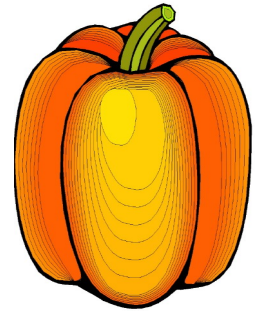


Share-Two



September – October 2002

Issue #11

All children are gifted . . .
some just open their package
sooner than others.



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A New School Year!

How fortunate we are to work in a profession that renews itself every 12 months! By the start of the fresh school year in the autumn, we are eager to begin again with a new class of children. Our frustrations from last year have all been passed on to another teacher and we are able to begin with a clean slate and fresh ideas.

Remember that your Grade Two students are still Grade Ones! It will take a period of review and re-teaching before they will actually be capable of doing Grade Two work. As a consolation, consider that they will be almost Grade Threes in ten months! Have a great school year!

Jean

How you know if you're an primary school teacher:

1. You declare 'no cuts' when a shopper squeezes ahead of you in a checkout line.
2. You move your dinner partner's glass away from the edge of the table.
3. You ask if anyone needs to go to the bathroom as you enter a theatre with a group of friends.
4. You hand a tissue to anyone who sneezes.
5. You refer to 'happy hour' as 'snack time'.
6. You ask guests if they have remembered their scarves and mittens as they leave your home.
7. Do you say 'I like the way you did that' to the mechanic who repairs your car?
8. Do you ask 'Are you sure you did your best?' to the mechanic who fails to properly repair your car?
9. Do you sing the 'Alphabet Song' to yourself as you look up a number in the phone book?
10. Do you say everything twice? I mean, do you repeat everything?
11. Do you fold your spouse's fingers over the coins as you hand him/her the money at a tollbooth?
12. Do you ask a quiet person at a party if he has something to share with the group?

- If you answered yes to more than two of the above items, you are hooked on teaching.
- If you answered yes to more than half of them, you're probably beginning to think about retirement.
- If you answered yes to more than ten, you'll always be a teacher, retired or not!



Poetry for September and October

Back To School

Today I hurry off to school,
To work and learn and play.
I am in grade two this year.
What a happy day!



September

A road like brown ribbon
A sky that is blue
A forest of green
With that sky peeping through.
Asters, deep purple,
A grasshopper's call,
Today it is summer,
Tomorrow is fall.

September

Red apples
Blue sky
Yellow buses
It's September.
Falling leaves
Rainbow crayons
Many questions
It's September.
Opening doors
Opening books
Opening hearts
It's September.
Time of wonder
Time of growing
Timeless treasures
It's September.
Welcome, children.

*Judith A. Lindberg
(used with her permission)*



October's paintbox
Bold brushstroke
Of splattered leaves.



'Come little leaves,'
Said the wind one day,
'Come o'er the meadows
With me and play.
Put on your dresses
Of red and gold,
For summer is gone,
And the days grow cold.'

Soon as the leaves
Heard the wind's loud call,
Down they came fluttering
One and all.

Over the brown fields
They danced and flew,
Singing the soft little
Songs they knew.

Dancing and whirling,
The little leaves went;
Winter had called them,
And they were content;
Soon fast asleep
In their earthy beds,
The snow laid a cover
Over their heads.

Trick or Treat

Witches, ghosts, and goblins.
Stealing down the street,
Knock on every door way,
Trick or treat!
When your door is opened,
This is what you meet,
Scary creatures shouting,
Trick or treat!

'Twas Halloween night and all through the sky,
The clouds hid the moon as the bats glided by.
I was dressed all in white in my mama's old sheet,
Walking with friends down the ghost-haunted
street.

All the kids were dressed in bright costumed
array,
While flashlights and street lights guided our
way.
We giggled and laughed as we hurried to each
door,
Ringing or knocking, then laughing some more.

There were pumpkins aglow and skeletons
dangling,
Scarecrows and shadows and silver chains
clanging.
Grownups in masked faces opened doors in
greeting,
As we stood with our bags and waited for
treating.
Judith A. Lindberg (used with her permission)

What Witches Do

The witches don their pointed hats,
The witches croak and croon,
The witches ride their broomsticks,
Away beyond the moon.
The witches don their flowing cloaks,
The witches stir their brew.
The witches chant their magic spells,
All the dark hours through.
The witches stroke their big black cats,
They comb their locks of grey,
Yet when the first faint daylight comes.
The witches hide away.



Poetry For Your Classroom

The Monster Teacher Scared Me

She frightened me so much today.
She said, 'There is no 'A' in they!'
She said it so meanly,
So veryHallowe'only!

'Students!' she said,
As she took off her head --
'There is an 'E' in they.
It has the sound of 'A'.'

Write down 'the', then add 'Y',
It's as simple as eyeball pie.
Just be very sure you spell it right.
It will save you from an awful
fright!

THERE IS NO 'A' IN THEY!!!!!!'

The Turkey

The turkey shot out of the oven
And rocketed into the air,
It knocked every plate off the table
And partly demolished a chair.
It ricocheted into a corner
And burst with a deafening boom,
Then splattered all over the kitchen,
Completely obscuring the room.
It stuck to the walls and the
windows,
It totally coated the floor,
There was turkey attached to the
ceiling,
Where there'd never been turkey
before.
It blanketed every appliance,
It smeared every saucer and bowl,
There wasn't a way I could stop it,
That turkey was out of control.
I scraped and I scrubbed with
displeasure,
And thought with chagrin as I
mopped,
That I'd never again stuff a turkey
With popcorn that hadn't been
popped.

Rules Rap

(lightly slap your knees)
Rules can be helpful,
Rules can be good.
They help us behave,
The way we should.
We follow the rules,
And we don't do wrong.
The world's a happier place
When we all get along.

The Pumpkin Poem



One day I found two pumpkin
seeds.
I planted one and pulled the
weeds.
It sprouted roots and a big, long
vine.
A pumpkin grew; I called it
mine.
The pumpkin was quite round
and fat.
(I really am quite proud of that.)
But there is something I'll admit
That has me worried just a bit.
I ate the other seed, you see.
Now will it grow inside of me?
(I'm so relieved since I have
found
That pumpkins only grow in the
ground!)

er the
er be
er the
er be not,
Whether the weather be cold
Whether the weather be hot,
We'll weather the weather
Whatever the weather,
Whether we like it or not.



Scarecrows

Scarecrows have a funny job,
In cornfields wild with birds,
They chase and shoo to protect the crops
Without a single word.

The scarecrow must pretend all day.
He is a mighty force
Do you suppose when nightfall comes
He snacks on corn? Of course!

Pumpkins

When you see me in the fields,
My orange glowing in the sun,
It's time to say goodbye to summer
And hello to autumn fun!!



Thanksgiving

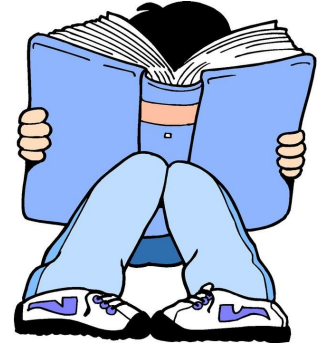
Turkeys, tablespreads, being together,
Happiness and homes to protect us from
all weather,
Aunts and uncles, a reunion in Fall,
Nieces and nephews, family members
all!
Kind-hearted kin coming over for dinner,
Surely you'll have fun, but you won't get
thinner!

Thanksgiving

The year has turned its circle,
The seasons come and go.
The harvest all is gathered in
And chilly north winds blow.
Orchards have shared their treasures,
The fields, their yellow grain,
So open wide the doorway~
Thanksgiving comes again!

Teaching Reading in Grade Two

Most Grade Two teachers are faced with a serious dilemma in the early weeks of the year. We soon discover that there is a wide range of reading skills in the class. Some of the children are reading fairly fluently above the grade level, some are struggling but have some of the needed skills, and you will likely discover a number of children who are barely reading. They are still working at mid-grade one level or lower, and the summer vacation has lowered the levels they had achieved at the end of the last school year. What can we do to give every child the help that is needed?



The children who did not do well in Grade One and who come to you with few reading skills require your assistance, and this is always a concern. The first thing to do is to assess these students to determine their approximate reading level. You can use a standardized test for this, the Marie Clay assessments, or use the simple assessment on the following page. It is not especially accurate, but will give you some idea of how far back you must go to teach each child. If you have a set of basal readers, you can determine the approximate expected levels for Grade One and have the child read different selections orally until you discover what he or she knows.

Many teachers are now doing Guided Reading lessons. Students with few reading skills, faced with text that is at their frustration level (below 90% word recognition), will be unlikely to improve their skills. They need to be taught specific skills at their level, which is difficult to do in a whole class situation. Grouping your students is quite acceptable, providing you do different lessons with each group. For more information on this, see the Fountas and Pinnell book titled, ***Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children***. The more variation in lessons the better. If you use basals, use a different publisher's set. It is helpful to teach concentrated phonics lessons using a large quantity of blending practice with the deficient students, since they are often missing this skill. They also need to be specifically taught the sight vocabulary.

By the end of Grade Two we would like to have all our students display a wide reading vocabulary and be reading automatically. To be able to read as fluently as this, instantaneous recognition of sight words is a prerequisite. This means that they should be able to read a vocabulary of more than 500 words without conscious thought or decoding. They should be reading in phrases, i.e. reading several words together with one eye movement.

Students with reading difficulties cannot easily remember the reading vocabulary, and must see words in isolation, in phrases, in sentences and in a variety of texts and trade books as many as 50 times in order to make the reading of that word automatic.

They need to understand phonics and be able to use this method to assist recognition. They need to be able to decode simple unfamiliar words. If your deficient students are weak in phonics and blending sounds, it really helps to do blending lessons and have daily drill practice blending sounds to form simple words.

The third necessary part of the reading program is printing. Some of your students will be kinesthetic learners and need to print the words and feel the shapes of the letters in order to remember them. Doing a daily printing exercise using the reading vocabulary is helpful to all your students. This is also a productive way for students to be engaged when you are teaching a different group.

Last, but not least in importance, is practice! Fluency will not develop without it. Your poorer readers need to read aloud to you or another adult every day. It is very useful for them to re-read a passage, or read it after hearing you read it, following the words with you as you read. You and the student can read a passage orally at the same time. Listening to you model good phrasing and expression is helpful. Children who lack reading skills often do not read independently, so in order to get the required practice, they need to read to an adult, and read and practice these skills as much as possible each day.

Most schools have a Learning Assistance Teacher (Special Education) who will assist you with your poorer readers. These teachers however, are always very busy and can rarely give the time necessary to provide a complete reading program adequately. It is much more beneficial for this group of children to be taught the skills by you in your classroom so that there is a carry-over of the lessons into other parts of the day. Many teachers do find it helpful if the L.A.T. takes this less proficient group for additional oral and directed reading practice. It is important that you also give these children a reading lesson each day, using a sequential repetitive program.

