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FAMILY LITERACY EVENTS
PROMOTING EARLY READING AND WRITING BEHAVIORS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education: Reading

by
H. Todd O'Neal
March 1994

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Approved by:


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3/15/94
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Abstract

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this project is to bring meaningful language experiences to the child and provide parents the opportunity to discover how children learn. For instance, parents will find their son or daughter learning to read by writing their own stories, and learning to write from reading books, magazines, signs, and labels.

Procedure

The first goal of this project is bringing purposeful literary experiences into each student's home. Literacy learning should not stop at school, children need to find reasons to read and write at home, or wherever they go.

The second goal is to bring children and parents to the realization that learning to read and write is accomplished through meaningful language strategies. Social conversation, reading signs, or writing notes are examples of purposeful language experiences that early literacy learners need.

Finally, the necessity for a parent and school partnership is emphasized, since student progress depends heavily on parental support of their child's education. Parents are encouraged to actively participate with their child in the undertaking of each literacy project brought home.

Conclusion

This project will provide a total of sixty literacy events for

early readers and writers. Each event provides an opportunity for students to read, and write at home with other family members. The literacy experiences are designed to follow the whole language learning model.

Students will find literature to read, stories to write, and plenty of fun completing their projects. All supplies and guidelines will be provided, adding to the enjoyment of each learning experience.

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Introduction

The topic of family literacy is designed to build on the parent and child unit, providing literacy education for the child and increase parental understanding of how children learn. In this project, primary students will take reading and writing materials home from school throughout the school year. Literary strategies will be shared with students and their parents, with the aid of brief written explanations.

Materials will be provided when necessary. For example, if students are to collect samples of environmental print, each child will be sent home with a paper bag to contain their print samples.

Statement of the Problem

Parents of primary children attending whole language classes are often dismayed, sometimes hostile, because they do not understand the integrity of meaning based language learning. One reason is that parents will remember their first grade experiences and picture their child participating in a similar classroom setting. For example, parents want to see their children completing phonics drills on dittos as they did, not free writing in journals.

For too long, educators and parents alike have undermined children's natural language growth by breaking it up into meaningless pieces. A letter, or word by itself is not language for example. Letters form words and words tell a message when they

are used in meaningful context.

The natural process of language learning becomes difficult when correctness becomes the main focus. If a baby's beginning attempts at speech were corrected, talking would be delayed. Reading and writing development for many children have suffered such delays because correctness has superseded the importance of communication.

Allowing the child to focus on communicating, rather than correctness, encourages reading and writing growth. Classroom literacy reunites the child with real language; family literacy invites reading and writing events into the home.

To bridge the gap between whole language classrooms and parental expectations, parents can experience literacy events with their children at home. Family literacy will provide a gradual introduction for parents to understand meaning based language learning. For instance, circling letters, and filling in the blank activities will be replaced with reading, discussing quality literature, and purposeful writing.

Baghban (1989) shares the following example:

Celebrate your children's authorship. Ask your children to read what they have written. Talk about the scribbles, drawings, letters, and the signs you see. Ask open-ended questions that encourage conversation about the drawings and stories. Respond to the meaning of the message in a positive way. Be a good audience (p. 11).

Theoretical Orientation / Foundation

Making sense out of text, whether it is read or written by the student, is the key point in a whole language learning environment. Communicating through meaningful language is how children learn to speak, read, and write. With this in mind, understand that students and their parents can use these concepts in the home as well.

Understanding how a child learns is a major pillar supporting the whole language philosophy of reading. Children learn language that makes sense to them, and children learn from that which relates to their past experiences. For example, if a child grows up in a city, reading and writing about farm animals may have little value.

Whole language teachers are sensitive to building the background or schema of children when beginning a new topic for study. Once students have become acquainted with a subject, they are better prepared to read and write about it. Goodman (1986) explains, "Readers construct meaning during reading. They use their prior learning and experiences to make sense of the text" (p. 38).

In addition to building schema, students involved in whole language learning are given choices. It is the child who has the opportunity to pick topics which hold a personal interest. For example, if the theme of transportation is covered by inner city school children, each student could decide which form of

transportation is most interesting to study. Some students may even choose to invent a new way of traveling through their city, and depict its advantages with drawings and written explanations.

It is important that students are encouraged to pursue an area of study which holds meaning for them. Choice empowers the learner, giving him or her more say in their learning.

Harste et al. (1988) describe choice in the following passage:

Choice is an integral part of the literacy learning process. In many ways choice is the propeller that gets the whole process started. It is in making the decision to read this story rather than that story, that ownership of the process occurs (p. 61).

Reading literature that makes sense to the reader, and writing topics that interest the writer are two examples of whole language theory and practice. The whole language theory is not mysterious or new. In fact, people were reading books and writing long before ditto sheets, flash cards, and workbooks were published. Keeping language real, student choice and background knowledge are essentials in the practice and theory of whole language. Routman (1991) explains, "Every day the teacher and her students were reading, discussing quality literature, and writing for a variety of authentic purposes. Skills were being learned and taught as much as possible in the context of genuine reading and writing experiences" (p. 5).

Literature Review

In reviewing literature concerning family literacy, three issues are discussed. The first topic is early language development, the second covers authentic language strategies, and building a partnership with parents is third.

Early Language Development

The natural process of language learning begins at home. Children soon learn that communication is vital for survival from the first day of birth. Infants cry when they want to be fed, held, or changed. Mothers and fathers talk, and sing to their babies. Any gurgle or coo is encouraged. With support, and real language use, talking appears to come easily to a child. The positive feedback children receive from their parents, inspires them to talk even more.

Parents are the primary educators of language to their children. Mothers and fathers are the first to teach their children to communicate through language. Since birth and throughout a child's life, parents provide the most critical use of language with their children.

Children learn language through the social interactions of family life. Language is shared within a household daily. Messages spoken and written between family members are each a form of literacy that children can learn from every day.

Reutzel & Fawson (1990) state, "Children look to parents and other adult care givers for their first and often most important demonstrations of language. While parents teach children the function of language implicitly, children learn to speak with ease and success" (p. 222).

When children observe their father, mother, and siblings reading, they want to participate in the experience too. Sharing stories and praising a beginning reader motivates the child to read more, just as it encourages a beginning speaker to keep trying.

Strickland & Morrow (1990) explain:

Research indicates that children who become early readers and who show a natural interest in books are likely to come from homes in which parents, siblings, or other individuals have read to them regularly. Further, parents of early readers tend to be habitual readers themselves. Frequent story readings at home help children become familiar with book language and recognize the function of written language (p. 518).

Children can and will make connections with print and its function; however, the process can become enhanced with direct parental involvement. For example, parents can read environmental print with their children when shopping, riding in the car, or at home. Sources of environmental print include: road signs, advertisements, and food labels.

