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Wendy Berkheimer

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# E.E. IN THE BASICS

## USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE TO ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

by Wendy Berkheimer  
Elementary Teacher in the Holt Public Schools

Environmentally sensitive books for children abound, many of which are of a literary quality which can be recommended for your personal enjoyment. The majority of available literature falls into the thematic category of nature appreciation, although seemingly more and more books are being published which propagate a deeper understanding of the environment interdependencies while exploring man's relationship within this system.

There are several ways to use such books in your classroom. Below is an outline of activities I have found successful in my fourth grade class.

### Books Particularly Suited to Read Aloud

- A. Picture Books: I use a lot of these with fourth graders and have heard testimony that they can be successfully used at the middle school as well.

Asimov, Isaac. *The Best New Thing* (ages 7-12)

Baylor, Byrd. *Hawk, I'm Your Brother* (ages 5-8)

Carrick, Donald and Carol. Any of their books (ages 5-10)

Ernst, Katherine. *Mr. Tamarin's Trees* (Ages 5-8)

Haban, Russell. *Arthur's New Power* (ages 7-12)

Jackson, Jacqueline and Perlmutter. *The Endless Pavement* (ages 7-12)

Lund, Doris H. *The Paint-Box Sea* (ages 6-15)

Miles, Miska. *Annie and the Old One* (ages 7-12)

Pomerantz, Charlotte. *The Day They Parachuted Cats on Borneo* (ages 7-12)

Tresselt, Alvin. *The Dead Tree* (ages 5-10)

- B. Novels:

Benchley, Nathaniel. *Only Earth and Sky Last Forever* (ages 11+)

George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves; My Side of the Mountain* (ages 9+)

London, Jack. *The Call of the Wild and Other Stories* (ages 9+)

Morey, Walt. *Canyon Winter* (ages 9+)

Peake, Katy. *The Indian Heart of Carrie Hodges* (ages 8-12)

Phelan, Terry Wolfe. *The Week Mom Unplugged the TVs* (ages 8-13)

Paulsen, Gary. *The Foxman* (ages 11-14)

Robertson, Keith. *In Search of a Sandhill Crane* (ages 11+)

### Directing Individual Reading

- A. Upon reading environment-oriented books yourself, jot down questions to be put on a Book Response Card
- B. Book Response Cards can be made for books you haven't read. For example:
1. *Book Response Card 1*
    - a. A popular conflict theme worth looking for in stories is man against his environment. This could be in terms of:
      - (1) man's struggle to survive in a harsh environment, or
      - (2) conflicts of pollution and destruction of the environment caused by man.
    - b. Write about the environmental theme of your book using specific characters and setting.
  2. *Book Response Card 2*
    - a. Which of the characters in the story shows particular care or respect for the environment?
    - b. Write a story about going camping with that character. You may use the same setting as the story. Include in your story ways in which the story character shows his care for the environment.
  3. *Book Response Card 3*
    - a. Think about two characters in the story. Write sentences explaining what kind of person is each of these characters.

### CONFERENCE ON THEOLOGY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Theological perspectives on clean water, land use, hazardous waste, non-renewable resources and other environment topics was the focus of an clergy and church educators. "Values and Environmental Issue." was held at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, on January 15, is co-sponsored by the Grand Rapids Area Center for Ecumenism (GRACE), the School for Ministry. The Project Lakewell.

The purpose of the conference was to relate theology to current environment issues and to provide a theological basis for pastors and persons engaged in the church education. The conference presented several denominations and included ministers who have congregational responsibilities as well as theologians from seminaries and church supported colleges.

Wes Michelson, currently teaching at Western Theological Seminary, provided the keynote address. Michelson has been associated with the *Sojourners* Group for several years.