Sight Word Tests

Each list has 25 words. If a child is able to read 20 words on a list, go on to the next list. If the child reads less than 20 words on any list, stop. The grade level scores are approximate.

List A - 1.4 level

a
and
the
I
in
see
said
you
for
can
my
to
me
here
come
not
play
red
look
run
blue
is
we
yellow
it

List B - 1.7 level

she
want
are
ride
out
like
did
away
little
get
big
something
what
this
today
funny
help
with
ball
good
animals
girl
yes
fast
boy

List C - 1.9 / 2.0

live
may
after
were
any
from
going
once
walk
could
ask
him
old
please
where
know
who
wanted
let
every
of
put
around
there

List D - 2.9

first
always
those
many
replied
write
found
pull
shall
right
before
does
properly
invented
which
place
world
strong
liquid
fourteen
learning
eight
knock
never

List E - 3.9

imagination
laugh
alive
complained
bread
noticed
wonderful
weather
properly
listen
definitely
proud
received
protection
dictionary
developed
champion
crawling
beginning
sounded
disappeared
invitations
powerful
creature

Story #1 - level 1.4

"Come with me," said Bob. "I have something for you to see."

"What is it?" asked Pam.

"You will see. It is a surprise," said Bob.

Pam and Bob ran to Bob's house. "Hi, Mom," said Bob. "We have come to see the kittens."

"Kittens! I like kittens! said Pam. "Here they are. I see five kittens. One, two, three, four, five. I see five little kittens!"

Story #3 - level 1.9/2.0

What a day! I got up too late this morning and I had to eat cold ham and eggs. I got dressed quickly and ran out the door. When I got to school, my friend Sally looked me up and down.

"Why do you have one red sock and one blue sock?" she asked.

"Oh, dear," I said. "What a day!"

The teacher came into the room. "Who did the homework that I gave you yesterday?" she asked.

"I did," I said.

"Where is it?" asked the teacher.

Oh, oh! "It is still at home," I said. The teacher was cross at me. Oh, what a day!

Story #2 - level 1.7

"It is time to go to school," said Mother. Ben got his books and Tammy got her skipping rope. They went out the door. The dog, Big Red, was sitting on the steps.

"You can't come with us, Big Red," said Ben. "Dogs can't go to school."

Tammy and Ben went down the street. They saw friends playing in the school yard. Tammy's friend Pat came running up.

"Look!" said Pat. Tammy looked back and Ben looked, too. Oh, no! There was Big Red!

Tape record the child's oral reading (without pre-reading) and make a list of every error the child has made. This list will give you insights to assist you in discovering the problems a child may be having.

To score the reading passages:

- 95% to 100% of vocabulary in the passage read correctly - the passage is at the child's independent reading level.

- 90% to 95% of vocabulary read correctly - the passage is at the child's instructional level.

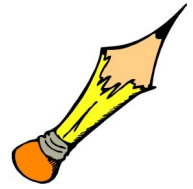
- The child is able to read less than 90% of the vocabulary in the passage. The child is reading at frustration level and needs to be reading easier material.

Bulletin Boards

Put the children's names on pencils: *Pencil us in for a great year!* or *Welcoming a sharp bunch of students!*



Put the students' names on award ribbons: *Award-winning Students!*



Using stars: *Reach for the Stars in Grade Two* or *Mrs. _____'s All-Stars*



Print the names on feet or shoes: *Grade Two*



We're starting off on the right

foot! or Step into

Decorated T-shirts on a clothesline: *Grade Two suits us to a tee.* or *Mrs. _____'s line-up*



Using apples: *Bushels of fun in Grade Two* or *The apples of my eye!*



Print the names on frogs:



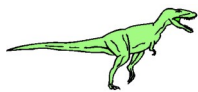
Leap into Grade Two or

Toad-ally awesome students

Using monkeys and bananas:

We're bananas about Grade

Two!



Put names on dinosaurs: *Welcome to a dino-mite dino-mite class*

Welcome to a dino-mite

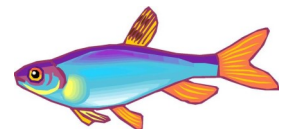


year or Welcome to a

Blue jeans: *Grade Two jean-iuses*



Using fish: *Welcome to our school!* or *We'll have oceans of fun in Grade two!*



"Have each student trace his or her bare foot, then draw a picture and print his/her name on the foot. Finally have the students cut out the feet. Place them on a bulletin board entitled, 'We are starting out on the RIGHT foot!'"

A New Twist

"For a beginning of the year bulletin board, use the game board for a twister game as the background. Put the spinner on as well, with the words 'A new twist to a new year.' Add cut-out feet and hands with the students' names on them. It is very colourful!"

Who's the Teacher?

"This bulletin board is about you, the teacher. Choose a background and border that represent your personality. Collect pictures, clip art, book covers, etc. that show your interests. Laminate these and post them on the bulletin board. Encourage your students ask you questions about the items on the board."

More Bulletin Boards

“Try backing your bulletin boards with fabric instead of paper. Use a fabric with small print, small polkadots or other small patterns. It can be fastened on using a stapler. You can use cotton prints, burlap for texture, felt, painting drop-cloths, sheets, tablecloths, or shower curtains. You can also purchase wrapping paper or wallpaper for bulletin board backgrounds. Try children’s wallpaper borders to add interest!”

“Here's a different twist on the fabric idea: buy theme or seasonal fabric for your display tables to be used as tablecloths. My year is driven by both seasonal themes and moving through the seven continents and I change the cloth monthly on a large table where we keep supplies.”

“I've used a red check tablecloth on one of my bulletin boards. It works great and it lasts for a long time. I put a picnic basket on it, an ant border, and the words **Grade Two is a Picnic!** It turns out to be really cute. I put plates on it with the names of subjects and the basket has plates and silverware sticking up out of it.”

“We use bees for other classroom things – there is a bee behaviour chart with a hive of good behaviour and nametags with bees, etc. I also have some very cute fabric... with tiny bees and hives. There is a bulletin board **BEEattitudes** - Be kind, Be safe...and so forth. You will ‘BEE’ lucky with this name!”



“My name begins with ‘B’, so I am going to do a bulletin board titled **Ms. B_____’s _____ Bees**. I will use a blue checked fabric and sunflowers for the bulletin board background. I plan to photocopy a bee pattern and attach photos of children. Many words may be placed in the third spot: **Ms. B_____’s Busy Bees**, or perhaps **Ms. B_____’s Brilliant Bees** Bright Bees? Beautiful Bees? Best Bees? Big Bees?”

Note: Another teacher suggests: brightest, biggest, bravest, beautiful, brainy, borderline - (her husband was helping generate this list), breathtaking, boisterous (that would be her last year’s class), bold, bubbly, brilliant, bedazzling ...

‘Go Shopping’ for Books

“My students go ‘shopping’ for books to put into a baggie. They keep these books for a week. I let the children take their Guided Reading books when we have finished with them That's one way I always have a variety of books at their level. They keep their books in their Reading Folders and can read these during DEAR time (Drop Everything And Read), but they can also choose three books of interest from our Book Center in my room. The children can keep five Guided Reading books in their folders.”



Language Arts

Using Miscues

"I have enough years under my belt to be pretty good at 'backing up' to discover a child's reading level so that I know what he or she needs next. One of my favourite parts of teaching Grade Two is analyzing commonality in errors or problems that a student is having and then trying to remediate. We use the HBJ Treasury of Literature end of the book tests. If a student makes a certain number of errors or has cluster errors, I sit with him or her and first have the student read the paragraph or question to me aloud.

I am checking here for plain old reading skills. I watch the mouth to see what the child is planning to say; a finger to see if that strategy is being used. I take notes. I watch and listen to see if the skills are applied for decoding, chunking, etc. I interview the student about what he or she was thinking and why the particular answer was chosen (if this is not obvious to me). I separate the students with word errors from those with errors in the comprehension section. Most children are able to do sequencing or predictions; more often they don't understand the finer points or the specific skills and strategies used to answer less obvious questions.

For example, one student had a cluster of errors in comprehension, not vocabulary or language. He read the story out loud with few errors so 'reading' was not an issue. I then went to the comprehension questions and he read perfectly. Then we looked at the choices of answers available... all correctly read. I asked him why he picked the answer he did. His answers reflected the fact that he did not observe the details provided in the story. He is reading with expression, but not involving active thought. I showed him how to tally some of the details. I had him reread the piece and interpret it in his own words, telling me what had just been expressed in each sentence, one sentence at a time, and predicting what seemed to be happening. By the time he finished that, he immediately spotted the correct answer. His problem was finding and focusing on details. Sure enough, his other errors all involved attending more closely to the details provided and thinking about the information given. It lines up perfectly with what Grade Two writing expands upon – using relevant helpful details to provide necessary information to the reader so he or she will have a clear picture of what the writer is trying to say. I couldn't have asked for more! Every error involved details. So next I asked him if he knew what he needed to be working on when he was reading for tests or workbook pages, and his answer needed to indicate to me that 'he got it'. I will now closely monitor work he does that will employ this skill.

Another poor reader was somewhat unique, nevertheless she could be analyzed. She appears to get confused and seems to be a careless reader. The truth is that she is a very insightful child. Her spelling is poor even after she studies, so I know she does not have a good memory for mundane details but she is extremely perceptive. She focuses on the deeper meaning in stories.... and is not an accurate reader. A reading error (*from / for*) caused her to misunderstand a given detail. Her oral reading showed she did that, but it was not until she read a question that depended upon getting that detail correct that her error in reading began causing a problem. You really need to know the student. I know she has a poor memory, still works at reading, and misreads words at times. She was not remembering the finer, necessary details to answer questions of a test nature. She is not remembering that 'Mike' was the person with the birthday so when she misread the present being *from* Mike instead of *for*, it made perfect sense to her. It made her think the gift was from a friend named Mike, not for Mike.... already mentioned eight times in the paragraph! For her, I suggested underlining the character's names and in a test piece, considering all the information important. She was told to reread the piece immediately, before answering the questions. The second time she would be less focused on the vocabulary and a little more mechanical about her reading.

It may not work, but in each case, the cause for errors and suggested strategies for the child were written on the outside of the test booklet and reviewed with each child. I will make a note of it as well in the comments section of the report card and explain to the parent when we meet. I feel like Sherlock Hemlock when I do that and it is so gratifying for me as a teacher. It is also a chance to help the children feel very at home with errors, for it is from our errors that we learn to excel, not our successes.

That is long winded, but that is how I do it. I'm pretty good at knowing what a kid needs before he/she

Teaching Homonyms

"I always refer to myself and my two sisters....."