Everywhere in the home children have literacy experiences open to them; however, these experiences are easily overlooked.

For example, few have realized that print is used in almost every room in the house. Hill (1989) explains, "Initially they listed reading sources found in their kitchen cabinets--canned goods, cereal boxes, and spices. Then they added recipes, sewing patterns, road maps, tax forms, and directions for assembling tools or toys" (p. 19).

More obvious print sources a parent can share are newspapers, magazines, and books. It is good to have reading materials in the house, and available to the child. A wide variety of books, including fiction and non-fiction, and books with different styles of prose, increase the chances of a child discovering an appealing topic to read about.

Reading stories together, either as read alouds or as paired readers, will provide ample opportunities for children to hear printed language and gain valuable exposure to enriching vocabulary. Reading together at home is one of the most significant things a parent and child can do together in helping a child learn to read.

Goodman (1986) shares:

Parents can play a vital role at this stage. Ask them to share with their children such things as letters, forms, advertisements, magazines, signs, packages, and other literacy events. Urge them to take their children to libraries, where, as soon as they can sign their own names, they can check out their own books (p. 44).

In addition to available materials, and reading together, the adult reader must encourage questions from the child, invite the child to talk about prior knowledge, and share genuine enthusiasm through the literature.

Kirby (1992) discusses home reading:

The type of quality of home reading is yet to be studied in detail, but through informal interviews with parents they described some of the ways in which they supported their children's literacy such as questioning, pointing out book features and talking about the book. The parents also described the ways in which their children had ownership over the story reading events including asking their parents questions and pointing out features in the books that they knew. This aspect of children having ownership over their own literacy is an important factor that is likely to positively influence their motivation, confidence, participation and growing knowledge of print (p. 9).

Eventually, children learn to manipulate writing utensils and paper. They scribble, draw, and eventually write. Children do not have to be asked to write. They soon learn from their own experimentations, how to communicate in writing.

From an observation of young children, Taylor (1988) found, "The linking of messages--of drawings with words--had begun. Without being asked, the children were drawing their families and writing 'I love you' messages. Pictures became letters and cards with writing and decoration" (p. 79).

Another outlet for children to share literacy is with other

young people. Children love to correspond with friends, siblings, and cousins for example. Encouraging children to pass notes, invent secret codes, and write letters will allow young people to experiment with written language. Through experimentation, children will learn the conventions of writing, plus understand the purpose of writing is to communicate with one another.

Real language experiences gives a person the chance to create meaning with a personal direction. In other words, children can choose their own stories and write about topics which are fascinating to them. Right or wrong is not the focus, meaningful, and purposeful communication is. Baghban (1984) states, "In environments that immerse these children in print and allow them to discover, formulate, test, and develop hypotheses about orthography, the children determine a role for their written products" (p. 22).

The child should have access to paper, pencils, and pens. With the necessary writing materials, the child only has to find a place to begin writing. Notes may be taken to school to share, mail, or keep in a journal for reference. The important thing is that children begin to develop a writing habit on their own. Once children discover the joy of sharing notes with friends, they find it more difficult to stop than to begin. Taylor (1983) adds, " However, it should be emphasized that the children are interacting with print on a daily basis and that siblings and friends are mediating each

other's literate experiences" (p. 17).

Children make use of their contextual environment, and are able to manipulate it to meet their own needs and interests. Communicating is essential since birth, and children build on their need to express themselves according to their development. Giving children the open opportunities they need to grow in language development is most critical. Hill (1989) shares, "I think you will also agree that not only do reading and writing begin at home but they continue to develop there" (p. 91).

Authentic Language Strategies

Authentic language strategies are ones which focus on the need children have to make sense of their world. Keeping language events "real" as children learn to read and write, creates the foundation on which young students can begin to make sense of print. When children read signs, menus, and billboards for example, they begin to experience the functions of print within their environment.

Laminack (1990) shares an observation of his 2 year old son:

In other instances Zachary had been ruled by context as he attempted to make sense of print; for example, he had read Escort as "Theresa's car," Colgate as "Daddy's toothpaste," and DAD printed on a mug as "Daddy's coffee." In those situations he was selecting primarily semantic (meaning) clues available from both highly contextualized situations and his own prior knowledge

of the functions of the products acquired through regular exposure with the objects in use (p. 537).

Educators looking for authentic literary events bring such things as newspapers, comic strips, and food labels to students since each are specifically intended to communicate a message.

Sumara & Walker (1991) describe authentic language tasks:

These should involve genuine communication of important meanings, not simply practice of communication skills that would be put to real use at some later time. We found that in these whole language classrooms, this sense of the need for authentic engagements was always situated within an understanding of what is "real" for children who spend a large portion of their lives in school (p. 283).

The following discussion specifically addresses three authentic language strategies children need as learners of language. The value of tying into life experiences is first, pursuing personal interests is second, and the socialness of learning language is third.

It is easier for children to learn new concepts when they can make a connection to previous experiences. Children enjoy hearing literature for example, because they can link story characters and events with their own lives, friends, and families. This is one reason why literature is a successful resource for bringing new topics to children. Reading helps students reach into new subject areas through a story line.

Educators can easily discover the history of their students by listening to them. Students have a lot to share, and they often tell about their past to their peers and teachers. The schools also learn about a child's background from student history files, family members, and others involved with the student. Educators can accept children's previous experiences and look for ways to incorporate them into the curriculum.

Harste (1989) states:

Whole-language advocates believe that learning begins by making connections to life experiences. No matter what one wants to teach, students need to begin by making connections. All students have experience and language. Teachers need to respect what the child brings to class and build from there (p. 246).

Another authentic learning strategy is inviting students to delve into their individual interests. For instance, if insects happen to be the topic for study, students could pursue an aspect of insects they find most fascinating. One way to do this is by making two columns titled: What I Know, and What I Want To Know. The two lists may look like the following:

What I Know

Six legs
One pair of antennae
Spiders eat them
A fly is an insect
Some insects suck blood
Some insects eat plants

What I Want to Know

Do all insects fly?
Is a worm an insect?
Do insects live in water?
Which ones have stingers?
Are they poisonous?
Do insects help people?

Once students have completed their lists, it is easier to select specific aspects of a topic to study. More information and questions may be added to each column as research progresses.

Goodman & Burke (1980) suggest the following guidelines:

1. Think about why you want to know this information.
2. Make a list of some of the things that you already know about the subject. Call it What I Know. Keep adding to this list as you find out important information that you want to remember.
3. Make a list of questions that you have about the subject .
4. Think about where you can find the answers to your questions.
5. Look for answers to the questions that are most interesting and important to you.
6. Organize the important information by putting ideas and concepts about the same things together.
7. Share your information with others. Present it in the form of a play or a TV show, lead a discussion about it, or think of another interesting way to share it (p. 202).