# E.E. IN THE BASICS

## Children's Literature

Below is a selected bibliography of books for elementary school aged children which have been found to be worthy as literature as well as being thematically sensitive to the environment. This is by no means a comprehensive list but is merely offered as a launching point. Many of you will know of other books which should be listed. I would appreciate any titles and authors you would send to me, preferably on a 3 x 5 card. Thanks! (Wendy Berkheimer, 318 N. Aurelius, Mason, MI 48854)

### APPRECIATION OF NATURE:

Annixter, Jane and Paul. *Sea Otter*. NY: Holiday House, Inc., 1972 (Ages 11+)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Horns of Plenty*. NY: Holiday House, Inc., 1960. (112)

Annixter, Paul. *Swiftwater* (Ages 13+)

Barth, Edna. *I'm Nobody! Who Are You?* NY: The Seabury Press, 1971. (Ages 8+)

Bourne, Miriam Ann. *Raccoons Are For Loving*. NY: Random House, Inc., 1968. (Ages 6-9)

Brown, Margaret Wise. *The Dead Bird*. Scott, 1958. (Ages 4-7)

Carner, Chas. Tawny. NY: Macmillan Pub. Co., Inc., 1978 (Ages 9-13)

Carrick, Donald and Carol. *Sleep Out*. NY: The Seabury Press, 1973 (6-9)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Swamp Spring*. London: The Macmillan Co., 1969. (5-10)

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Old Barn*. NY: Bobbs Merrill Co. Inc., 1966 (6-10)

Carrick, Donald. *The Tree*. NY: The Macmillan Co., 1971 (5-10)

Caudill, Rebecca. *A Pocketful of Cricket*. (4-7)

Clark, Ann Nolan. *Along Sandy Trails*. NY: The Viking Press, 1969 (7-11)

Dixon, Paige. *The Young Grizzly*. NY: Atheneum. 1974. (11+)

Dragonwagon, Crescent. *When Light Turns Into Night*. NY: Harper Rowe, 1975. (4-7)

Ernst, Kathryn. *Mr. Tamarin's Trees*. (5-8)

Gallico, Paul. *The Snow Goose*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1940. (12+)

Healey, Larry. *The Claw of the Bear*. NY: Franklin Watts, 1978. (10+)

Jackson, Jacqueline and Perlutter. *The Engless Pavement*. (7-12)

Leek, Sybil. *The Tree That Conquered the World*. NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969. (8-11)

Lund, Doris H. *The Paint-Box Sea*. NY: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1973. (7-15)

North, Sterling. *Rascal* (11)

Phelan, Terry Wolfe. *The Week Mom Unplugged the TVs*. NY: Four Winds Press, 1979. (8-13)

Rawings, Marjorie Kinnan. *The Yearling*. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938. (11+)

Robertson, Keith. *In Search of a Sandhill Crane*. The Viking Press, Inc., 1973. (11+)

Shaura, Mary Frances Craig. *The Season of Silence*. Atheneum Pub., 1976. (10-14)

Smith, Theresa K. *The Fog is Secret*. NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966 (8-14)

Taylor, Milred D. *Song of the Trees*. (8-11)

Tresselt, Alvin. *The Dead Tree*. NY: Parents Mag. Press, 1972, (5-10)

Viorst, Judith. *The Tenth Good Thing About Barney*. Atheneum, 1971. (5-10)

Zolotow, Charlotte. *Hold My Hand*. NY: Harper & Row, 1972. (4-9)

\_\_\_\_\_. *When the Wind Stops*. Harper & Row, 1975. (5-7)

### NON-FICTION

Buck, Lewis. *Wetlands, Bogs, Marshes and Swamps*. NY: Parents Magazine Press, 1974. (7-12)

Busch, Phyllis S. *Lions in the Grass*. NY: The World Pub. Co., 1968. (7-11)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Once There Was a Tree; The Story of the Tree, A Changing Home for Plants and Animals*, 1968. (7-11)

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Walk in the Snow*. NY: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1971. (5-9)

Hoban, Tara. *Look Again*. (6-12)

Morey, Walt. *Operation Blue Bear; A True Story*. NY: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1975. (11+)