"I tell the children that when I was younger I lived at home with my two younger sisters. When people would call on the telephone they couldn't tell who they were talking to because on the phone we all sounded the same. But when they saw us we didn't look the same. We were each our own person on the inside."

"I then share several sets of homophones with children. We talk about how they sound the same, but don't look the same and don't mean the same thing."

"After I have told this story the kids understand the definition of a homophone pretty well. Then anytime we run into a word that is a homophone, I put my hand up to my head as though I am talking on the phone. This triggers their memory of the word homophone and its meaning."



"I taped up a piece of paper the length of the board and a foot wide. Whenever we ran across a homophone (sometimes the kids would hear one at home and share it) we would write it on the paper. Needless to say, we had to add more paper because the students really looked for them! They could then refer to the paper when they needed one of these words!"

"Last year, I introduced homophones during an Ocean Theme. As a poetry lesson I used the poem/song:

A Sailor Went To Sea
A sailor went to sea, sea, sea,
To see what he could see, see, see.
But all that he could see, see, see,
Was the bottom of the deep blue sea, sea, sea!

After reading it, we learned to do the hand clapping and singing, etc. We discussed the sea/see set of words and the definition of a homonym. On another day, I gave out cards to the kids and they had to 'mingle' until they found the student who had the other half of their homonym pair (e.g.: right/write). Once they met up they had to discuss the meaning of their two words and then decide how they could each pantomime to the class what their two words meant. As they got up to act we read their words and they acted out the different meaning of each word."

Kerry

Making Words

"I don't pass out letters. I use 1" graph paper, cut in strips, passing out a strip to each child. I have letters to use on the overhead - blue consonants and red vowels, and they form the letters that I put up - one in each square in their strip. Then they quickly snip the lines separating the squares. That way, they can manipulate the letters to make the words. It helps the kinesthetic and visual learners - as they move the letters around they actually see the word written before they then write it on their paper. At the end of the lesson, I pass out plastic baggies. The kids put their letters in them, and they go home as homework that night. They play 'Stump The Adult' and try to see how many words their adult can make, and if he/she can make the 'big word' that we made in the end using all the letters given."

Kelly

"For 'Making Words' (4 Blocks) I made copies of all the letters from the back of 'Making Words', laminated them, and cut them apart. In the beginning they were in baggies which the students kept in their desks but sorting through all the letters to find the ones we needed each day was a nuisance. Then I came upon a new idea - I probably got it from Share-One or Two!

"I give each student a duotang containing 2 sheets of slide protectors (you can get them at photo shops). They are clear sheets with little pockets into which you slip your slides. I sorted the letters so each pocket has a different letter, in alphabetical order, so all the students have to do is open their duotangs and take the letters they need. They are easy to replace and we can tell if the letters have been mixed up with a neighbour's. I did make a little tab with clear tape at the top of each pocket to help the kids get the letters into the pockets. They lasted very well last year, no repairs. It took a while to get set up but I am very pleased with the results."

Heather

The First Days

It is a good idea to over-prepare for the first few days of the new school year. This will give you a sense of security, and when the students are actively engaged it is unlikely that you will encounter behaviour problems. When you write out a lesson, make it a detailed plan. This will make you feel extremely prepared, even if you don't refer to the plan when it is being taught. It is like a rehearsal and will help you a great deal, especially if you are a new teacher or new to the grade level.

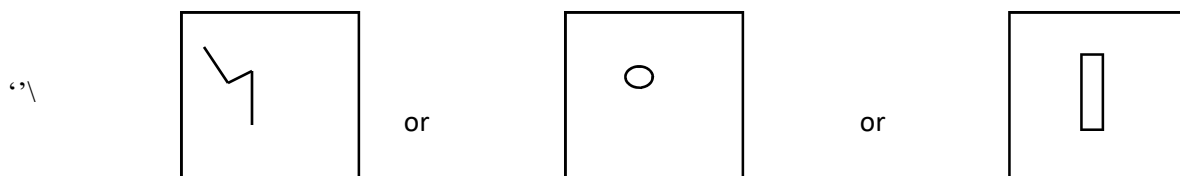
First, set up your classroom routines. Model your expectations. The children need to have a clear understanding of what you expect them to do and how you would like them to behave. This may take two or three weeks, but it is time well spent.

Here are some ideas for the first day:

1. Show the children how you want them to sit in the circle or gathering place for Opening Exercises. This is the important Day One on the 'Days in School' chart, so it is vital to do this on the first day. Go through the basic items in your Opening Exercises – the date, calendar, days in school, weather, the new month, poetry, etc.
2. Play a 'name game'. While in the circle the children each take a turn saying his/her name and doing a body or hand motion. Each child in the circle repeats the first child's name and the motion. The next child says his name and does a motion, and the class repeats that as well as the first child's name and motion. This continues around the circle.
3. Explain the routines: when students can sharpen pencils, when they can use the bathroom, the bus routine, lunch routine, practice lining up, handing out and collecting papers, the library. If you have students who are new to the school you may wish to go for a walk to show them the washrooms, gym, office, etc.
4. Have each of the students think about one thing he/she would like to tell the class about him- or herself. You can model it first, then they introduce themselves one at a time and tell the one thing.
5. Brainstorm the characteristics of a good classroom. Group these and see how few rules you can have – perhaps: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible. Once this is done, you can have each child trace his/her hand print on coloured paper. Glue these around the rule chart. Explain that this is the way we 'sign' a pledge to follow the rules. It makes a colourful bulletin board!
6. Have an SSR time. See which children are actually reading and the material they have chosen.
7. Print a poem with at least eight lines on the chalkboard or a chart. Give the children inter-lined paper and ask them to copy the poem carefully. You will see which students are able to print fluently and legibly.
8. Give each child 10 math manipulatives and have him/her make number patterns. Have the student move the counters to make different groupings of 10 and give full equations that equal 10. Print them on the chalkboard or a chart. Then you can give the class a sheet of addition questions to 10 and watch how the children find the answers. The next day you can do the same for subtraction to 10.
9. When the class is busy with an activity, have children come to you individually and read a page from material that is end of Grade One level. Provide a variety of easier and more difficult reading material also, enabling you to find each child's approximate reading level.



10. Begin reading a chapter book to the class. Suggestions: *My Father's Dragon*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (or other books by Raold Dahl), *Sideways Stories from Wayside School*, etc.
11. Bean Bag Game. Have the class sit in a circle. When a child is thrown the bean bag he catches it and says one thing that he likes to do in school!
12. ABC Scavenger hunt. This is a nice game to play the first day. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a certain letter of the alphabet. They will then search around the classroom for things with names beginning with that letter.
13. After reading *How I Spent My Summer Vacation* by Mark Teague, students can write about their vacations (real or imaginary), to share with the class. It is a nice idea to do this on cut-out suitcases.
14. After reading *My Teacher's Secret Life* or *My Teacher Sleeps in School*, have students write about what they think it would be like to be a teacher living in school.
15. Go outdoors and discuss the rules of the playground, then play a game.
16. Using their imagination: give each child an 11 x 18 inch piece of white paper with the same design on it.



The students can turn the paper in any direction and make it into a picture, complete with background. The students then write a story to go with their pictures. Model this activity using a different design. You can use this as an assessment in creativity, fine motor skill and writing. Stress trying to think of something that is creative.

17. Go outdoors and find perfect autumn leaves. Bring several back to the classroom and do leaf prints. Put a leaf on the desk with the veined side up. Place a piece of white paper or newsprint over it. Take the wrapping off pieces of orange and red wax crayons and colour over the leaf, holding the crayon held horizontally.

18. Teach a song.

A Turkey Glyph

"A glyph is as a way to visually organize information without using words (usually personal/individual information). We do one for Thanksgiving. Using a turkey pattern (feet, wattle, feathers, etc.) the children follow directions similar to these:

If you like turkey, colour the body brown; if you do not like turkey, leave it white.

If you stay at home for Thanksgiving, colour the feet yellow; if you go somewhere colour the feet orange.

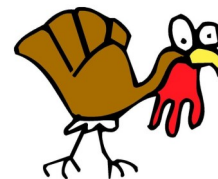
If you like green beans add a green feather to the turkey.

If you like pumpkin pie add an orange feather, corn -- yellow, cranberry sauce -- red, stuffing -- brown, etc.

Take the directions as far as you wish – background, other things in your picture, etc.

Doing the glyph requires the children to think and follow directions.

The fun comes after everyone is finished. Each child can come to the front of the room with the finished product, then the rest of the class interprets the glyph to find out more about their friends!



Writing Ideas

Super Sentences

1. Begin by showing students a simple, unadorned but complete sentence. Example: 'I went for a walk.'
2. Ask students to verbalize the questions such a sentence brings to their minds, such as: Where did you go? Were you alone? Why did you go on this walk? What did you see or do on this walk? When did you go? Did you come back?
3. Using these ideas, students can then add some life to the sentence – details, description – to help it become a 'super sentence. Example: 'Yesterday afternoon my friend Jody and I took a long walk through the dark forest.'
4. These super sentences should be shared aloud before being displayed (on a Super Sentences bulletin board) under the original sentence to emphasize the changes that were made.

A Whole-Class Story

"In my class, we wrote a whole class story. First we brainstormed some Hallowe'en words (they loved doing that). Then I began the story by writing on the chalkboard:

On a dark night, a spooky black cat.....

then the kids offered their ideas. I continued to write down their suggestions, those which we agreed would make an interesting story. Then when we were finished, they all copied the story from the board on cute Halloween writing paper. The next day we broke into groups, and made impromptu costumes, then each group acted out the story. They just loved this, too! (I cut up some black garbage bags and made capes and tied them around the kids who were vampires). We chanted the story, acted it out, and discussed it. About four days later, the students wrote their own Halloween stories. After we edited them, they did their final copies and made covers, and I laminated and bound them. This next week, the children will read their stories to other classes, going to the office to share as well. They did a good job and felt very proud of themselves. I was impressed with the quantity some of them wrote. Some wrote 4 pages, others, 2, and a few wrote one page. I felt that writing the first class story really helped give the students the 'push' toward enjoying writing their own stories. We will do this once a month, in addition to doing other writing assignments."



Practicing Writing Possessives:

"Brainstorm a list of nouns with the class. Be sure to include lots of nouns that are typical subjects for a sentence (Tom, the boy, a dog, the witch, the bee, my mom) as well as everyday nouns. I encourage the students to look around the classroom, think about things in their bedrooms, things they see outside. I then type the list spreading it out over two pages and print it out on two different coloured papers, one having all the 'subjects' plus some regular nouns, and the other which has just regular nouns. I cut all the words apart and put them into two different baskets. The students choose one word from each basket and create a sentence. I tell them that the word from the first basket is the subject and must contain the 's and the word from the second basket is the thing that belongs to it. They come up with really silly sentences like "I see the bee's hat". We do some orally, then they print them. You can have the students illustrate and display the sentences on a bulletin board for fun."