It is a good idea to supply students with plenty of resource books, and magazines when they begin to look for information on their particular subject. Libraries at school, and within the community are also good places to send students for more literature. One last suggestion for students is to interview people who are knowledgeable within the field of study. Goodman & Burke (1980) recommend, "List nonprint resources (pet-store owners, science teachers, exterminators). Help them understand what kinds

of questions a parent or older sibling or such experts as biologists or leaders of nature centers may be able to answer" (p. 203).

Thirdly, authentic language experiences are social events. When students have an opportunity to share ideas, they learn from one another. When children talk to each other about interesting places, movies, or their pets for example, each child learns something while communicating with real language. Goodman (1992) shares his view of education, "I believe learning is both personal and social and that optimum learning occurs when learners are engaged in functional, relevant, and meaningful experiences" (p.192).

Whole language classrooms encourage student collaboration. Instead of teacher centered lessons, teachers and students learn together. Ideally, students take charge of their own topics and reach a mutual goal.

Freeman & Freeman (1992) explain:

In whole language classrooms students and teachers collaborate as they investigate subjects of interest to them. They find answers to questions by reading together and talking together, and then they write up their findings and sometimes also present their findings orally to others (p. 123).

One example of students working with students, is the authoring cycle; Harste et al. (1988) list five steps often used in beginning circles:

1. The first author reads the piece aloud to the other authors in the Authors' Circle.
2. The listeners receive the piece by telling what they heard in the piece, especially focusing on what they found most effective.
3. The listeners then have the opportunity to raise questions about parts that were unclear to them or areas where they felt additional information was needed, or to make any other comments about the meaning of the piece. The author can take notes to remember comments.
4. The next author reads a piece and the process continues until each author has been heard and responded to.
5. The authors then leave the circle to consider the suggestions that were made and to arrive at their own decisions (p. 223).

Authentic language strategies become possible when educators look for ways of becoming less didactic, and empower students with the freedom to select appealing topics and learning styles. Giving students more control is a gradual process; however, it is a necessary step if students are to encounter purposeful reading and writing events.

Sumara & Walker (1991) share:

Child-centeredness seems to require the teacher to take on the role of an invisible authority who seeks to affirm, validate, and promote effective learning without becoming authoritative and controlling the kinds of choices that allow authentic reading and writing experiences to evolve (p. 278).

Building a Partnership With Parents

Parents want their children to succeed in school; however, it is important to establish a collaborative relationship between the home and school for success to be achieved. Collaboration can be established with a simple written message taken home by the child, a phone call, or conferences. Keeping communication open is key to establishing a positive relationship between home and school.

Cairney & Munsie (1992) explain, "Parents must be viewed as equal partners. There must be a reciprocal relationship. We need to go beyond involvement and recognize the vital role that parents play in education" (p. 36).

In essence, a child's education does not stop with the child. How much a parent understands or accepts what their child is learning determines how far a child will go within a particular learning environment. Student progress will grow or wither depending on the support from the parents.

According to Cairney & Munsie (1992) they propose that:

It has been our aim to treat parents as learners, and to see them grow as parents, because it is our belief that to do otherwise is short sighted. If children are to be given a chance to succeed with literacy (and schooling) then parents have to be helped to become long term supporters of their children's learning. Continued growth in children as learners is at least partly dependent upon the quality of interactions that these children experience with their parents within the home (p. 40).

Insuring each child's academic success has become a collaborative effort between the child, parents, and the school. For example, parents can share more read alouds, book discussions, and purposeful writing experiences with their children by receiving the necessary guidelines and materials from school. In a whole language classroom, children are writing in journals, making books, sharing real literature, and choosing books most interesting to them; the point is getting children and their parents actively involved in similar literary experiences at home.

Educators can make parents aware of the important role they play in the success their child has at school. For example, reading and writing are lifetime skills and should be practiced not only at school, and at home, but almost anywhere. In fact, the hours spent at school are only a fraction of the day. A child spends many more hours at home, and with increased parent and teacher cooperation, learning time at home can become more beneficial to the child's literary development.

Something else worth mentioning is that once a child begins school, parents often believe that their responsibility for their child's learning stops. Winter & Rouse (1990) explain, "Helping the child learn to read is perceived by many to be the task of the school, and teachers are expected to work this magic with children without assistance from the home" (p. 383). The learning environment at home can enhance a child's progress at school.

If a child were learning to play the piano, he or she must practice at home for many hours before coming to the next piano lesson. The same is true for a boy or girl learning to read and write. Children must read and write at home too, before coming to school the next day. We know what happens when someone fails to practice their piano lessons. The same is true for the first grader who fails to find purposeful reading and writing experiences in daily life.

But most importantly, schools can encourage parents to talk with their children. They can find out firsthand which kinds of stories their children enjoy most, and build their own library around their child's interest. The family can keep a running list of the stories read, and stories they would like to read.

After reading favorite stories with children, parents can learn to experience the joy of having their child retell stories, write new endings to stories, or make up new stories of their own. The list is endless of nurturing reading development and interests.

Parents and the school are instrumental in promoting children's natural inquiry; however, sometimes it is necessary to assist a child in developing an area of interest. Children will claim that reading is no fun, for example, or there is nothing to write about. Children will feel this way until they find a particular book or writing topic that matches their genuine interests.

Bridging literacy to meaningful purposes is the foundation to reading and writing growth and success. Giving students something they feel good about doing is the fuel they need for motivation and learning. When they come up with their own topics, students are motivated to write because the subject is their own.

Rosner (1989) states:

Parents who wish to help their children grow in the ability to write stay alert for ways to provide real reasons to write. Children who write letters to relatives, make lists, label their drawings, or keep a journal are writing for a variety of real reasons (p. 13).

Literacy events at home can begin with a backpack filled with the necessary supplies from school, for example. Teachers have filled these packs with writing tools, paper, and basic guidelines, creating a mobile writing center to be taken home by the students for the purpose of writing. A student may wish to make a poster of his family, a book he or she read, or make a book from the supplies in the pack.

Reutzel & Fawson (1990) suggest:

One means of involving parents with their children's writing development is the use of a Traveling Tales backpack. This idea, is similar to magazine packs developed to promote family reading (Farris, 1987), creates a bridge between the home and the school, bringing children and parents together in a shared writing event at home which will be shared eventually in the classroom (p. 223).

In summary, uniting parents with the school, in a collaborative effort to bring literacy into the student's home, were most instrumental in developing this family literacy project. Since parents provide the primary source of language, it appears paramount to involve them in their children's reading and writing development. Thus, each literacy event is designed to invite parents to participate with their child when reading and writing.

