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# A School-Wide Literature Extension Project

ARTICLE BY CAMILLE KETTEL



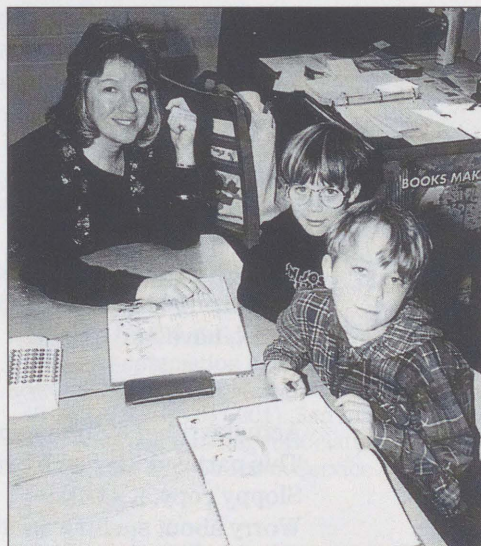
My responsibilities as a Reading Support Teacher in my school district are varied and diverse. They include providing in-class support to classrooms in the form of whole-group instruction, modeling teaching strategies for Reading and Language Arts, and providing small-group and individual instruction on a pullout basis.

I believe that quality literature has universal appeal and can be used in a school setting to extend, supplement, and support a Reading and Language Arts program. I wanted to illustrate this for teachers by modeling a way in which they could enhance the teaching of Reading and Language Arts in their classrooms.

I wanted to share an excellent story, maximize the enjoyment of it, and complete a lesson relevant to a learning concept for class. This would demonstrate and provide a basis for the use of exceptional literature in a whole language program, with specific strategies and learning concepts in mind.

I selected the book *Half A Moon and One Whole Star*, by Crescent Dragonwagon and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. It is written in a poetic, lyrical, narrative style, and it is illustrated with beautiful, vibrant, unique watercolor drawings. The book could easily be read as a bedtime story, with certain phrases used in a repetitive manner, and they work in correlation with the colors in the drawings to create an exquisite work of children's literature.

Initial project planning included conferencing with teachers in my buildings to show them the book, describe the



*Camille Kettel and Students*

idea for my project, and ask them if they would like me to present it to their classes. Without exception, every teacher approved the project and the selection of literature. I then asked what skills and concepts they were working on in Reading and Language Arts, so that I could support their teaching with a literature-based lesson of my own.

From the teacher conferences, I generated a list of activities from which I designed lessons appropriate to each class. Because I work in these two elementary buildings, the students and teachers are familiar with me and with my style of supplemental and/or support teaching in their classrooms. This made it comfortable for them, since it was not necessarily a new experience for me to be providing in-class instruction. In most cases, it had been done many times before.

- I choose the following activities:
- Kindergarten: Reader Response
  - Grade One: Color Words
  - Grade Two: Sequence and Order
  - Grade Three: Brainstorm Main Idea and Inference
  - Grade Four: Paragraphs Using Grade Three's Ideas
  - Grade Five: Poems Using Grade Four's Paragraphs

The lessons were designed to be progressive from Kindergarten through Grade Five, building on the concepts presented in the previous grade. As an extra activity for third, fourth, and fifth grade students, I worked with the art teacher. In her classes, the students painted watercolor impressions of the book after they had completed their literature experience with me. All student work was displayed in the halls of the school.

I divided each lesson into two forty-five minute sessions on alternating days of the week. During the first session, I introduced the book, explained why I was presenting it, and described the activities of each class. The author's purpose and style of writing were discussed, and the illustrations were briefly shared. I asked students to listen for repeated phrases, to relax and enjoy the flowing, rhythmic language of this "story poem" and to look for ways in which the illustrations complimented the words. After this discussion and introduction, I read the book aloud.

During the next session, we discussed student reaction to the book and proceeded to work on the lessons designed for each grade level, as follows:

### **Kindergarten**

*Session One:* Read and discuss book.

*Session Two:* Complete reader response by answering the question, "Did you like this book?"  
"Draw a picture of something

that happened in this book."

### **Grade One**

*Session One:* Read and discuss book.

*Session Two:* Share and discuss Kindergarten Reader Responses. Complete Color Word Activity by reading the color words and drawing pictures of objects from the book using colors that are like the illustrations.

### **Grade Two**

*Session One:* Read and discuss book.

*Session Two:* Share and discuss Color Word Activity from First Grade. Complete Sequence Activity by drawing pictures of what happened in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the book.

### **Grade Three**

*Session One:* Read and discuss book.

*Session Two:* Share Sequence Activity from Second Grade. Brainstorm, using large sheets of poster paper and working in groups. Decide on the main idea of the book, on what details support the main idea, and what can be inferred from the book. Use descriptive words and phrases. Bring these posters to Fourth Grade for writing paragraphs.

### **Grade Four**

*Session One:* Read and discuss book.

*Session Two:* Using Third Grade Brainstorm Posters, write rough drafts of paragraphs. Check rough drafts, making sure all spelling, grammar, and punctuation are correct. Rewrite paragraphs for display using complete sentences.

## **Grade Five**

*Session One:* Read and discuss book.

*Session Two:* Using Fourth Grade Paragraphs, write drafts of poems in either a rhyming pattern, free verse, acrostic (using words or phrases from the book), or concrete forms, all of which styles had been previously taught in their classes. Correct drafts (as above) and rewrite for display.