Heather



Thanksgiving

For a Thanksgiving bulletin board, give each child a photocopied feather pattern which they take home. The family then decorates it with whatever they wish and cuts it out. They can mount it on tag if they wish to make it sturdier. When the feathers are returned, put them on the tail of a large turkey body.

Decorate a paper classroom tree with colourful leaves stating something that each student is thankful for this Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving Quilts

“Brainstorm a class list of things for which your students are thankful. Give each student with a 9" by 9" square of coloured felt. Have students create an interesting autumn or Thanksgiving quilt square. They can draw and cut out pictures or bring items from home, including photographs. They can choose to cut out words or phrases using felt and fabric scraps. Encourage students to be as creative and inventive as possible. When each student has completed his/her quilt square you can sew it together or use fabric glue to adhere it to a large piece of felt or burlap. Children will enjoy the quilt all year long!”

“Give each child a 9 inch square of construction paper that has been divided into nine squares. Let each child glue 3 inch squares of fabric, wallpaper or coloured wrapping paper into the squares on their papers. Encourage them to glue their squares in patterns. Tape the children's papers together to create a group quilt.

Pine Cone Turkeys

“If you have access to pine cones you can make pine cone turkeys. We did this every year and my students used them as centerpieces at their Thanksgiving dinner tables. These are quite easy to make. Each student is given one pine cone, 5 or 6 different coloured pieces of construction paper for feathers (they can cut these out and make the feathers themselves), brown construction paper for the head and feet, 1 small red piece for the wattle, 1 small square for the beak and 2 ‘googlie’ eyes.

Before they start putting the on feathers they should locate where their pine cone sits satisfactorily, otherwise after everything is glued on it will tip over.

It will be necessary to use a glue that becomes immediately tacky so that the bits will stay where the children place them.”

“We do a turkey art activity, but I try to make it educational too. I first read a genuine book about turkeys, and then we discuss their habitat. The children draw and colour a picture of a farm, woods or grassy area for wild turkeys. I talk about horizon line and perspective a little bit with this. (About as much as I know about it!) Then they choose three pieces of coloured paper that I have cut to 3 by 8 inches. (I cut a variety of colours so they are not all the same.) Each of these is fan-folded. I staple one end, and we spread out the other end. These are glued beside each other, first one to the second one, second one to the third one, and so forth, to make about a half circle. These are the tail feathers. I have them make their own turkey body to glue in front; this is glued over the staples. The back of the ‘fan’ is glued to the habitat drawing. They have to place their hands on this arrangement for awhile so that the folded edges stay glued down while the glue is drying. It makes a neat three-dimensional picture, and they don't all end up looking alike.”

Cindy

“I give my class a coffee filter and a set of watercolour paints. (Be sure to put newspaper or paper towel under the filter when the students are painting. The paint bleeds, making a really nice feather look.) The children paint stripes of colour from the center out on the filters. Then they can cut out a head, body, (one small circle and one larger, from brown), legs (two yellow rectangles), feet (yellow triangles), beak (yellow diamond), red wattle, to glue on after the filter has dried. Glue the larger (approximately 4 inches) brown circle at the bottom of the filter, the smaller one at the bottom of the big one. Glue the legs and feet from under the bottom of the filter. Draw black eyes on the smaller head circle. They look really cute and each is totally different!”



Math

Math Wall

"I utilized a math wall in my classroom this past year and found it to be very successful.

I devoted a section of the wall above my alphabet line to math words and definitions. Like the word wall, the cards I put up were chosen carefully and introduced as they appeared in the curriculum. I made sure that each word was large and could be seen from the back of the room and in some cases, a short definition was written under the math vocabulary word.

Some of the words included were data (information), graph, axis, volume, area, column, row, increase, decrease.

I also put certain labeled shapes on the wall, such as a hexagon, triangle (irregular-shaped triangles, not posted 'straight and orderly') on the wall, square (labeled as a 'special rectangle'), and octagon (with a little 8-armed octopus pictured on the shape).

Also put up were reminders of strategies we used: 'counting on', 'plus 10's' and 'near 10's', etc.

We included some special counting strips on the wall. One of our grade one teachers teaches her class a rhythmic chant in which they count by ones to ten, then follows it by teaching twos to twenty, threes to thirty, all the way to twelves! It is pretty impressive. I decided to learn her little rhythmic ditties and carry them through with my grade twos last year. There were approximately six of her former students in my class last year, so they were a big help in teaching the rhythms and patterns to the others. I cannot begin to tell you what a difference it made in almost all aspects of our math learning. Awesome! As we would learn a new counting sequence, I would post number strips in different colours on the wall.

I cannot over emphasize how well this served the students. They were even relating it to telling time ('Hey! Look at the fives! When the minute hand is pointing to the 7, it's 8:35! Get it? Seven fives make 35! 8:35!') I was stunned. My grade three colleague will now include this counting regime in her class. We put the rhythms on tape so this will be easy for her. It will surely make a difference in the students' success memorizing multiplication tables! From now on, I will always include this component in my morning routine.

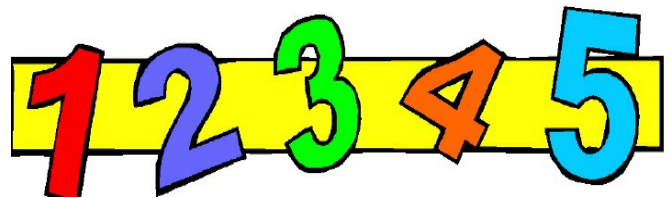
My class used the math wall a lot. They especially used it to recall information and to spell the vocabulary when they needed to respond to tasks requiring them to provide a written explanation of their thinking. Since my students are so tuned-into our word wall, they readily adapted to using the math wall."

Karen

Number Lines

"Number lines are wonderful and easy to use, but the class must know that they are not to count out the largest number. They should be aware that addition questions can be turned around; that $2 + 7$ is the same as $7 + 2$. Go directly to the largest number. Stand there and then step out the smaller number, not counting until the first step has landed on the next number. Students should never step out both numbers on a number line and, of course, it is much more practical to go to the largest number and step out the smaller one when adding. When using the number line for subtraction, the students will again go to the largest number, of course, stand there , and then step out the smaller number going down the number line. Make a large number line on the floor and have the children physically step out the questions."

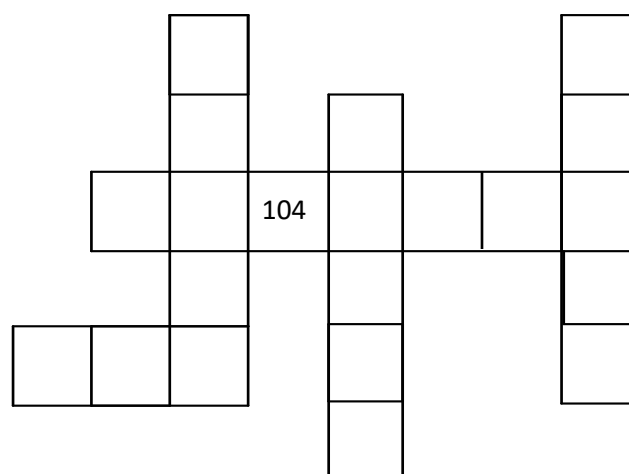
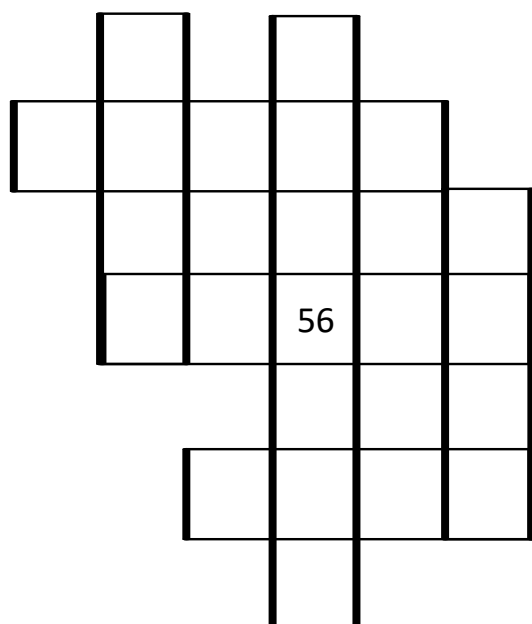
"To help the students remember to start counting on the number line with the first step, I say, "Remember, you're not there until you have left home and arrived at the next place. Putting your finger on where you start from (home) is not a step to Billy's house!" I do a 'live demo' for this one they love my antics as my foot slowly rises and I try to count it as a step, until it almost touches but not quite makes it to the floor...still not a step!"



Number Puzzles

Cut out a variety of shapes from 100 charts. Put in one number and the kids fill in the rest.

Leona



More Ideas

“I worked with a teacher who had a great idea – buy or recycle a kitchen clock to keep in your classroom in addition to the one that is already on the wall. Take the cover off the face, then remove the minute and second hands, leaving a clock that only shows the hour. When the hour hand is pointing straight to the 9, it is exactly 9:00. When the hour hand is between the 9 and 10, it is between 9:00 and 10:00, etc. I introduce this at the beginning of the year and we talk about it once or twice a week during calendar. This way by the time we get to the official telling time unit, the students have a good understanding of what the hour hand does and how it moves around the face of the clock. You could do something similar with another clock leaving only the minute hand on it.”

Diana

“I play ‘Around the World’ with my students almost daily and it really helps them to learn the facts. You start with one student standing behind another student's chair then you call out a math problem. These two students try to answer the question as quickly as possible. The first student to answer moves to the next child's desk and you call out another question. (If the student standing doesn't answer first, then he sits in that chair and the student that was sitting down now moves on.) They enjoy competing against each other and ending up in different seats. We do two or three rounds a day to begin the math class.”

“I am strict about how to read math problems. The students read the problem through and then say, ‘I start with (a certain number) and I (add, subtract, etc.) (this many). When I am finished I should have (????)’ I use the same format for all problems. This can be said with the question marks in a different place – ‘I start with (a certain number) and I (add, subtract, etc.) (?????). When I am done I should have (the total). The children shrug and gesture with their hands when they come to the question marks.’”

Vicki

Sunflower Fun

A Sunflower Mini-Unit

"I did a mini-unit on sunflowers with my Grade Two students. Here's what we did:

The first day they all brought in something that had to do with a sunflower - a picture they drew, a book, a real sunflower, etc. We read ***This is the Sunflower*** (a cumulative book like ***The House That Jack Built***) and everyone shared their sunflower items. Then I took their pictures with what they had brought for a class book. They completed an activity sheet with a space for drawing and the story frame taken from the book - This is the (big sunflower) that (Mrs. _____) brought to share. (It is over 11 feet tall.) (It came to school in the back of a truck). I typed what they wrote and added the picture and voila! Our first class book - ***Sunflower Sharing***.