Families will receive the necessary materials from school. The guidelines, reading and writing supplies will all be available for each learning event. Students will choose which literary strategies to bring home and each student's final product may return to class for sharing purposes.

Project Description

Summary of the Project

Family literacy involves the family. All family members can experience real literature, purposeful writing, and other meaningful communication strategies through a collaborative effort between home and school.

The objective is to provide each child with resources that motivate language building experiences. Guidelines will provide each student with ideas. For example, students may make a scrapbook or collage of ads, schedules, and labels. The entire family can participate by bringing more samples of environmental print to the child.

Each student will bring home a brown, nine by twelve inch envelope containing appropriate materials necessary for language learning. Each student will have an opportunity to bring a literacy event home once every two weeks. Examples of project contents include: trade books, descriptions of reading strategies, lists of environmental print resources, pencils, markers, and paper.

Goals

The most important goal is increasing the social interaction between child and care giver for the development of language learning. It is also important that a partnership begins between home and school through open communication and understanding. Finally, once students experience the pleasure of reading real

literature and purposeful writing, each child will pursue their own reading and writing interests.

Limitations

The first limitation of this project is the focus on early reading and writing behaviors. It promotes beginning reading and writing literacy. Upper grade students may find the learning level below their maturity.

The second limitation is its convergence on meaning, this project neither focuses on the mastery of skills out of context, nor does it advocate the process of breaking language down into meaningless pieces; keeping language whole and purposeful is the core of language learning.

The third limitation is the dependence upon parental commitment. Parents may not read, understand, or accept the guidelines brought home. Almost every literacy event will depend upon some participation from an adult in the home. A family literacy program is most effective with support from the student's family.

The final limitation is the informal assessment included within each envelope sent home. Each assessment will ask for basic feedback from the child and parent. For example, the student may be asked to state if he or she liked writing about their family, and the parent may have to write about their observations of each lesson brought home.

The teacher's evaluation form will include a brief oral interview of the parents and child, following their presentation. Each question specifically rates parent and child enthusiasm and participation, to help determine the overall effectiveness of each literacy event.

Responses from the evaluations will determine which lessons may need replacing or changes. No formal evaluation will accrue from the use of this project.

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Appendix A

Introduction

Each literacy event in this project is to provide purposeful language experiences for beginning readers and writers. Giving students literature, writing materials, and the necessary guidelines to take home, will allow them to experience more language building after school. Children need to participate in reading and writing events throughout the day, and have the motivation to read and write on their own time.

Since motivation is an important factor, students are given the freedom to select from an appealing variety of projects. All projects are designed to be fun as well as educational. Some examples include, poster making, book making, and writing comic strips.

Communicating through meaningful language is how children learn to speak, read, and write. This is why students need to participate in literacy events which give them the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings. For instance, writing a comic strip gives a child the chance to share something funny, and poster making may provide a student an opportunity to create something portraying a favorite place, or pastime.

Family literacy brings reading and writing events into the child's home, where students can spend quality time reading and writing with their family members. All family members are encouraged to work together with the child, and create a writing

event that will be shared at school.

Parents are especially encouraged to participate, since they play a vital role in the success of their child's education. In fact, a collaborative relationship is established between home and school to assist parents in making their child's learning time more productive.

Before literacy projects go home, the parents of each student are contacted by a written notice, phone call, or conference, informing them of how to assist their child. Parents are specifically asked to read project guidelines, books, and poems with their son or daughter. Parents and students will also be informed that all necessary literature, writing materials, and art supplies will be provided within each project envelope sent home. Students will carry their project materials home in a brown, nine by twelve inch envelope.

Once parents begin the family literacy routine with their child, it is expected that they too will discover the benefits of whole language learning. Parents will find their son or daughter reading and writing about topics which they have chosen to pursue, and hold a particular interest.

Parents will also discover with their children the benefits of real language learning. A major advantage with meaningful language events, is that they make sense to students. Thus, children will want to participate. For example, writing about

a favorite place to hide will have greater interest to a student than spelling the word hide on a ditto sheet. Real language events typically revolve around those things which children experience in daily life, so literary strategies which focus on foods, games, places, friends, and family for example will hold greater interest for children.

Children look for what is interesting, understandable, and fun. The key is finding literary events which focus on that which children seek.

Project Management

Each student will have an opportunity to choose a literacy project and share their work. A lottery system will be used for students to check out literacy events. Once a day, four names will be pulled at random. Those four students will choose which literacy event to take home. Not all projects will be available on one day, eight will be out for selection a day. After four events are selected, four more will be added to the ones left over.

Student names already picked will not go back into the lottery until all students have a turn. Within a two week period, all students will have had a chance to select a project and share their work. After the second week, the lottery begins again.

Sharing days will occur, according to the number written on the project envelope. For example, if a student selects an event on Monday, and a three is written on the envelope, that student will be scheduled to share on Thursday. The number of days a student has to work on their project is determined by the level of involvement a particular project requires. Some literacy events take two, three, or more days to complete.

Sharing time will begin at nine o'clock in the morning, and parents are invited to attend. No more than three students may share a day. If more than three sharing events happen to fall on the same day, the last student chosen from the lottery will be asked to share on the next available day. This will be determined

on the day of the lottery, when sharing days are scheduled according to the project number. Sharing dates will also be dropped into the project envelope to remind students and parents of the day they are scheduled to share.

Each student will have approximately five to ten minutes to share, making sharing time last for approximately 15 to 30 minutes. Sharing time is limited to match the attention span of first grade students.

A letter will be sent to parents, encouraging them to participate with their child on each project brought home. Reading the guidelines and literature together are especially important. Parents will be invited to share completed projects with their child; however, this is strictly optional. If a student is not ready to present on their due date, parents are asked to send a letter regarding the need for more time, so a new day can be arranged.

Guidelines For Literacy Events At Home

Dear Parent(s),

Literacy education at home can have a great influence upon your child's reading and writing development. The weekly projects sent home will include a variety of reading and writing materials for use by you and your child. I encourage you to work with your child in each literacy event. Writing poetry, and poster making are just two examples of what you will be doing together.

Please go over the guidelines before starting any project. Students will need to understand what to do before they can begin. Students are often asked to share read books with someone, that means you read the material with your child. You encourage your son or daughter to read along simultaneously.

All necessary literature, writing materials, and art supplies will be inside each project envelope brought home. A due date will be written on the outside of each envelope, that is the day student work and supplies are to be returned.

Please allow for invented spellings of words, and have your child read their work to you. It is important that students are familiar with their work, and be ready to present it to the class.

