and that we were venturing a new thing by having our magazine printed.
- C. The staff met to assemble "copy."
1. The staff selected the best material handed in to each editor.
 2. They decided on the space that should be given to each department.
 3. They made a "dummy" and sent it to the printer.
 4. They later read proof.
- D. The class cleared money on the *Chatter*.
1. One hundred and sixty copies were printed.
 2. Under the supervision of the business managers, the class sold these copies at fifteen cents per copy.
 3. Nine dollars and a half was cleared on the sale of these.
 4. At the graduation exercises of the 8A class, one member, selected by the class, presented the money to the principal of the Junior High School as a parting gift from the class.
- II. *Values the Children Derived*
- A. Values they derived in information and skills.
1. They learned the characteristics that mark a good short story, poem, editorial, and news article.
 2. They gained skill in writing short stories, poems, editorials, and news articles.
 3. They had practice in the following things:
 - a. Judging material for a magazine.
 - b. Typing material.
 - c. Making "dummy."
 - d. Reading proof.
- B. Values they derived in social and personal habits:
1. Poise
 - a. They spoke before their own class and before other classes.
 2. Independence
 - a. They learned to convey their own ideas—they had to convince others.
 - b. They worked alone in getting material for their magazine.
 3. Co-operation
 - a. The staff backed by the class worked together, in securing and assembling material for the *Chatter*.
 - b. Other Junior High School grades co-operated with the 8A's in contributing.
 - c. The class co-operated with the business managers in financing the magazine.
 4. Leadership
 - a. The editors felt their responsibility and the class looked up to them.
 - b. The class felt that the whole Junior High was looking for it "to put across something big."
 5. Business training
 - a. They learned to interview business men in getting ads.
 - b. They learned to make money by their sales of ice-cream, popcorn, and pop.
 - c. They learned to keep accounts of money made by the sale of copies of *Chatter*.
 6. Citizenship
 - a. They learned to use their money in a way that would benefit the whole Junior High School instead of themselves only.

RUTH HOGGARD LEWIS

School libraries have been installed in 99.9 per cent of all school districts in the State of Washington.