"We shared the book, ***The Sunflower that Went Flop!*** It's a great book for the start of the year. I have multiple copies of ***Diary of a Sunflower*** (from Scholastic), and we talked about fiction and nonfiction, along with fact vs. opinion. Then we made a mini-book on sunflowers for the students to take home to share with their families.

"We shared a sunflower poem and read it many different ways (I also did a cloze activity first with it.)

"The final thing we did is complicated to explain, but really fun and worthwhile. You can do it with any book. We used the ***Flop!*** book (which we also used for reader's theater). We brainstormed important events in the story, then sequenced them. Then groups of students posed for a 'still life' showing those events and I took their picture with the digital camera. (We talked about expression, big hand/arm movements, etc.) Once we had done all the important events in the story, I created a powerpoint presentation and we worked together to add text (retelling). They LOVED to see it when it was all done."

Lisa



Other Sunflower Activities

Bring a sunflower head to school and have the kids estimate how many seeds are in it. Take out the seeds, group in tens and count.

Make large sunflowers with a paper plate for the centre. Cut huge yellow petals and glue them behind the plate. Glue sunflower seeds to the plate, make a tall green stalk and leaves.

You could measure VERY small items with both shelled and unshelled sunflower seeds and observe the difference and discuss why they are different.

You could do some research on the internet about different types of sunflowers and compare their sizes. You could find out how many kids tall certain sunflowers are.

Plant sunflower seeds and observe in class.

Show students a sunflower plant (roots and all). Ask them to describe what they see. Identify the parts (roots, stem, leaves, petals, and seeds).

Give students a large piece (12x18) of white drawing paper. Instruct them to put their name in the lower left hand corner. Ask them to tell how many petals they think there are. Count how many petals are on the flower. Post it on the board. Estimate the number of seeds. Count how many seeds. Post that number. Do the same for the roots and stem. Have students draw the sunflower based on their observations and the data collected.

When the sunflower seeds are dried (in a few weeks) you can give each student several to take home and plant the next spring.

Autumn Activities



Bring in several types of leaves. Divide the class into groups of four. Each group will work to answer the following questions:

What can you tell me about the leaves?

Which leaf is the longest? Which is the shortest?

How do the leaves feel to the touch?

Draw your favourite leaf.

Use a magnify glass to look at your favourite leaf. Turn the leaf veins upwards and cover the leaf with paper. Use the side of a crayon to bring out the leaf shape and vein pattern.

Do creative writing on leaf shaped paper.

Why do you like the autumn? What changes occur in the fall? What are your favourite fall activities? If you were a leaf floating in the wind, where would you float and why? Why do you think leaves change colour? Imagine you are a leaf hanging on a tree. How would you get another leaf not to be afraid of falling off the tree?

Make a Fall 'Class Soup' using fall vegetables. You can do this by acting out the book "Stone Soup", for instance, and this makes an excellent language lesson. While each child adds his ingredient (whether brought from home or provided by you) take a picture. After eating your soup make a class book with the recipes for "Stone Soup". Each child can write the recipe and what he or she added.

Make a 'signs of fall' chart or book. Here are some examples: wind blows, leaves fall, squirrels gather nuts, clothes are changed, birds fly south, apples are picked.

Dried Leaves. You will need construction paper, fall leaves and heavy books. Place the leaf on the paper and then inside the book for 2 weeks. After this you can make a beautiful fall leaf wreath, or laminate the leaves.

Use fall leaves to make pattern.

For your fall estimation jar use: candy corn or corn kernels.

"Last year, a student wrote a wonderful little book for me about leaves. She glued on fresh, beautiful fall leaves. I laminated the pages of the book, and much to my surprise, the leaves are still as beautiful as the day she picked them!"

Karen

Stained Glass Fall Leaves

Cut a large sheet of waxed paper and fold in half. Open it up, then take the paper off red, orange and yellow crayons. Using the side of your scissors, shave the crayons over one half of the waxed paper until it is covered well with different fall colours.

Again fold the waxed paper, with the shavings inside and iron the sheet briefly with a medium heat to melt the crayon wax. Now draw leaf shapes on the waxed paper and cut out.

Use black glue, which can be purchased or made by mixing black powdered paint with glue, to outline each leaf and to draw in the veins. Poke a small hole in the top and tie a string so you can hang these beautiful leaves in a sunny window.

Have the students paint the back of a real leaf with tempera paint in autumn colours of red, yellow and orange. Then they press the painted side of the leaf onto dark coloured construction paper, preferably black. They can use more than one leaf and different colours of paint for their pictures. There is a little trick to it – do not apply too much paint and when you press, rub away from the center all the way to the tips while holding the leaf securely in place. You can mount the black onto a larger piece of red, yellow or orange as a frame.

Class Management

“Give each student a number. I put my students’ names into alphabetical order by the first names and number them from 1 to _____. This number stays with the child all year. New students who come in during the year get the next number at the end of the class list. This helps for lining up – I say, for example, “Number 10 is the leader!” and the numbers go on from there to the end of the list and then continue with 1 to 10. The kids put their numbers on all their supplies. They print the number on all work that will be handed in, and this makes the work you want to file simple to sort. When they do art work a small number in the bottom corner does not mar the art. Dismiss the children by calling out numbers, by asking for prime numbers, multiples of 3, or by asking math questions. The children soon learn the numbers of all members of the class. It is a quick way to have the children check who is absent when there is a fire drill, as they will know when a number next to them is missing. This is a strategy I would not be without!”

Mary

Here's an idea that can help organize both new and veteran teachers. I have a ‘Planning Binder’ that helps me keep my school year organized. Here are a few of the things I keep in this binder:

1. A list of the supplies I order every year.
 2. A calendar page for each month of the school year. Before school starts I sit down and mark all the holidays, professional development days, parent nights, Open House, report cards due. Then I pencil in when I want to start each new theme, author study, writing project, math topic. This gives me a visual idea of how my year might look. Some themes are only a week long and some last two or more weeks, so I can see how they will fit around related holidays, seasons, vacation time and report cards. I keep one calendar from the previous year to see what worked and what didn't. I try to make notes regarding things that worked and what I might change for next year.
 3. Web addresses - as I surf through the web, I often come across sites that I might want to use later to go with a theme. I jot these down on a notepad and then add them to my planning binder. I keep a binder page for each theme I teach that includes web addresses and related book titles.
 4. Student information - name, phone number, address, birthday, emergency numbers, etc.
 5. New ideas - I get so many great ideas from other teachers that sometimes I don't know what to do with them all! I love yellow sticky notes and have them stuck all around my computer screen, my classroom, my car and everywhere else they'll stick. When I come across a new idea, I either print it out or jot it down on a sticky note. Sometimes I put these sticky notes on a planning binder calendar page to tie in to the theme I have planned. That way, when I get to that theme, I will see the note and remember to try the great new idea.”
- Erica*

“I have a binder that is always left in view for substitute teachers who come into my classroom. I have my weekly schedule showing the specials that my children go to, and the routines involved. There is an up-to-date seating plan. I have a page showing the classroom rules and the expectations I have for behavior and the consequences for inappropriate behavior. There are ideas for extra lessons in every subject in case I am unable to prepare for some reason. I give an overview of the classroom routines. Teachers-on-call have told me that this has been very useful!”

“I hate cluttered desks and one thing I do is to keep most of the students’ notebooks and duotangs on a shelf. I have cardboard magazine boxes labeled for each subject (math, poetry, spelling and so on) and all their books go in the boxes. It takes time to hand them all out but I know where they are if I need to find one, and it really keeps down the desk clutter. A friend keeps all of her notebooks in Rubbermaid tubs on a shelf. I label each book at the TOP with the student’s name and book name (journal, math). That way, the student can more easily find his or hers by flipping through the books, than if the names are at the bottom on the space provided.”

“I have a different ‘Class Parent’ each month. This parent calls all the other parents if this should be necessary, finds volunteers if they are needed for field trips or other special occasions, organizes food for special days, etc. This takes a lot of work off my shoulders.”

“Are you planning on getting rid of your teacher’s desk? Where will your piles go now? I got rid of my desk once, and my whole room replaced it. Scary thought, isn’t it! So I have a desk again and it is called the avalanche zone and all the kids know what that means. If any unsuspecting adult goes near (we have lots of people in and out of our class), the kids just tell them that you need to stay away from the avalanche zone. Someday I’ll get organized – I admire organization very much!”

Cindy

“I pick the leader of the week. I go in alphabetical order. That student is the line leader and also the messenger, and does all of the other jobs. At the end of the week, this child becomes the line ender. It solves that ever persistent problem of who will be first and last in line. I always have 26 kids in my class so every child will get a chance at one time during the year. Why do I do it this way? Because I hate changing the job chart and I can remember one child per week. It’s just easier for me to manage!”

Paula

Dizzy Dollars

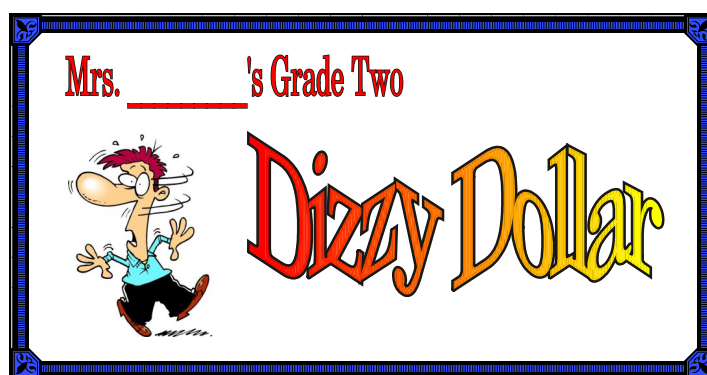
Brainstorm your own ways to use this fake money as a reward in the classroom. Here are some suggestions:

- Good behaviour
- Meeting expectations
- Achieving goals
- Academic excellence
- Good attendance
- Memorizing math facts
- Completing homework
- Behaving for substitute teachers

Students could use the money to get:

- Extra recess time
- Extra time on computer
- Sit at teacher's desk
- Help in another classroom
- Messenger of the day
- Buy from a toy chest
- Add points to a paper or assignment
- ‘No Homework’ pass

Have fun!



Good Ideas

“The only things in students’ desks are their pencil boxes, glue, scissors and rules, and 2 notebooks and 1 duotang. We keep a notebook for Working With Words (4 Blocks) because we use it almost every day, and a “Thinking Book” notebook. I use this for brainstorming, when I want the class to make a quick prediction, estimate, etc., when I don’t really want to be bothered finding the “right” notebook but I don’t want to bother with handing out and dealing with odds and ends of paper.”