I invite you to come to school with your child, if it is possible, to share the projects you have done together. Sharing time is at nine o'clock in the morning.

Thank you for your help.

Literacy Events

Print All Around Us

Look around and read aloud some important signs you see.

Read signs you see riding in your car.

Read signs you see in stores.

People buy signs and wear signs.

Find the tag board, colored paper, scissors, glue, and markers.

Make some signs of your own.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

An Environmental Print Walk

Go for a walk around the house with someone.

Read any signs, notes, or anything else you see together.

Did you find many things to read?

Write about the ones you would like to share.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

My Favorite Book

Make a poster of your favorite book.

Remember to write your book's title and author.

Write some good things about your book too.

Getting Started

Choose a sheet of colored paper for your poster.

You may use the markers, or crayons in the envelope for writing.

The small pieces of colored paper are for any decoration you wish to make.

Glue and scissors are also packed for you.

Please return supplies when you are finished.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

My Best Friend

Make a poster of your best friend.

Remember to write his or her name on the poster.

Write some good things about your friend on the poster.

Idea Boosters

What are your friend's favorite games?

Does your friend belong to a club?

What are your friend's hobbies?

What is your friend's favorite place?

What is your friend's favorite food?

What is your friend's favorite toy?

Where does your friend go to school?

Getting Started

Choose a sheet of colored paper for your poster.

You may use the markers, or crayons in the envelope for writing.

The small pieces of colored paper are for making decorations.

Glue and scissors are also packed for you.

Please return supplies when you are finished.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

My Favorite Food

Make a poster of your favorite food.

Find pictures of it, and write why it's so good.

You may want to write the recipe too.

Getting Started

Choose a sheet of colored paper for your poster.

You may use the markers, or crayons in the envelope for writing.

The small pieces of colored paper are for making decorations.

Glue and scissors are also packed for you.

Please return supplies when you are finished.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

My Favorite Place

Make a poster of your favorite place.

Find or make some pictures of your favorite place.

Remember to write why you like your favorite place.

Getting Started

Choose a sheet of colored paper for your poster.

You may use the markers, or crayons in the envelope for writing.

The small pieces of colored paper are for making decorations.

Glue and scissors are also packed for you.

Please return supplies when you are finished.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

My Favorite Sport

Make a poster of your favorite sport.

Find pictures, or draw your favorite sport.

Write something about how it is played.

Getting Started

Choose a sheet of colored paper for your poster.

You may use the markers, or crayons in the envelope for writing.

The small pieces of colored paper are for making decorations.

Glue and scissors are also packed for you.

Please return supplies when you are finished.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

Peek and Write

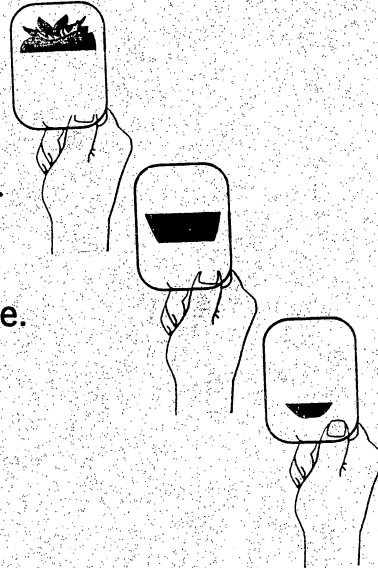
Look in window one . . . write what you see.

Look in window two . . . write what you see.

Look in window three . . . write what you see.

Write a story about what you found.

You may use the writing paper, pencils, and crayons
in the envelope.



Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

From Trash to Treasure

Go through some trash, and look for things you can read.

Glue them down to make a collage.

In the envelope you should find scissors, glue, and tag board to help you get started.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

My Favorite Animal

Make a poster of your favorite animal.

Find pictures or make pictures of your favorite animal.

Remember to write about your favorite animal.

Idea Boosters

Where does your favorite animal live?

What does your favorite animal eat?

What does it do?

How does it move?

Why is this your favorite animal?

Getting Started

Choose a sheet of colored paper for your poster.

You may use the markers, or crayons in the envelope for writing.

The small pieces of colored paper are for making decorations.

Glue and scissors are also packed for you.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

When Will I Read?

Ask someone to read aloud, When Will I Read?, by Miriam Cohen.

After hearing the story, look around and think about all the things you can read.

Collect some in a bag to share in class.

Adapted from: Watson, J. (1987). Ideas and insights:
Language arts in the elementary school.
Urbana IL: National Council of Teachers
of English.

Goodbye Geese

by Nancy White Carlstrom

Ask someone to share read, Good-bye Geese with you.

After reading, take a few quiet minutes to think about the story.

Once you thought awhile, try making a drawing of what the story meant to you.

When you finish, ask other people in your house to tell what they think you are trying to say in your picture.

Once everyone has had a turn at explaining your picture, you can tell what you were trying to say.

Adapted from: Harste, J. C., Short, K. G., & Burke, C. (1988).
Creating classrooms for authors.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Pattern Stories Are Fun to Find
An End of the Year Project

Pattern stories are fun to find and read.
The more you read, the more fun you have.
See how many pattern books you can find.

These are just a few pattern books.

Is Your Mama a Lama?, by Deborah Guarino

Cookie's Week, by Cindy Ward

Just Like Daddy, by Frank Asch

The Napping House, by Audrey Wood

Chicken Soup With Rice, by Maurice Sendak

Can you find anymore?

After you read a few pattern stories, try writing your own.
Find the blank book, markers, crayons, and pencil
in the envelope.

Have your own pattern story ready for sharing.

You may use the pattern story demonstration done in class.

Adapted from: Harste, J. C., Short, K. G., & Burke, C. (1988).
Creating classrooms for authors.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Nice Notes

Make a nice note.

This is your chance to do something nice for someone else in class.

Think of something nice to say to that person and write it in a card.

Find a blank card, crayons, and pieces of colored paper in the envelope.

Decorate your card.

You won't have to share this one with the class if you don't want to.

Adapted from: Harste, J. C., Short, K. G., & Burke, C. (1988).
Creating classrooms for authors.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Book Sharing

Find a favorite book, or magazine to share.

Think of some really good reasons why a person would want to read your book or magazine, and write them down.

Be ready to share your book or magazine to the class.

You may want to practice sharing with someone at home first.

This event is to help other students learn about new things to read.

Adapted from: Harste, J. C., Short, K. G., & Burke, C. (1988).
Creating classrooms for authors.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Make a "Success" Book

Find your blank book, glue, and scissors in the envelope.

Look through old newspapers, magazines, even trash and cut out anything you can read.

Glue one cutting on each page of your book.

When you are finished, you will have a book that you can read with success.

