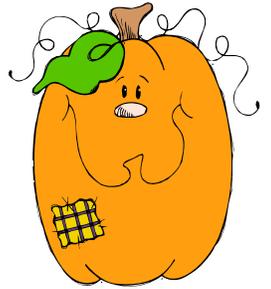


# Share-Two



September – October 2000 Issue #1

## Something New!



**You can't scare me. I teach.**

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It is always a gamble to begin a new publication! “Share-One” has been well received over the past 5 years, and has evolved and grown in this time. As I have been writing it, I have seen information that was more suitable for Grade Two and for some time the thought has been in my mind to begin to put a newsletter together specifically for this often ignored grade level. So, here goes - and I hope you enjoy it!

I taught Grade Two for many years. It is a nice age! The children can read (hopefully) when they come to you in September, they can write without too much assistance, and the math in Grade Two is very interesting to teach. They still love their teacher and show great enthusiasm for small pleasures. You can really get your teeth into Science and Social Studies units, too, so the day can be exciting and fun.

As in “Share-One”, there will be one or more articles on reading programs in each issue. I am not endorsing any particular program or method, simply sharing what is presently popular and being used by teachers at this level.

The ideas in the newsletter have been written by teachers around the world. It doesn't seem to matter where you live – teachers have the same interests and concerns and are willing to share what they have found works well. Hopefully, you will “Share-Two”!

*Jean*

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*As the old man walked along the beach at dawn, he noticed a young man ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them into the sea. Finally catching up to the youth, he asked why he was doing this. The answer was that the stranded starfish would die if left until the morning sun.*

*“But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish,” countered the other. “How can your effort make any difference?”*

*The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and then threw it to safety in the waves. “It makes a difference to this one,” he said.*

*Anonymous*



# Poetry for September and October

*Note: I have tried to select poems that have interesting vocabulary and give visual pictures. Use these poems for class discussions, reading, memorization, and choral speech. After the poem has been studied, give each child a copy to put into a poetry book of his/her own.*

## What Falls In The Fall?

In the fall  
Do you fall out of bed?  
Do you land on your head?  
In the fall  
Do houses fall down?  
And buildings and butterflies  
All over town?  
Something must fall  
In the fall, if you please,  
Oh, yes. The leaves fall.  
They fall from the trees.



## Rain of Leaves

It's raining big,  
It's raining small,  
It's raining autumn leaves  
In fall.  
It's raining gold  
And red and brown  
As autumn leaves  
Come raining down.  
It's raining everywhere I look  
It's raining bookmarks  
On my book.



## The Witch

There once was a witch  
of Willoughby Wood,  
And a weird wild witch was she;  
With her hair that was snarled,  
And hands that were gnarled,  
And a rickety, kickety knee.  
She could jump they say  
To the moon and back,  
But this I never did see.



# Poetry For Your Classroom

**Feelings**

*Dee Lillegard*

**Birthday Poem**

Happy Birthday to you!  
Squashed tomatoes and stew;  
Eggs and bacon for breakfast,  
Happy birthday to you!

*Anonymous*



**Pocket Treasure**

A tiny bit of eggshell  
From an empty robin's nest.  
It's like a piece of summer sky.  
The blue that I like best.  
Four fine rocks, one perfect shell,  
A rusty little locket -  
Those are just a few of the things  
In my blue-jeans pocket!

**Scissors**

*Sandra Liastsos*

**Birthday Wish**

*Myra Cohn Livingston*

**Birthday Song**

*Patricia Hubbell*

**Pencil Poem**

*Julia Fields*

**Manners**

*Helen H. Moore*



**Friendship**

*Risa Jordan*

**Books To the Ceiling**

*Arnold Lobel*

**Pass The Poems, Please**

*Jane Baskwill*



# Here We Go!

Some really easy things to do the first half day:

1. Read a story and have them do a simple reader response.
2. Decorate name tags for their desks.
3. Play "Name Bingo": Everyone has a bingo grid; they walk around the room and collect a different signature in each square (have slightly less squares than there are kids). Pass out chips and pull names from a jar.
4. Organize supplies (this always takes time).
5. I always discuss the rules with the class. I let them come up with all sorts of rules but then help them narrow them down to three. This year I'm going to narrow it down to one ~ Treat others as you would like to be treated ~ (the old Golden Rule). My consequences vary according to the situation. Usually I try and get the kids to work out their own problems. If it's someone disturbing the class, though, I give a 5 minute time out; 2nd infraction is another time-out, 3rd time they miss recess and 4th time they phone their parents and tell them they were misbehaving.

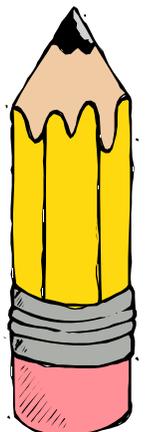
*Barb*

## How to Start the First Day

1. Collect your class! Have a greeting for each child.
2. Go to the classroom: Go to classroom together and find coat hooks. Hang up jackets and backpacks. (Collect all notes.) Find names on tags lying on desks and sit down.
3. Attendance: Take attendance and lunch count quickly and send to office.
4. Welcome: Introduce adults (teacher and aide) and welcome class.
5. Pictures: Videotape class briefly and snap a couple of pictures. (Take the video home that night and practice names and recognition!) Save tape to periodically add to it during year. Parents may make a copy at the end of the year.
6. Rules: Explain the basic rules. Practice getting quiet for your signals or whatever key words you are using. Explain and then practice going to seats quietly and tell the children how you expect them to sit to be quiet and listen. (These are probably the most useful techniques we teach all year. If you insist from the first day, it doesn't take long for it to be a habit.)
7. Bathroom: Explain bathroom procedures and rules.
8. Size seats: Place the children in correctly sized desks. Then fasten the names down on the desks with wide tape.
9. Paper and supplies: Look at the supplies and show the children what you wish done with them – e.g. collect all pencils and make them community property, put supplies that will be used later in the year in the cupboard, etc.
10. Do a 'names' activity: Have the children decorate their name tags, the web (P. 31) or play name Bingo (above).
11. Read a story: Explain the 'listening' rules - that they must sit cross-legged, hands on lap, etc. Again, if you insist on it from Day 1, you will minimize future problems.)
12. Lunch: Discuss how we get ready for lunch, line up, procedure, etc.

## A Checklist For You

1. What is your policy regarding: heading papers, writing on back of paper, colouring or drawing on paper, printing expectations, use of pen or pencil, late work, incomplete work, neatness, make-up work?
2. How do you intend to: provide for absentees, post assignments, explain assignments to groups, keep students working from one assignment to the other?
3. For effective monitoring of work, how and when will you: make sure you get around to all students, not just the demanding ones, look carefully enough at students' work in progress to catch errors?
4. How do you want students to turn in work: where to put it, how to pass papers in, how to keep track of whose work is or isn't turned in?
5. What is your policy regarding: checking for turned-in work, work not turned in on time by the end of the day, specific feedback, criteria for displayed work, how and when to return papers to students, having students correct papers of their own, checking and returning corrected work?



# Bulletin Boards

The Olympic Games are coming in September! You can make one of these super bulletin boards to help celebrate.

**Winners!** Put a head photo of each child on a photocopy of an Olympic medal. All gold, of course!

**Carry the Torch for Canada** Use torches and the Canadian flag to decorate a bulletin board. The children can print a short description on each torch to introduce themselves.



**The Olympics** Use a picture of the 5 rings, symbolizing the continents – Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa and the Americas. List the different events and the countries that participate from the different continents.

**Grade Two is a Picnic!** “Use a red-and-white checkered tablecloth or checkered fabric for the background. I used three paper plates to write ‘Miss Carter's Class’. The children could draw their faces on small paper plates. Put a few black ants around the ‘table’!”