“If your class owns calculators, as opposed to students bringing their own, keep track of them by numbering each one, then standing them all in a shoebox or other container where they can stand on end so the labels are visible from the top. If each student has been assigned a number and uses the calculator with that number it will be easy to see which are missing and who would have them.”

“Make up a sheet of labels for each student with names and numbers. You can do these on your computer. These can be stuck onto supplies, exercise books, coat hooks, magnets for graphing, etc. This saves a lot of work!”

“If you’ve got bunches of papers held together with those giant sized paper clips, and the stack is so thick the clip is all twisted out of shape, use spring-type clothespins instead. They stick out to the side when you have all the stacks piled up on your desk, and you can put labels on the clothespins to identify what’s in the stack.”

Behavior Management

"I use several CDs of calm classical music. I play it as the children are coming in from breaks and when they are having SSR. Does it help? That is hard to say, but the students enjoy it and it makes a pleasant atmosphere."



"For repeated misbehaviour, I have a little 'behaviour sheet' the student fills out and take home for a parent's signature. It has places to write:

What was I doing?

Why is that a problem?

What will I do next time?

I keep these on file."

"I always try to listen to some of the tattling because on the few occasions that I didn't listen, I should have. Sometimes there is bullying going on that I need to know about. I make the kids come together and resolve their conflicts with me watching. Sometimes this helps the less assertive students be braver and try out a strategy such as using an 'I' message. Having me as a witness sometimes stops the problem as the bully is aware that I know about it. If the problem continues, then I talk to parents."

Lori

"I have two rules: **Be Respectful** and **Be Responsible**. We talk about what the words mean and have discussions throughout the year as needed."

"I have found that for a system to work, the teacher must feel very comfortable with it. I have tried elaborate systems, but then I forget to hand out stickers or cards and the system loses its effectiveness.

"I am going to try something new which I'm sure others have used before. I am going to have a jar on my desk and popcorn kernels. Whenever I catch anyone in the class following the rules or doing exceptional work, I will drop in a kernel. Sometimes I will drop in enough kernels for a group of students or even the whole class. When the class has helped me to fill the jar, I will reward them with a video. I want to try this again next year and have other types of rewards too.

"I also do sticker charts for individual students. When they earn 10 stickers they get to go in my prize box. My prize box contains stickers, pins, pencils, erasers, small toys, etc.; things I get free or pick up on sale. They just love getting stickers on their charts. I will often give out stickers if they are quiet during reading time or when they go to wash their hands. Sometimes I will give stickers to one person or sometimes a small group.

"In September/October I hand out little things like jelly beans or small candies to reinforce the rules often. By mid November I have weaned them from this system into doing the sticker chart more often plus other things.

"I do a lot of low key attention-getters (Superintendents and Principals seem to love this, so I assume I'm doing something right). Little things like touching them on a shoulder, praising the students who are doing what is expected, moving around the classroom, flicking the lights, ringing a bell. I also have a number of little chants that get their attention. Or I'll ask a question aloud, "Now who is following the good listening rules?"

"As far as punishment goes, I start with time-outs in the room or in the hall-way with my T.A. If the behaviour progresses or is very serious then the student may miss some of his or her gym time, recess or centre time. Usually it ends with the time-out. On rare occasions it can mean a phone call home. This is only with my severe behavior problem students.

"One last thing that has worked well for me is sticky notes. My class knows when I start to write on a pad it means I am catching those who are behaving and they will get stickers. This allows me to keep track of who I need to put stickers up for as going to the chart every time is not always easy to do. Also it allows me to observe more of the class. By the time I get to the sticker chart everyone is behaving so it's hard to tell who shouldn't get a sticker. Sometimes all I have to do is pick up the pad and paper and I have instant quiet."

Cathy

Improving Brain Function

The 'Brain Gym'

Brain Gym® is the registered trademark for a developmental movement program established by Paul E. Dennison, Ph.D., an expert in child motor-development. It promotes efficient communication among the many nerve cells and function centres located throughout the brain and body. Blocks occur when information cannot flow freely among these centres.

Brain Gym® can be done in less than five minutes, does not require special equipment or space, adapts well to any curriculum or teaching style, has immediate, long-term demonstrable results, and is highly effective for specific learning difficulties.

http://www.familiesmagazine.co.uk/topics/health/health_brain_gym.htm

Scroll to about the middle of the page for the exercises you can do and their benefits.

Water and the Brain

Our brains function by sending small electronic signals between neurons. Water is the primary conduit for these signals. If we lack the proper amount of fluid in our systems, nerve signals are dulled and impaired. Think about the dehydrated man in the desert suffering from hallucinations. Try increasing your water intake before a big test and see what a difference it makes.

From the BBC News:

“An experiment in Scotland claims that pupils' test results improve if they drink more water. Pupils at Corstorphine School in Edinburgh have been drinking water throughout the primary school day - and have seen test results improving to the extent that they have already exceeded targets set for 2002. The theory under consideration is that the human brain uses water in its transmission of neural messages - and that if children are regularly hydrated their brains are better physically equipped to learn. The school's assistant head, Carol Wood, says that pupils bring bottles of water to school and can drink from them whenever they wish - and that the increased intake of water is now part of the classroom scene.

“Apart from any benefit to children's brains, Ms Wood also says that regular consumption of water has more general health benefits - and that it prevents children from becoming dehydrated throughout the day. And she also speculates that the process of stopping in order to drink water can help pupils to re-focus their thoughts. But she was reluctant to see the school's success linked solely to the water experiment - saying that improvements in test results reflected the effectiveness of the teaching and other measures being tried at the Edinburgh primary school. As well as testing the impact of drinking more water, this innovative school is experimenting with theories based on pupils having different learning styles - such as some preferring to learn visually rather than verbally or through writing.

Water in the Classroom

“At the school I was in they were doing great deal of brain research. It concluded that children need to be drinking so much water, etc. We had the PTA buy water bottles for every child in the school.”

“My class had water bottles last year. The bottles ‘sweat’ and leave water rings on the tables. I had a student once who brought his water bottle to school wrapped in a man's tube sock. He had frozen the water overnight and the sock caught all the sweating. It became a new trend!”

“I allow water bottles – only the type with the pop up top. I said they had to stay at the table and they could not play with it or they would lose it. You must be very firm about your rules and take away a child's water bottle when they misuse it. I did notice more need to use the bathroom at first until the children's bodies adjusted to more water in their systems.”

Mapping Skills

Around the World in 180 Days

September

We made a map of our classroom and the children used KidPix on the computer to create very simple maps of their bedrooms.

October

We went for a walk up and down the street then created a map of our street, but this time we made it 3-D, adding construction paper houses, trees, people, traffic lights, cars, etc.

November

We talked about our province and our country. Each child was assigned a province on which to do a simple report and they were given a pattern to place on top of a cake to cut out so we could create an edible Canada. (This is always a big hit everyone!). Pairs of children ice a province or territory and add an M and M for the capital. We add upside down Bugles for the mountain ranges and then we eat! We learned about continents and about the animals in North America. We had a class tadpole that turned into a frog and we learned about puffins, butterflies and bears.

December

Each child was issued a passport because now we were leaving North America and traveling to Europe. We studied reindeer, and learned about Christmas traditions in Sweden. We did an author study on Jan Brett. We baked cookies and dressed up with paper hats for the boys and paper candle wreaths for the girls and served cookies to all the faculty for St Lucia Day.

January

We traveled to the South Pole and Antarctica to learn about Penguins. We created a 3-D map of Antarctica. We tried to walk balancing an egg on our feet and we drew life size penguins around the room to see how tall they really are. We read *Mr. Popper's Penguins* and after completing KWL charts each child wrote a report about penguins.

February

We were off to Africa, where we once again created a map and each child made an African style house. We drew a full size baby giraffe to compare to the size of our penguins. We learned about giraffes, hippos, lions, elephants and ostriches. Several parents who had either lived in Africa or had traveled to Africa visited with lots of artifacts, pictures, food, and dress. The children began making African flags from the pictures they found in the atlas. Soon our hallway was a parade of flags.

March

We were off to Asia where we zeroed in on India and the Philippines because the class had students from both of those countries. Again parents visited with lots of artifacts, money, tasty treats, traditional dress, and samples of money. We read about the banyan tree so we decided to create one from cardboard and the tubes from inside a rug. The children added the leaves and we created a coconut tree complete with a stuffed monkey! We added paper coconuts but did see and taste the real thing. The children continued to create flags now including the countries of Asia as well. We studied the monkey, the Asian elephant and the water buffalo.

April

We arrive in Australia and plan to create an eucalyptus tree. We will learn about the koala bear and the kangaroo. We will learn about islands and the children will create an island map again using KidPix. We will definitely be drawing a full size kangaroo to join our penguins and giraffe. One child has a relative in Australia so we will be e-mailing him during the month to ask questions. At the end the kids will get to pick whether to write a report about the koala or the kangaroo.

May

Last stop will be South America where again several parents will be visiting and I am planning a piñata and a party for Cinco de Mayo. We will learn about the rain forest and the animals that live there.

June

We will blast off for space!

Each time we leave a continent we stamp our passports, draw a picture of the place we are leaving, write about something we have learned and get a sticker related to that place. At each stop we compare the weather, thanks to the internet. Jody

Pumpkins Everywhere!



“Read the book *The Pumpkin Book* from Scholastic or another book that tells the sequential story of the pumpkin from seed to fruit and back again.

“Make a pumpkin story wheel. The pumpkin’s life cycle forms a perfect activity in making a story wheel. Start with a circle and divide it into eight sections. In each section write part of the story. You will have to combine some of the pages. The students illustrate the sections and then cut out the wheel. Fasten the wheel to a paper plate with a brad in the middle. You could use orange styrofoam plates which are available this time of year, but white paper plates work, too, as the children can colour the edges with crayon. Staple on a piece of green or brown construction paper for the stem. Read the story wheel together by reading the section that is near the stem and then turning the wheel so that the next section is on top.

“Make a pumpkin mural. Roll out long sheets of butcher paper and encourage children to draw pumpkin vines, flowers, sprouts, and green and orange pumpkins. You could use light brown paper so the back looks like soil, but the children’s work will still show up. It makes a nice backdrop if you want to display the next project.

Paper Pumpkin Patch

Stuff white lunch bags with newspaper and twist the top. Secure with masking tape. Paint the bottom part orange and the top green to look like a pumpkin. Let them dry. You could display these in the hallway with vines cut from paper and the pumpkin mural backdrop. Tip: If you don’t paint faces on them they can stay in the hallway during November, too!