Russell, Franklin. *Corvus the Crow*. NY: Four Winds Press, 1972. (11+)

Stephens, William M. *A Day in the Life of a Sandy Beach*. NY: McGraw-Hill, 1973. (7-11)

### LIVING IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

Asimov, Isaac. *The Best New Thing*. NY: The World Pub. Co., 1971. (7-12)

Baylor, Byrd. *Hawk, I'm Your Brother*. (5-8)

Benchley, Nathaniel. *Only Earth and Sky Last Forever*. NY: Harper & Rowe, 1972. (11+)

Byars, Betsy. *The House of Wings*. NY: The Viking Press, 1972. (9-12)

Carrick, Carol and Donald. *A Clearing in the Forest*. NY: The Dail Press, 1970. (4-8)

Donovan, John. *Wild in the World*. (11+) Ets, Mary. *Play With Me*. NY: The Viking Press, 1955. (4-7)

Gackenbach, Dick. *Do You Love Me?* The Seabury Press, Inc., 1975. (5-8)

George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves*. NY: Harper & Rowe, 1971. (9+)

\_\_\_\_\_. *My Side of the Mountain*. NY: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1959. (9+)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Who Really Killed Cock Robin? An Ecological Mystery*, 1971.

Hoban, Russell. *Arthur's New Power*. NY: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1978. (7-11)

London, Jack. *The Call of the Wild and other stories*. (9+)

Miles, Miska. *Annie and the Old One*. (7-11)

Morey, Walt. *Canyon Winter*. NY: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1971. (9+)

Peake, Katy. *The Indian Heart of Carrie Hodges*. 1971. (8-12)

Paulsen, Gary. *The Foxman*. Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1977. (11-14)

Pomerantz, Charlotte. *The Day They Parachuted Cats on Borneo*. Young Scott Books., 1971. (7-11)

# MICHIGAN READING JOURNAL

## STYLE SHEET

1. Manuscripts should be typed, doubled-spaced throughout (bibliography as well) and no more than 10 pages in length, including references. An original and three copies should be submitted with a large, self-addressed, stamped envelope.
2. Manuscripts must be original and must not have been sent out for simultaneous review by any other publication.
3. The author's name should appear only on a cover sheet for the original and should *not* appear as identification anywhere else in either the original or the 3 copies.
4. List all sources in a separate reference section at the end of the article. Alphabetize the references by author's last name, then number each reference consecutively (See example below).

### SAMPLE TEXT

More specifically, Baker and Stein (1978) call for investigating "expository comprehension," particularly in children of the "transitional period, i.e., third and fourth graders who have mastered basic decoding skills but are not yet fluent readers" (p. 46). While the comprehensibility of narrative prose can be explained in terms of 1) the coherence of episodic components, and 2) the reader's goals, expectations, and familiarity with the structure and schema of the material (Kintsch, 1977; Stein and Glenn, 1978; Winograd, 1977), identifying the components of variables that either facilitate or impede the comprehension of expository prose is not as clearly understood. Thus, the first generalization issue addressed in the present study involved relating findings based on narrative passages to findings based on expository passages. Research focusing on type of comprehension task suggests that differences should be obtained as a result of type of prose (Kendall, Mason, & Hunter, 1980).

### REFERENCES

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2. Kendall, J., Mason, J., & Hunter, W. Which comprehension? Artifacts in the measurement of reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Research*, 1980, 73, 233-36.
3. Kintsch, W. On comprehending stories. In M.A. Just & P.A. Carpenter (Eds.), *Cognitive processes in comprehension*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1977.
4. Stein, N.L., & Glenn, C.G. An analysis of story comprehension in elementary school children. In R. Freedle (Ed.) *Discourse processing: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Ablex, Inc. 1978.
5. Winograd, T. A framework for understanding discourse. In M.A. Just & P.A. Carpenter (Eds.) *Cognitive processes in comprehension*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1977.

**MICHIGAN READING ASSOCIATION**

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