Be prepared to read your book to the class.

Adapted from: Harste, J. C., Short, K. G., & Burke, C. (1988).
Creating classrooms for authors.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Your Family Has Stories To Tell

All families have great "remember when" stories.

Talk about some of your favorite family stories with your mom, dad, brother, or sister.

Make pictures of your favorite family stories, and write what you can about them.

You will find writing paper, and a pencil in the envelope.

You can share your family stories with the class.

Adapted from: Harste, J. C., Short, K. G., & Burke, C. (1988).
Creating classrooms for authors.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Talking Journals

Write something in your journal every day for one week.

Share your journal writing with someone in your house.

Ask that person to write back to you.

Try writing back and forth to each other, as if you were talking on a telephone.

You can share your journal with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Writing Stories for Wordless Picture Books

Look through your copy of One Frog Too Many,
by Mercer and Marianna Mayer.

Try to tell the story to yourself.

Once you know your story, try telling it to someone else in your house.

After you have told your story, write your story on the spaces below the pictures.

Now you have a book to share with the class.

Adapted from: Harste, J. C., Short, K. G., & Burke, C. (1988).
Creating classrooms for authors.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

I Am an Expert

This is your chance to tell about something you are really good at.

Some people are good at riding skateboards.

Some people are good at riding bikes.

Some people are good at singing songs.

Some people are good at helping others.

Everybody is an expert at something.

Write about your special talent.

Include a picture if you want.

You will find writing paper, a pencil, and crayons in the envelope.

You can share your special talent with the class.

Adapted from: Routman, R. (1991). Invitations:
Changing as teachers and learners k-12.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Annie Bananie

by Leah Komaiko

Ask someone to share read Annie Bananie, with you.

After the story, try to think of fun things you and your best friend have done together.

Find the blank book, pencil and crayons in your envelope.

Write a story about all the fun things you and your best friend do together.

Don't worry about filling all the pages, just do the best you can.

You can share your adventures with the class.

Adapted from: Routman, R. (1991). Invitations:
Changing as teachers and learners k-12.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Goodnight Moon

by Margaret Wise Brown

This story has a pattern.

Goodnight clocks and goodnight socks, is an example.

Find the writing paper, and add some new pages to this story.

Some ideas are:

Goodnight rat and goodnight bat.

Goodnight bed and goodnight Ted.

Goodnight jar and goodnight star.

They don't have to rhyme, but you can try.

Remember your pictures for the pages.

The heavy paper is for making a book cover for your pages.

The paper fasteners will hold your pages inside.

Adapted from: Routman, R. (1991). Invitations:
Changing as teachers and learners k-12.
Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

The Carrot Seed

by Ruth Krauss

Ask someone to share read, The Carrot Seed with you.

After the story, find the bagged soil, carrot seeds, milk box, and journal.

Plant your seeds and water them when the soil is dry.

Check your seeds every day, for four weeks.

Check your seeds each day, and write what you find in your journal.

Please date each journal entry.

Please return the book in the envelope after three days.

Share your journal and seedlings after four weeks.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Have You Seen My Cat?

by Eric Carle

Ask someone to share read, Have You Seen My Cat? with you.

After reading this story, think about your pets or a pet you would like to have.

Find the blank book and write a pattern story about your pet.

Have You Seen My Cat?, shows different kinds of cats.

Your story can have different kinds of dogs, fish, or snakes for example.

If you want to do cats, that's okay too.

A Sample Story

Have you seen my fish?

This is not my fish.

Have you seen my fish?

This is not my fish.

Have you seen my fish?

This is my fish!

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Dandelion

by Don Freeman

Ask someone to read, Dandelion with you.

After the story, find the paper bag, yarn strips, buttons, and pieces of cloth to make your own Dandelion puppet.

Practice acting out a favorite part of the story with your puppet.

You can share the book, and your puppet act with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

The Shoemaker and the Elves

by Paul Galdone

Ask someone to share read, The Shoemaker and the Elves with you.

Talk about the story and think of something nice you can do for someone else, without them knowing you did it.

Find your writing paper, and pencil in the envelope.

Write about the nice thing you did for someone, and tell what happened.

You can share your story with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Mouse Soup
by Arnold Lobel

Ask someone to share read, Mouse Soup with you.

After the story, think of some favorite or unusual soups of your own.

Find writing paper and a pencil in the envelope.

Make up some of your own soup recipes.

Give each soup recipe a name, and tell how they are made.

You can make one, or as many as you'd like.

They can be silly soup stories, or real ones.

Share some recipes with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers

by Merle Peek

Ask someone to share read,

Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers
with you.

Find the blank book, and make your own pattern story using
names of your brothers, sisters, cousins, and friends.

You may use photographs, but ask mom or dad if it's okay.

A Sample Story

David wore his green socks, green socks, green socks.

David wore his green socks all day long.

Sarah wore her purple shoes, purple shoes, purple shoes.

Sarah wore her purple shoes all day long.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Complete the Comic

Find the comic strips.

Did you notice that parts are missing?

Can you add the missing parts to make the comics complete?

Use the construction paper and glue to put your comic strip together.

Bring them to school to share.

Adapted from: Goodman, Y., & Burke, C. (1980).

Reading strategies: Focus on comprehension.
New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers.

Mr. and Mrs.?

Look through the phone book and find a name you like.

From the sound of the name, write a story about that person.

You will find writing paper, a pencil, and crayons in the envelope.

Idea Bank

Where do they live?

What is their job?

What do they like doing?

Tell about their house.

Where do they go on vacation?

How do they help people?

How do they dress?

Tell about their pets.

Do they have any children?

How do they travel?

Make a picture of them too.

Adapted from: Goodman, Y., & Burke, C. (1980).

Reading strategies: Focus on comprehension.

New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers.

It's On the Map

Find the maps of Disneyland, and Knott's Berry Farm.

Choose a place on one of the maps to write about.

Your story may be real or made up.

Idea Bank

Tell the name of the place you found.

Tell what it's like to be there.

What are the houses, shops, and rides like?

Are the people friendly?

Use the watercolor set to make a picture of your place on the map.

Use the painting made in class if it helps you.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Welcome to Kingston

This is your chance to make a banner about your school.

Think about the fun you have, and how much you learn at Kingston every day.

How To Begin

Find the blank banner, letter stencils, and markers.

You can add your own good thoughts about your school.

Make or find designs and pictures for your banner.

Make it as interesting as you can.

Look at the banner made in class if it helps you.

You can share your banner with the class.

Idea Bank

You can write about your friends at school, your teacher, and the principal.

You can write about the school lunches, playground, and field.

You can write about the computer lab, library, and assemblies we have had.