A Pumpkin Unit

- Start the unit with a mystery box. Decorate a large box and place a pumpkin inside. Have students ask questions to determine what you have hidden.
- Have the students estimate the pumpkin’s weight, then actually weigh the pumpkin.
- Have the students determine whether or not the pumpkin will float and test this in a large tub of water.
- Estimate the circumference of the pumpkin by having the students cut a piece of yarn that they think will fit around the pumpkin. Sort pieces by too short, too long and just right.
- Estimate the number of seeds in the pumpkin. Open the pumpkin and clean it out. Wash, dry and save the seeds. To keep the pumpkin fresher longer, wipe out the inside with bleach to retard the growth of mould. If you carve a Jack-o-Lantern face, rub the edges with petroleum jelly to retard shrinkage.
- Count the pumpkin seeds into groups of ten, then put the tens together into hundreds to determine the total.
- Soak some pumpkin seeds overnight, cut them open so the students can see the tiny plant embryo inside the seed.
- Have each student plant a pumpkin seed in a ziploc bag with a little dirt and water. Zip the bags tight, hang them up and they will require no further maintenance. The bags will fog and then clear up and you can explain to your class how this is similar to clouds and rain. The ziploc bag is like its own little world. The other really awesome aspect of the bags is that you can see the seeds open and the roots grow down and the sprout grow up. Send the plants home shortly after they sprout, because they will need to be transplanted.
- Then we eat! Roast pumpkin seeds by spreading oil on a pan, spreading seeds in a single layer, adding a little salt and paprika for colour, and roast them at 400 degrees until brown. This only takes about 10 or 12 minutes, or roast them at 200 degrees for 1 hour. The children can write the steps for this process.

“Make ‘pumpkin pie in a baggie’. Pre-cook pumpkin chunks. Give each child a ziplock baggie and some pumpkin chunks. Add sugar, a bit of cream, cinnamon and nutmeg (you may want to try this first to see the amounts needed for the amount of pumpkin you are putting in each baggie), and then seal the baggie. The student

Hallowe'en

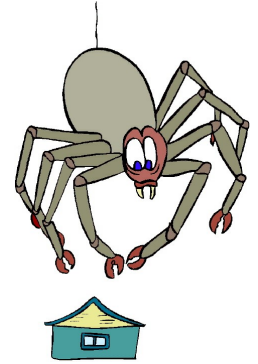
Spiders

"We cooked spaghetti, let it cool in water, and then laid it out over wax paper to make a web. It's really sticky and can frustrate the children a little (we used our pencil tips to help separate the spaghetti from our fingers). Then we dabbed white glue over any intersecting pieces. Once dry, the webs can be separated from the wax paper and hung up."

"I make a big spider to hang from the ceiling. The materials needed are: a balloon, a large black garbage bag, a small black garbage bag, a twist tie, and some tacks.

Blow up the balloon. Put it in the smaller garbage bag to make the body of spider. Cut off extra plastic and tie with a twist tie. Cut the large garbage bag lengthwise and open. Cut the bag again lengthwise into four long strips. (legs) Attach the middle of the legs to the ceiling with tacks. Attach the balloon body over the legs. A tack can be used in the middle of each leg strip so that the legs have a joint and hang from the ceiling.

"It looks pretty spooky!"



Ghosts

Take a white wire hanger and shape it into a long diamond shape. Pull a white knee high hose over it from the end opposite the hook. Tie the top with orange and black curly ribbon. Reshape the hanger into a fuller diamond and glue on black construction paper eyes. Hang the ghosts from the ceiling.



"My favourite Hallowe'en activity is a ghost mobile. You need a white paper plate, template of three little ghosts about 6 inches tall, tape, and a small amount of string for hanging. Simply colour, cut, and tape the hanging ghosts evenly around the plate and hang from the ceiling."

Dip the student's foot into washable white paint. Step once first to get rid of most of the paint and then step onto a piece of black construction paper. Turn the page upside down and paint black eyes onto the footprint shape in order to create a ghost. Hang up the painting for Hallowe'en!

Favourite Hallowe'en Fun

"There are two things I really like to do. First, this old favourite:

Stirring and stirring and stirring the pot
Bubbly, bubbly, bubbly HOT
Look at the moon
Laugh like a loon
Stir _____ into the pot.



We do this poem with lots of expression and actions and think of different things to stir into the pot. The kids just love this one - they try to think of strange things to put in the pot.

"Another favourite is a game called 'Mummy'. In groups of 4-5, choose one person to be the 'mummy'. Give them a couple of rolls of cheap toilet paper, a five minute time limit, and let them wrap. It's pretty funny, the kids have lots of fun and it's interesting to watch the group dynamics as they figure out the most effective ways to do it. I did it with four different classes as a station today and it was a lot of fun." *Betty-Ann*

A Pumpkin Glyph

If you haven't done glyphs with your class, this is a simple one to start. Start with a pumpkin shape. The students will decorate the pumpkin according to their answers on the following questions.

1. Have you ever eaten pumpkin seeds? If yes, stem is brown. If no, stem is green.
2. Do you like pumpkin pie? If yes, smile for mouth. If no, frown for mouth. If you don't know, crooked/zigzag mouth.
3. Do you like scary or happy jack-o-lanterns? If Scary, make a square nose. If happy, make a triangle nose.
4. What is your favorite fall treat? If caramel apples, triangle eyes. If popcorn balls, circle eyes. If candy corn, triangle eyes BUT turn them upside down. If it's some other item, square eyes.

These can be displayed along with little stories interpreting the glyph for others to read. Be sure to put the legend up so others will understand the reasoning for this activity and don't think it's just an art project.

Have your students tell the class about their glyphs, speaking in complete sentences. They would interpret a glyph such as: Travis has eaten pumpkin seeds. He does not like pumpkin pie. He likes scary jack-o-lanterns and candy corn is his favourite treat.

Your students can be scientists and police officers because they have to compare, contrast and draw conclusions from their data.

I save pumpkin seeds every October. I make seed packets that the kids decorate, and then I save them until spring. In the spring we plant them in milk cartons. Each child has a seed packet they remember making in October. The plants grow well indoors and fairly quickly. One year I had a student bring in a pumpkin that he got from the plant after he took it home, put it in the ground and let it grow all summer!

Witches Brew

"On the first of October bring in a large, black pot that resembles a witch's cauldron. Inside the pot there is a slip of paper that reads: 'I am the Witch of the West and I am out gathering ingredients for our Hallowe'en brew.' On designated days, place a bag containing one ingredient in the pot. The ingredients should be placed inside a plastic bag so that no smell escapes. Place plastic bags within brown paper lunch bags so the children cannot see the contents and have appropriate names printed on the outside of the bag. On Hallowe'en, have fun emptying all the bags and stirring the brew. This recipe is a guarantee for perfect attendance. Put approximately 1 cup into each bag:

Blood Drops - (Red Hots)

Owl Eyes - (Peanuts)

Cats Eyes - (Peanut M&Ms)

Chicken Toenails - (Corn Candy)

Coloured Flies - (M&Ms)

Butterfly Wings - (Corn Chips)

Black Worms - (Licorice)

Cat Claws - (Sunflower Seeds)

Ants - (Raisins)

Snake Eyes - (Chocolate Chips)

Cobwebs - (Triscuits)

Lizard Gizzards - (Shoestring Potatoes)

Bat Bones - (Pretzels)



"At my school the Grade 1 and 2 classes all go into the cafeteria for our party. We have about 10 stations set up: wormy apples, punch, fishing for candy bar, spiral ghost art, lollipop ghost, black cat art, black bat art, musical chairs, scarecrow bean bag toss, and pin the nose on the pumpkin. The children have a 'passport' so that they can only visit each station once, attached to a lunch sack to hold all the prizes from the stations. It's fun for the children to celebrate with friends from other classes and you get lots of parent help for set up and clean up. Happy Hallowe'en!"

Kathy

Community Helpers

In the last year, community helpers have been in the news a lot. We have heard stories about firemen, police officers, paramedics, medical personnel and construction workers. All of them have been helping the community. Community helpers include many more than these people, though. To know what a community helper is, first you need to know what a community is.

A community is made up of different groups of people who live and work together. The community has a specific location (it is in one place), it has rules and laws that people must follow and the people work together to solve their problems. The very smallest unit which could be called a community is your family, then comes your neighbourhood, and finally the town or city in which you live. So what is a community helper?

A community helper is anyone in the community who helps others by providing a service of some kind. The easy ones to think of are the Police Force, the Fire Service and the Emergency Medical Services. There are many, many more, though. Brainstorm people who help in your community.

“These are some of the ideas I used with my community helpers unit last year with Grade Twos. I loved teaching the community helpers unit.

“First of all, we asked parents to come and speak to us about their occupations. We worked with another grade 2 class so we were able to get quite a few parents to come in (although they were pretty nervous talking to 46 grade 2 students!). Before the first parent came in we brainstormed questions to ask them, and the students really did improve in their abilities to ask a question rather than ‘tell a story’. At the end I allowed them to ask me questions about becoming a teacher and they were able to stay on topic and all of the questions related to me. I was very impressed with their progress and it was something that we had not even thought about when we began the unit. After each parent’s presentation we wrote a sentence or two about his or her occupation and compiled our information into a little booklet.

Other ideas included:

‘What I want to be when I grow up’: the students decorated a paper doll cutout to look like them in their chosen profession and wrote a few sentences about what they wanted to be and why.

A field trip to the local library and Safeway store - it went over very well with both the kids and the parents.

Reading books about various occupations.

The students gathered pictures of people involved in various occupations and we created a bulletin board together. I gave the students pictures of workers and they had to discuss their thoughts, in small groups, about the different jobs, e.g., what do you think this person does for a living? Do you think you would enjoy this type of work? Why or why not? What might be some interesting or exciting things that could happen to a person doing this job? What might be some things that a person might not like about doing this job? What might be one of the best parts of doing this job? What might be the worst part of doing this job?

The best part of the unit was when the students worked in groups of six to create their own communities. I got a large appliance box and cut it into large squares. Each group was given this cardboard base with which to work. They planned everything before beginning to work on the actual model. First, they drew out the roads, park areas, etc. and painted the base. Then they brought in boxes of numerous shapes and sizes to use as buildings. They painted the boxes to look like the type of buildings they were trying to represent. I also brought in some playdough, twigs, toothpicks, etc., so that the students could add the finishing touches (stop signs, trees, fences, etc.) The models turned out beautifully and really demonstrated the students' understanding of what a community is and how the people (through their occupations and in other ways) help to make the community a safe and happy place to be. We even had other classes come in to see our models and ask questions of the students. They were very proud of their accomplishments. It took us about four days to make the models, working several hours each day. The students even worked through recess one day they were so excited about the project. In the end they wrote about the process and the different things that they had included in their models. They also completed a self-evaluation based on criteria that we had selected as a class. As a little memento I took pictures of each group with their model and had them laser copied so that each student could have his own picture to take home (since the models themselves were too big for the students to take home. We decided as a class to take them apart at the end of the unit because there was simply not enough space to keep them.