**What-a-melon!** is the caption above a large slice of watermelon. The seeds are the children's names/photo.

**Blast Off!** Each child's picture is glued to a rocketship. Put cut-outs of various star sizes, along with the little star stickers all over the bulletin board. Caption reads - **Blast Off to Grade Two!** or **Grade Two is Out of This World!**

**Put Your Best Foot Forward** Have one big foot (or shoe) in the center, and then have the children trace their feet or draw their shoes, cut them out, put their names on them and decorate them.

**Author of the Month** Post a picture of the author of the month, photocopy book covers and add any writing, artwork, student comments on the author's work.

**I Have a Hunch This Is a Bright Bunch!** “I take a picture of each kid wearing a pair of sunglasses. I mount them on suns that I have made and had laminated. I print the title on banner paper and use sun clip arts on the banner and also cut out clipart suns to add to the bulletin board. I did it last other year and got a lot of compliments on it.”

*Paula*

## And.....

- Go Wild For Reading - Use jungle animals
- Read Anywhere – Use airplane or means of transportation
- Books Make Me Hoppy – Use frog
- Flip over Books – Dolphin
- Take Flight....Read – hot air balloon
- Warm up With a Good Book – Snow child
- I'm Buggy for Books – Ladybugs

- Chill Out and Read – Penguin
- Score Big With Reading – Basketball players
- All-Star Readers – Baseball player
- Chalk One Up for Reading – Chalkboard
- Jump Into a Good Book - Frog



# The Olympic Games

*Make 2000 an Olympic year: Strive to do your personal best!*

## Learn About the Olympic Games

- learn that the summer Olympics happen every 4th year on the leap year, and the winter Olympics 2 years later.

- learn about the events
- learn about the mascots
- Study the flags of participating nations. Have each classroom (or group of children) make a different flag. Hang for display.
- Learn about the origin of the Olympic games. Make the flag of Greece.
- For your own information, check out:

<http://www.aafra.com/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicPrimer/OlympicPrimer.htm>

## Math for the Olympics

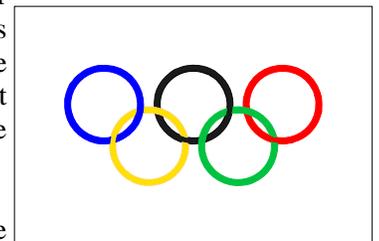
- Graph favourite events
- Predict the number of gold, silver, and bronze medals Canada will win.
- Keep track of the medals won by each country.
- Hold a class or school Olympics competition (track and field events, Math Olympics, Geography Olympics, etc.). Hold at least one event involving measurement, such as the Long Jump. Measure results in meters and centimeters.
- Determine the length and/or width of the various playing fields or courses of Olympic events, i.e., soccer field, Olympic swimming pool, tennis court, running events, etc.

## Olympic Art

“Make Olympic windsocks to hang in your room or down the hallway: After learning about the Olympic rings, draw and colour the rings on a piece of 12" x 18" white construction paper laid lengthwise. You can write Sydney 2000 on this also. Turn the paper so that it makes a cylinder. Glue, tape, or staple. Make a hanger by putting a piece of string or yarn through two holes that have been made at the top of the windsock with a paper punch. Give each child one 8" strip of crepe paper streamer of each of the colors of the Olympic rings: blue, black, red, yellow, green. These should be glued evenly around the bottom of the windsock so that they hang down.”

“Take a photo of each child. Cut out just the head. The children glue their heads down on a piece of paper. They must draw the rest of their bodies doing their favourite Olympic sport. Then they write about themselves as if they were a participant in the Olympics.”

“Collect pipe cleaners in the colours of the Olympic rings, one of each colour for each child in your class. Begin by making a circle with the blue one. Twist the ends to form a smooth circle. Add the yellow pipe cleaner; form and twist a circle. Add the black, the green, and then the red, in that order. If you hold it up you will have what appears to be a chain, but if you lay it flat, you can arrange the circles to form the Olympic rings.”