You can write about anything you like about your school.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Leo the Late Bloomer

by Robert Kraus

Ask someone to share read, Leo the Late Bloomer with you.

It took Leo a while to learn to read, write, draw, eat neatly, and talk.

Write about some things you can do now that you could not do before.

Can you think of some things that you are teaching other children to do?

There is paper, a pencil, and crayons in the envelope to help you write your new accomplishments.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

My Favorite Restaurant

Think of your favorite place to eat.

Try to find advertisements for your restaurant from newspapers, old phonebooks, and magazines.

You might try getting placemats and paper bags printed with the name of your restaurant.

Getting Started

Find the scissors, glue, construction paper, and markers in the envelope.

Cut out the pictures and writing of your favorite place to eat, and glue them on the construction paper.

Use the markers to write all the good reasons why you like your restaurant.

You can share your work in class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Word Art

This project is demonstrated in class before going home.

Draw words to show their meaning.

Idea Bank

Write cracked to look as if it is cracked.

Write tall in tall looking letters.

Write broken to look as if it is broken.

More fun words to draw are: shining, flat, soft, fuzzy, dark, bloody, and fast.

Try to think of more of your own.

You can use the paper, pencils, and crayons in your envelope.

You can share your word art with the class.

Adapted from: Goodman, Y., & Burke, C. (1980).

Reading strategies: Focus on comprehension.

New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers.

Make A Nursery Rhyme Book

In the envelope you will find a paper divided into four boxes.

Within each box is a line from "Peter, Peter, Pumkin Eater".

Make pictures to go with each verse.

Cut out the pages and put them in order.

Make a cover for your book with the extra strip of construction paper.

Fasten the cover and pages together with the two paper fasteners.

Extra Fun

Find the extra paper divided into four blank boxes.

Make a book of your own from your favorite song or nursery rhyme.

Extra paper fasteners, and book cover are also in the envelope.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

A Guessing Game

This project is demonstrated in class before going home.

Think of a well known animal, place, or object.

Write three clues about your animal, place, or object.

Example

It has four legs.

It has fur.

It has fleas.

Answer:

It is a dog.

Find paper, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

Draw a picture and write the answer to your riddle on the back of your paper.

You will read your clues to the class, and the other students will guess what it is.

Each student's paper will be saved in a class riddle book.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Toy Sale

Find the pictures of toys in the envelope.

Pick a favorite toy.

Glue it on the construction paper.

With the markers, write some reasons why this is a good toy to buy.

There is extra construction paper if you want to write about more toys.

Please put the extra pictures back into the envelope.

Be ready to share your work in class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

"I Had a Party"
by Valerie Gelfat

Ask someone to share read the poem, "I Had a Party!" with you.

After you read the poem, find four papers, a pencil, and crayons in the envelope.

Each paper has its own title, they are: Halloween Party, Birthday Party, Valentine's Day Party, and Christmas Party.

On each sheet, write some things you might like to do at each of these parties.

You may also want to make a picture for each party too.

Be ready to share these in class.

Adapted from: Goodman, Y., & Burke, C. (1980).

Reading strategies: Focus on comprehension.

New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers.

Fables

by Arnold Lobel

Fables are little stories that teach a little lesson.

Look through the book, and decide on the fable you would like to hear.

Ask someone to read your fable aloud.

After hearing your fable, copy its title and write what you learned from it.

There is extra paper in your envelope if you want to do more.

Adapted from: Goodman, Y., & Burke, C. (1980).

Reading strategies: Focus on comprehension.
New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers.

My Own Funnies

This is your chance to be in the funnies, to make a comic strip about you.

Think of something that has happened to you.

Draw and write what happened on your comic paper.

You will find construction paper, a pencil, markers, and talking cloud stencils in your envelope.

You can make talking clouds from the stencils if you wish.

Adapted from: Goodman, Y., & Burke, C. (1980).

Reading strategies: Focus on comprehension.

New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers.

Eency Weency Spider

by Joanne Oppenheim

Ask someone to choral read, Eency Weency Spider with you.

Choral reading is when parent and child read a story aloud at the same time.

Try choral reading this story at least two times.

When you finish reading, try making a spider with the egg holder, pipe cleaners, buttons, and glue from inside your envelope.

A sample spider is already made to help you make your own.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

Charlie and Me

Charlie is the class mascot chosen by the students.

Charlie and a journal go home with you for two days.

During the two days, write about some of the adventures you and Charlie have had.

Your story goes in after the last person's entry.

Go ahead and read the other adventures Charlie has had already.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

The Teeny-Tiny Woman

by Paul Galdone

Ask someone to read, The Teeny-Tiny Woman out loud to you.

After hearing the story, retell the story using the pictures as you go.

Be prepared to share this book with the class.

Adapted from: France, M. G., & Hager, J. M. (1993). Recruit, respect, respond: A model for working with low-income families and their preschoolers. The Reading Teacher, 46, (7), 568-572.

Millions of Cats

by Wanda Gag

Ask someone to echo read, Millions of Cats with you.

Echo reading is when an adult reads one line out loud, then the child reads the same line out loud.

Go through the whole story this way.

After the story you can draw some of the cats from the book.

You may want to draw your own cat.

Write about some things cats do, or things you do with your cat, or dog, or any other pet.

Be ready to share Millions of Cats with the class, and bring in your pictures if you'd like.

Adapted from: France, M. G., & Hager, J. M. (1993). Recruit, respect, respond: A model for working with low-income families and their preschoolers. The Reading Teacher, 46, (7), 568-572.

"Magic"

by Shel Silverstein

Ask someone to share read, "Magic" with you.

After reading the poem, think of 3 magic wishes.

What are your wishes?

Write your wishes on your paper, and make drawings if it helps you.

Be prepared to share your wishes with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

"Hug O' War"
by Shel Silverstein

Ask someone to share read, "Hug O' War" with you.

After reading the poem, think of some ways to make a friend.

How have you made friends?

You might ask other people in your family how they have made friends too.

Once you have some ideas, write them down.

You will find paper, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

You can share your ideas with the class.

This may help others learn how to make new friends.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

"Pancake?"
by Shel Silverstein

Ask someone to share read, "Pancake?" with you.

After you read the poem, think of your favorite breakfast.

Draw, or find some pictures of your favorite breakfast.

Write what it is, and how it's made.

You will find paper, a pencil, crayons, and glue in your envelope.

Be prepared to share your favorite breakfast with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

"Invention"
by Shel Silverstein

This project is demonstrated in class before going home.

Ask someone to share read, "Invention" with you.

After the poem, think of something you could invent.

Invent means to think up something new.

Draw or make your invention with things you can find.

Write what it is, and what it does.

You will find paper, a pencil, and crayons, in your envelope.