I designed this school-wide project to encourage literature appreciation, as well as to establish and reinforce the reading and writing connection which is essential to a Reading and Language Arts program in an elementary setting. The success of the project depends on several factors. First, good rapport must exist between the reading support teacher and the classroom teachers. Trust must be developed in order for classroom teachers to welcome a support teacher into their classrooms. The understanding must be that a quality lesson will be presented, that it will be age-appropriate, and that it will serve as a supplement to concepts or skills students are currently working on. A non-judgmental, non-threatening atmosphere should be well established, previous to this project, so that both teachers feel secure in their relationship and comfortable in their school roles.

Second, students should be familiar with the support teacher and feel comfortable with having someone other than their classroom teacher presenting a supplemental lesson. Their expectations should be discussed. Teachers should understand the purpose of the project and know that what is happening in their classrooms is in direct correlation with other classrooms. It is exciting to be part of a school-wide project and their own lesson will be more meaningful if they see a clear connection in context with others sharing the same literature experience.

Third, the lessons should be fun, enjoyable experiences that are interactive with student and teacher that enhance and extend the literature experience in a positive way. Students will remember this experience as exciting and enjoyable. They will take pride in their work and the literature will come alive in a memorable way.

The planning, organization, and coordination of this project took considerable time and effort, but the results were worth it. I would like to do it again, perhaps next time in collaboration with teachers using student generated choices of literature.

*Camille Kettel teaches in the Algonac Community School District and is active in the Blue Water Reading Council.*

Appendix A  
**Sample Kindergarten Activity**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you like this story?  Yes  No

Draw a picture of something that happened in this story.

# Sample Grade One Activity Sheet

*Half a Moon and One Whole Star*  
by Crescent Dragonwagon  
illustrated by Jerry Pinckney

Draw and color Susan *many colors*.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Draw and color a *blue* boat.

Draw and color a *red* bird.

Draw and color a *black* bed.

Draw and color a *purple* flower.

Draw and color a *yellow* star.

Draw and color a *orange* morning sun.

Draw and color a *green* leaf.

Draw and color a *white* moon.

Draw and color a *brown* bread.

# Sample Grade Two Activity Sheet

*Half a Moon and One Whole Star*

by Crescent Dragonwagon; illustrated by Jerry Pinckney

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

What happened in the  
**BEGINNING**  
of this book?

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What happened in the  
**MIDDLE**  
of this book?

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What happened in the  
**END**  
of this book?

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Appendix D  
Sample Grade Three Poster

## NARRATIVE POEM

**Purpose:** Bedtime Story

**Main Idea:** Someone is trying to get to sleep.

**Details:**

- a. nocturnal: Animals are awake
- b. Johnny is playing the saxophone at a club.
- c. The baker is baking bread.
- d. Mom and Dad are talking and laughing.
- e. The sailor is working on the boat.
- f. The curtains and shades are flapping.
- g. Half-a-moon and the stars are shining so bright.

**End:** The evening changes to daylight.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Half a Moon and One Whole Star*  
by Crescent Dragonwagon, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

What kind of a book is this?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the main idea of this book?  
\_\_\_\_\_

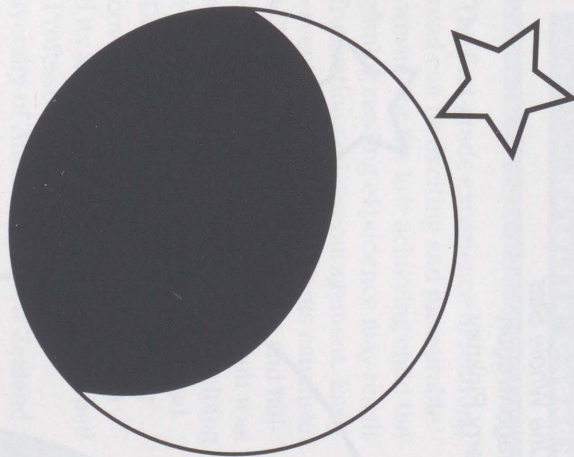
What are some details in this book?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Inference**

What can you infer from reading this book?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write a descriptive paragraph below. Be sure your paragraph has a main idea and some details to support it. Use ideas, adjectives, and descriptive words to write your paragraph.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



*Half a Moon and One Whole Star*  
by Crescent Dragonwagon, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

A descriptive paragraph based on the book above:

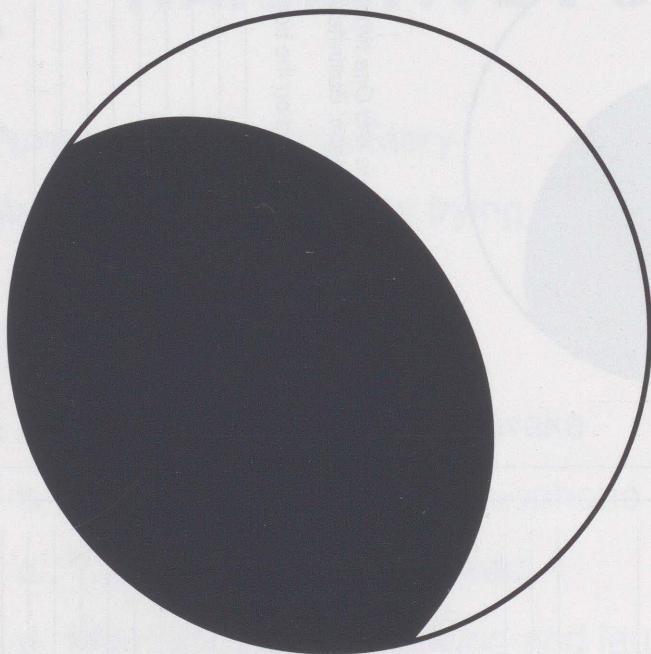
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix F  
**Sample Grade Five Activity Sheet**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Half a Moon and One Whole Star*  
by Crescent Dragonwagon  
Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney



A poem  
based on the book above.

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