“I found this great site with work and colour sheets about the Olympics. It give great information on the mascots and games to share with your class. click on ‘kids’ and then on ‘teachers’. I used the junior page for ages 4-8.”

<http://www.olympics.com/eng/>

*Claire*

## Learn About Canada

If the children know more about Canada, they will enjoy the Olympic games more and understand what they are hearing while the coverage is on.

Learn about:

- our flag
- our national anthem
- the different provinces
- own area, province, maps
- our Canadian athletes and where they live in Canada
- our Olympic heroes



## Learn About Australia

- the continent – and learn the other continents
- the people
- the animals
- the different parts of Australia
- different seasons in the southern hemisphere
- learn Australia’s flag
- learn about the major cities and attractions

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~wprimary/acts.htm>

This site has things about Australia for children to do.

## Learn About Other Countries

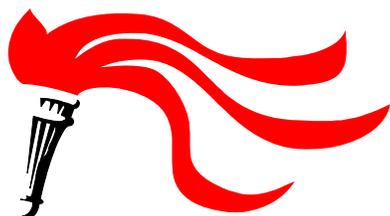
Give each child a country to research. They can look up the flag, where the country is, and interesting facts. Perhaps the children would like to learn about their family’s country of origin. Put little flags on a map of the world.

## Go For the Gold!

“I think I will use coloured ‘ribbons’ on the board with the students name on the bottom, add stars as they read....like 2 books = red star, 5 books = Blue star, 8 books = green star, 10 books = silver star, 15 books = gold medal; and use a gold seal (like they sell at Office Depot for certificates) to add to the middle when they reach the GOLD medal level. I would title the bulletin board : Go for the Gold! I'd like to do this as a grade-level. I LOVE the Olympics!!”

*Karen*

“Form an Olympic Readers Club. To be eligible, students keep track of their reading on a weekly log during the month of September. If they read a total of six hours per week (average of 30 minutes per night) for the month, they earn a gold medal. Gold medalists are permitted to choose their classroom seating arrangement for the following month or other treat. If the majority of the students are gold medalists, the class gets a pizza/video party at lunch-time.”



“Students can be a GOLD MEDAL WINNER and win a gold medal at the end of each week by following all of our new classroom rules every day. Those with the most gold medals by the end of September can choose their classroom job for the following week. Gold medal winners will be graphed and posted on a bulletin board. Students who try their best without winning a gold medal will also receive special recognition.”

*“Koala-fy for the Reading Olympics!”*

# Four-Blocks

*“Four-blocks is a framework - and it is for balanced literacy. One is the Working With Words block (the one that shows the most dramatic growth), one block is for writing, one block is for guided reading (specifically for comprehension and fluency), and one is for self-selected reading. It is multilevel and is supposed to be able to reach all types of learners. The self-selected reading and the writing are the blocks where the teacher meets 1:1 with students, after modeling, mini-lessons, etc. You are supposed to spend 30-40 minutes every day on each block so you are reaching all learners.”*

Ada

## Building the Word Wall

*The following article is by Cheryl M. Sigmon, and used with her permission.*

**For the "new kids on the blocks":** Before we get started with the ins and outs of the model, let me take just a minute to brief the novice to 4-Blocks about what all the excitement is about. The 4-Blocks Model is an instructional model based on the premise that there are four basic ways that all children learn to read. The model ensures that all children will be exposed to all four methods every single day, addressing the individual learning styles and personalities of children. In brief, the four blocks of the model are Guided Reading Block, Writing Block, Working with Words Block, and Self-Selected Reading Block. The creator of the model, Dr. Patricia Cunningham, felt that it was possible to construct a balanced approach to literacy instruction that could address the individual needs of all children in a heterogeneous classroom setting, creating a real community of learners. Although the model was created for first graders, adaptations have been made to provide the continued balance for the diverse learners at other grade levels through middle school and beyond. Data has proven the model to be phenomenally successful even in its first year of gradual implementation. Teachers have reported being renewed by the model and have witnessed classrooms of re-energized students who are very actively engaged in the activities of the model.