You can share your invention with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

"Magical Eraser"
by Shel Silverstein

Ask someone to share read, "Magical Eraser" with you.

After reading the poem, think what you might do with a magical eraser.

Idea Bank

You could erase trash.

You could erase dirt from the air.

You could erase drugs.

You could erase the ugly writing on walls.

Write some good things you could do with your own magical eraser.

You will find paper, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

Please do not erase people, animals, or any other living thing.

You can share your ideas with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

"Magic Carpet"
by Shel Silverstein

Ask someone to share read, "Magic Carpet" with you.

After reading the poem, think about where you would go with your own magic carpet.

Find pieces of cloth, glue, and construction paper inside your envelope to make a magic carpet.

You will also find paper, and a pencil to help you write about the places you would go on your magic carpet.

You can share your travels and your carpet with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

A Picture Walk

Find your pictures inside the envelope.

Look at each picture.

Pick one that would be fun to walk into.

Take a walk inside your picture.

Ask Yourself

What do I see?

What do I hear?

What do I smell?

What adventures can I begin?

After your walk, write about the things you did inside your picture.

Finishing Up

Glue your picture and your story to the poster paper found in the envelope.

You can share your picture walk with the class.

Adapted from: Gray, J. (1991). ERDG 633: Alternative communication system. California State University, San Bernardino. Class activity.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

by Eric Carle

Ask someone to share read, The Very Hungry Caterpillar with you.

After reading the story, paint a picture of your own beautiful butterfly.

Write a story about your butterfly.

Glue your painting and story to the poster paper.

You can share your poster with the class.

Materials

Inside your envelope you will find all the things you need.

The materials include: The Very Hungry Caterpillar, construction paper, writing paper, a water color set, and glue.

Please be sure the book and paints are returned.

Adapted from: Routman, R. (1988). Transitions: From literature to literacy. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Imagine That!

Imagine that you are a kite.

Imagine that you are a cloud.

Imagine that you are a whale.

Imagine that you are a jeep.

Idea Bank

What would you see?

What would you feel?

What would you hear?

What would you do?

Pick one, or all, or make up your own ideas to write about.

You will find paper, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

You can share your story with the class.

Adapted from: Brown, K. (1983). Poetry Potions. Chatsworth
CA: Opportunities For Learning.

Shape Up!

This project is demonstrated in class before going home.

Shape poems are more picture than poem.

They are pictures in words.

Pick a simple shape.

You will find paper, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

Write around your shape.

This is how you would do a shape poem about an ice cream cone:

1. Sketch the shape lightly.
2. Write your story around the shape. An ice cream cone is cold. It melts. Ice cream cones drip.



Idea Bank

Try writing a shape poem about trees, snakes, butterflies, or anything else you can think of.

You can share your shape poems with the class.

Adapted from: Brown, K. (1983). Poetry Potions. Chatsworth
CA: Opportunities For Learning.

Free Verse

This project is demonstrated in class before going home.

Free verse poems are poems that do not rhyme.

Free verse poems follow no pattern.

Free verse poems are written in lines, and can be about anything.

Look At These

Green is my favorite color.

Green like leaves.

Green like grass.

The sun is hot.

It warms the earth.

Cars go fast.

Cars go slow.

Cars go, and go,
and go.

Try a free verse poem of your own to share in class.

You will find paper, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

Adapted from: Brown, K. (1983). Poetry potions. Chatsworth
CA: Opportunities For Learning.

When You Wish Upon a Star

Wish poems do not have to rhyme.

Every line begins with "I wish".

Wish poems can be about colors, or food, or toys, or anything else.

Look At These

I wish I had brown eyes.

I wish I had red hair.

I wish for a taco.

I wish I had a puppy.

I wish for a shake.

I wish I had a cat.

Idea Bank

You can write about animals, places, or the weather.

You can make or find pictures for your wish poems.

You will find paper, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

You can share your wish poems with the class.

Adapted from: Brown, K. (1983). Poetry potions. Chatsworth
CA: Opportunities For Learning.

"Today Is Very Boring"

by Jack Prelutsky

Ask someone to share read, "Today Is Very Boring" with you.

After the poem, think about some fun things you know how to do.

Find your blank book, a pencil, and crayons in your envelope.

Write some fun things to do in your book.

The next time you have a boring day, you can look in your book and find something fun to do.

You can share your ideas with the class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

More Spaghetti, I Say!

by Rita Golden Gelman

Ask someone to share read, More Spaghetti, I Say! with you.

Spaghetti can be eaten so many different ways.

How do you eat spaghetti?

You can write how you eat spaghetti, or any other food you especially like.

You will find paper, a pencil and crayons in your envelope.

You can share your story in class.

Developed by: H. Todd O'Neal

My Favorite Hiding Places

Think of all the places where you like to hide, or go to be alone.

Where are your hideaways?

What do you do, or think about when you go there?

Getting Started

Look in your envelope for writing paper and a pencil.

Write some things about your hiding places, but don't tell exactly where or what it is.

When you share your clues with the class, we can guess what or where your hiding place is.

If you don't have a hiding place, then just tell about a special place where you like to go to think, read, or just be alone.

Developed by H. Todd O'Neal

Appendix B

Student
Evaluation Form

Your name: _____ Project title: _____

Please circle 1 if you liked this project, 2 if you did not like this project, or 3 if you are not sure.

1 2 3

Comments: _____

Parent
Evaluation Form

Your name: _____ Project title: _____

Please circle 1 if you liked this project, 2 if you did not like this project, or 3 if you are not sure.

1 2 3

Comments: _____

Oral Interview Evaluation Form

Project title: _____ Student's name: _____

Ask the following questions after the sharing presentation.

1. What did you like about this project?

Student response: _____

Parent response: _____

2. Which part of this project would you change?

Student response: _____

Parent response: _____

3. Rate the student's overall enthusiasm of the project.

excited apathetic disappointed

Rate the parent's overall enthusiasm of the project.

excited apathetic disappointed

4. Rate the student success level of this project.

high average low

5. Suggested changes for this project are:

Materials List for Literacy Events

The following items are necessary for several projects. Each envelope sent home with a student will hold specific reading, writing, and art supplies.

Art Supplies

buttons
cloth pieces
crayons
egg cartons
glue
pipe cleaners
scissors
watercolor paint sets
yarn pieces

Writing Supplies

blank books
markers
pencils
pens
stencil letters
writing journals

Reading Supplies

comic strips
poems
trade books

Paper

construction paper
paper scraps
tag board
writing paper

Miscellaneous

bagged soil
carrot seeds
milk cartons (pint)
paper bags
paper fasteners
simple maps

Picture File

animals
foods
places
scenic
sports
toys

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