“I loved doing this unit, and I hope you find some of these ideas useful.”

Tammy

Websites

For Your Teaching

<http://www.gigglepotz.com/ccameric-2.htm>

Here is a list of Grade 2 classes that are looking for e-mail or pen-pals.

<http://www.proteacher.net/>

This gives you access to many chatboards and lots of interesting information.

<http://www.backflip.com/members/donnathomson/7764829>

This website is a great place to begin a search for useful information. The site owner has collected links that you will enjoy.

<http://expage.com/MORE4TEACHERS>

If you are a new or substitute teacher, this website will be a good place to visit.

<http://members.aol.com/Aesopnet/>

This is a site for Grade One and Two teachers. It isn't fancy, but has some lessons you may be able to use.

<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/english/seqwsjumbled.htm>

Do you have a bright child who needs some extra work? Print this out and see if he/she can unscramble this amusing story.

<http://www.marcias-lesson-links.com>

I keep suggesting this site – it has the best collection of educational links on the web. Whatever you want – it's there!



For Your Pleasure

It is hoped that by now all teachers are familiar with the internet and use it. It gives you the fastest access to all the information you will ever need, both educational and personal. Here are some personal favourites:

Bookmark your provincial weather site: **http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/canada_e.html**

Do your banking on-line.

Check your credit card balances.

Use this site for a dictionary and thesaurus. **<http://www.thesaurus.com/>**

If you travel you can make all your plans and reservations on-line.

Research your interests.

Settle arguments!

Look for webcams in your favourite places around the world. Mine is: **<http://www.abcparislive.com/>**

There are wonderful photographers who put new pictures on-line that have been taken that day.

Try: **<http://www.lakelandcam.co.uk/main.html>** and **<http://www.cornwallcam.co.uk/>**
as examples.

All news outlets have websites.

Purchase books at **<http://www.amazon.com>**

Send e-cards to friends.

Check the stock market and the business day.

Look up medical information at **<http://my.webmd.com>**

Play games on-line.

And the list goes on and on! Bookmark your favourites so you have direct access.

Here is a super search program to download. Just get the basic – it's free! When you type in your word(s), it searches 80 engines to give you the best information. I wouldn't be without it!

<http://www.copernic.com/downloads/>

Odds and Ends

"My name is Chantal and I am a French immersion teacher in Quebec, Canada. I searched for mailing lists for French teachers but did not find any. Therefore I decided to create a new list. The mailing list would be for French immersion as well as French teachers at all levels of elementary school. I would like to share ideas as well as resources. As we all know, there are not many French resources on the market so the more we share, the better. Even English teachers are sometimes required to teach one period in French so receiving French ideas would be great.

"I created the list with Egroups France. All French teachers could join. You may write in English if you want.

To subscribe to the list, send a blank email to the following address:

profimmersionfr-subscribe@egroups.fr

You will receive a subscription response soon after to confirm the email address as well as subscription. Thank you for your interest. I am really hoping to have many teachers join to make the list interesting. If you know other teachers or friends which would be interested in this list, please forward the message."

Chantal (clatour@sprint.ca)

Spelling Assessment

"A few years ago a colleague got a list at a conference of the 1200 most frequently written words. The first 100 are supposed to correspond with what we expect students to be able to spell by the end of grade one, the next 100 for grade two, etc. They match quite well with the Dolch list and the lists of words I've seen recommended for the Word Wall.

"In September and November I dictate 1-100 to all of my grade 2s and then in February and May I dictate 1 – 200. I might give a few of the more able students up to 200 in November. It is a great way to show the students and their parents their progress at reporting times as you can easily compare the tests. Of course, I emphasize that this is a "snapshot" of what they can do in spelling and we also look at their writing samples. When I've had a grade 1/2 class I've given it to the grade 1s who I think can handle it well. They are floored when they look at their progress over the year. In September it takes us 4 – 5 sessions to get through all the words but by June we're doing it in two."

Heather

A Scarecrow Poem

The children can create a scarecrow poem following the model below. Clap out the patterns.

Line 1 the topic (2 syllables)
 Line 2 a description (4 syllables)
 Line 3 the action (7 syllables)
 Line 4 the setting (8 syllables)
 Line 5 a thought (6 syllables)

Example:

Scarecrow

Stuffed man of straw

Looks upon field of plenty

Where golden yellow corn grows tall

A brilliant fall display

Names on Papers

We sing :

"Write your name on your paper, write your name.

Write your name on your paper, write your name.

Write your name on your paper,

Write your name on your paper,

Write your name on your paper write your name."

"Tune: If you're happy and you know it

They clap or snap at the end if they have their name on the paper by the time we finish the song.

Sometimes they just start singing and

I don't have to sing or remind them about their name. If we want to add dates to our paper, at the very end they just shout 'and the date' after the last line. They love it."

More Odds and Ends

A Teacher's Portfolio

"Your teaching portfolio should contain a brief autobiography, statement of educational philosophy, resume, transcripts, letters of recommendation, student teaching evaluations, verification of having passed the department of education exams, copy of teaching certificate, awards/honors, volunteer services and activities, documentation of involvement in student organizations, documentation of participation in professional development activities/conferences, information on special skills/talents, sample lesson plans, sample curricular unit, photographs of various teaching experiences: bulletin boards, working with students, etc., self-evaluation of student teaching experiences, professional development plan, video-taped lesson."

Aimee

"I love zipper bags... the new kind with the plastic zipper on top. I use them all the time for games and game pieces, and I bought a supply for home, too. They are great for sending projects and gifts home, especially now that the less expensive sandwich size is available."

Corinne

Applesauce

"Last year, I did an apple theme where I had 5 stations running every afternoon. I had a mom come in to make applesauce with a small group:

3 apples peeled and chopped

1/4 cup water

Cover and cook on medium heat for 15 minutes. Mash with a fork (or potato masher).

Add 1/4 tsp cinnamon.

We made 5 different kinds of applesauce – Golden Delicious, MacIntosh, Red Delicious, Granny Smith and Spartan. I froze them until the Tasting Day. On the tasting day, I did a blind taste test (only I knew which was which). I numbered the applesauce, put numbers on paper plates, put about a teaspoon of each flavour on the plates, had the kids taste each one and choose which their favourite was. They put an apple sticker on a graph and we charted which was the favourite. Then I told them which was which flavour. They really liked doing this and the children were amazed at the different tastes of the different apples. I usually have a bunch of apples for comparison and if there were any left at the end of the unit, I made them into an apple crisp which we had as a special treat on the last day of apples."

The Water Cycle Bracelet

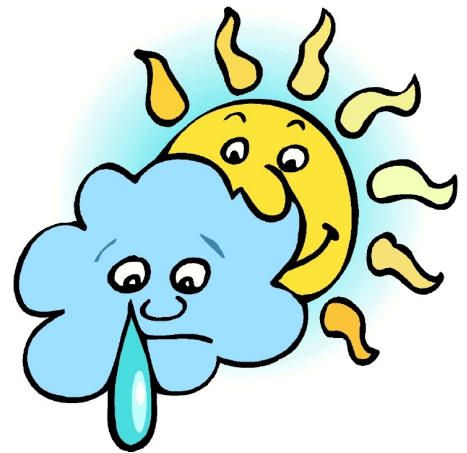
The beads are threaded in this order:

1. blue (stands for the water that is being heated up)
2. yellow (sun that heats up the water that is here on the earth)
3. clear (evaporation into the atmosphere)
4. white (forms white clouds of condensation)
5. blue (precipitation that falls from the clouds) then it goes to yellow again, clear, white, blue, yellow, clear, white, and then I stop on blue.

Don't forget to sing the water cycle song sometime in your unit. My kids loved it!

Water Cycle Song (to the tune of she'll be coming around the mountain)

Water travels in a cycle, yes, it does,
 Water travels in a cycle, yes, it does,
 It goes up as evaporation,
 Forms clouds of condensation,
 Falls down as precipitation,
 Yes, it does!



Dear Colleagues,

This has been a busy summer, as usual! I always promise new materials in September and it seems that so many projects turn out to be more work than I expect..... This happens every time, but obviously I am not a quick learner.

My daughter, Kelly, has been working with me for a couple of years (in her spare time) and this fall she is taking Primary Success into the US. She has a new website for American teachers and is putting me to shame – I will have to fix up the Canadian one now! If you want to see samples of the materials, go to the US site and you will find samples there. The materials are basically the same.

<http://www.primarysuccess.ca/>

We are re-writing all the materials for the US market – changing Grade One to First Grade and spelling many words differently. The Canadian materials are being spruced up, too, and will keep the Canadian flavour, with a 'u' of course.

When I have done all this and get the busy fall time over, I will treat myself to a nice holiday.....

Jean



Improving the English Language

Having chosen English as the preferred language in the EEC, the European Parliament has commissioned a feasibility study in ways of improving efficiency in communications between Government departments. European officials have often pointed out that English spelling is unnecessarily difficult; for example: cough, plough, rough, through and thorough. What is clearly needed is a phased programme of changes to iron out these anomalies. The programme would, of course, be administered by a committee staff at top level by participating nations. In the first year, for example, the committee would suggest using 's' instead of the soft 'c'. Certainly, sivil servants in all sities would reseive this news with joy. Then the hard 'c' could be replaced by 'k' sinse both letters are pronounsed alike. Not only would this klear up konfusun in the minds of klerikal workers, but typewriters could be made with one less letter. There would be growing enthusiasm when in the sekond year, it was announced that the troublesome 'ph' would henseforth be written 'f'. This would make words like 'fotograf' twenty persent shorter in print. In the third year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expected to reash the stage where more komplikated shanges are possible. Governments would enkourage the removal of double letters which have always been a deterrent to akurate speling. We would al agre that the horrible mes of silent 'e's in the languag is disgrasful. Therefor we kould drop them and kontinu to read and writ as though nothing had hapend. By this tim it would be four years sins the skem began and peopl would be reseptive to steps sutsh as replasing 'th' by 'z'. Perhaps zen ze funktion of 'w' kould be taken on by 'v', vitsh is, after al, half a 'w'. Shortly after zis, ze unesesary 'o' kould be dropd from vords kontaining 'ou'. Similar arguments vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters. Kontinuing zis proses yer after yer, ve vud eventuli hav a reli sensibl riten styl. After tventi yers zer vud be no mor trubls, difikultis and evrivun vud find it ezi tu understand ech ozer. Ze drem of the Guvermnt vud finali hav kum tru.

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