Let's get started with the hows, whats, and whys of the Word Wall--

First, let's put the Word Wall in the context of the model. One of the blocks of the model is called Working with Words Block. That block of time, approximately 30 minutes, is comprised of two segments. The first of the segments, lasting approximately 10-15 minutes, is spent working with what's called the Word Wall. The Word Wall is an ever-present resource in the classroom to make high-frequency words accessible to students.

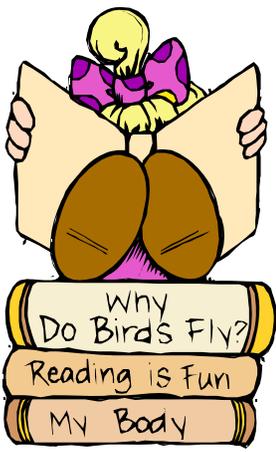
### **What words are selected for the Word Wall and why?**

At the primary grades, the words on the WW are strictly high-frequency words. That means those words that students encounter most frequently in their reading and need most often in their writing. Some lists that Pat Cunningham has shared with us have strategically included high-frequency words that provide patterns that will enable students to spell other rhyming words (word families). Also, we want to have words under every letter of the alphabet, which is why you might see the word "zoo" on a WW. Some basal series are helpful in identifying high-frequency words that correlate with a guided reading selection. There are also reliable lists available for this purpose.

As the grades go up, the teacher should depend more and more on selecting words for the WW from the frequently misspelled words from students' writing. The words should still be words that most students encounter in their reading and need for their writing, although they may appear with less regularity than the ones on the WW at grades 1 and 2. Don't, however, clutter the walls with words that all of the students in the classroom know.

### **What does the WW look like and how do I make it?**

The words for the WW are displayed under letters of the alphabet, on a wall, in clear sight of all students. (The teacher should actually move around at kids' eye-level to be sure that nothing obscures the view of any word for any child.) Some teachers use one wall or section of a wall; some run the alphabet around the upper border of the wall just below the ceiling. The letters of the alphabet are displayed with capital and lower case side-by-side. Some teachers back the letters with notepad sheets in a cute shape, perhaps relaying a theme or mascot. The alphabet needs to be as linear/horizontal as possible. At first grade this is particularly important because these kids are just learning alphabetic principles and need to see the correct sequence. At other grades, the students are using the wall as a quick reference source and having the alphabet in a logical order will help them. (In other words, don't let your thermostat on the wall dictate the alphabet and don't rearrange it--it's carved in stone!)



Every week, the teacher will introduce 5 new Word Wall words. They will continue to be added to the wall until about mid-April when you'll stop adding new ones and concentrate on reviewing the 110-125 total words. (Pat Cunningham says to remember to stop on the day taxes are due!) The teacher's goal is to have all students know these words with some automaticity before going to the next grade level.

**How do I construct the words for the WW? How should they look?**

Each word for the WW must be written in large, legible letters, preferably in the style of writing used by the children. As a rule of thumb, you should be able to get about three words to a sheet of paper 8 1/2 X 11. Some teachers use computer print in a very large font (200) when they find a font that is similar to a good model of writing. There is no need to have to use technology or to buy commercially prepared WW words; they're very easy to make with a wide black marker as well.

All of the WW words should be cut in the configuration of the word. This is an important clue for some visual learners in the classroom. It takes some extra time for the teacher, but it's time well spent (and remember that you only have to construct 5 words per week!).

It is very important to construct all of the words on a wide variety of colored paper. If you're printing your WW words on the computer, you'll likely print them on white paper. This will necessitate backing them with a color. My personal preference is to have the word on white paper and cut into the configuration, and then backed by a color of construction paper, providing a crisp contrast. It's not necessary to configure the backing. If you're constructing your words directly on the colored paper, that's fine, too. Just cut that one piece into the configuration of the word.

One more thing that you'll want to add to make your Word Wall as useful to students as possible: designate which words will be the greatest help to them in their transfer to spelling many other words (word patterns/families). We usually place a sticker, an asterisk (on computer), or a star by these words.

**What do I need to know about the different colors on the Word Wall? Are the colors important?**

The colors on the WW play a critical role, especially for the emergent readers. The intent of the color is to help children distinguish similar words under the same letter of the alphabet. I can place a blue word under every letter of the alphabet if I want to. However, I want to avoid placing two blue words under the same letter of the alphabet. Some letters of the alphabet tend to have more high-frequency words than other letters, such as a, b, c, s, r, t, and w. If a child has trouble telling the difference between the word "were" and "where", the fact that one is blue and one is red will help the teacher point it out and will also make an impression upon the student who references the word frequently.

\*\*\*In summarizing what to remember about the words: make them large and legible; cut them in their configurations; use different colors under same letters of the alphabet; and designate the pattern words.\*\*\*

**What do I do with vocabulary words that students might want to use in their writing? Can I place them on the Word Wall, too?**

No! The WW is held sacred for high-frequency words at the lower grades and for commonly misspelled words that are used frequently at the upper grades. Use theme or cluster charts in the classroom to display other words that you feel students may want to use. Don't confuse students about the reason for the Word Wall. It is a constant resource for them because you will always expect them to use these high-frequency words correctly in their writing. You won't have that expectation of most content vocabulary words. Vocabulary is more a reading skill where meaning is important. Spelling is a writing skill. There is a difference!

Now we've talked about how to construct the Word Wall. There's a great deal more to learn about the daily routine of working with these WW words. Also, remember that working with the Word Wall words is only one part of the Working With Words Block.

“You should get *The Teacher's Guide to the Four Blocks* and *Month by Month Phonics for Second Grade*. I just recently purchased their new book *Guided Reading the Four Blocks Way*. The first two books will have you ready to go though. They are easy to read and follow. The Month by Month book lays the Working with Words block all out for you. Yes, you can be ready to implement this program in the fall. It's comprehensive and allows the flexibility of reading materials.”  
Carolyn



# Literature Ideas

## Author Studies

Study Dr. Seuss, Bill Peet, Ezra Jack Keats, Robert Munsch, Leo Lionni, Tomie de Paola, Marc Brown, Jan Brett, Beatrix Potter, Patricia Polacco, Laura Numeroff, Bill Martin, Jr., Mercer Mayer.....

"I use author studies in my class. I have a 1/2 multi-age class. I focus on a different author each week. I make a poster with the author's name, and display it with various books by the author standing around it. I introduce the author on Monday, read about him/her from an inside cover of one of the books, and then introduce the activities that we will do in our literacy centers around the author. I will have a listening center activity in which one of the author's stories is on tape, (most of the time I tape the stories myself). After they listen to the story they do a comprehension activity with the story. I also have an A.R.T. (author related task) project in a center. It is an art project that comes from one of the books. During the week we read the various books during story time."

*Dana*

## Sideways Stories

"*Sideways Stories From Wayside School* has been a read aloud favourite in my classroom for over five years now. I always read it and the sequel, *Wayside School is Falling Down*, to my grade twos. Year after year the enthusiasm for these books is exceptional, although I always have to close my door when I read about Mrs. Gorf in case people in the hall think that's really the way I talk to my kids!"

*Holly*

## The Paperbag Princess

"We draw a picture of the princess. We use a piece of brown paper bag and cut it out for her dress and glue it to the picture. This turns out very cute!"

## Fairy Tales

"Two things I love doing are building a castle with cardboard, toilet paper rolls and paper towel rolls. We go all out with a draw bridge and moat full of alligators. The other is reading as many tales as we can find time for and comparing the differences of all the Snow Whites, Cinderellas, Three Bears, Three Pigs, and so on. I love sharing the silly, the serious, and different country's versions. Plus they're fun to read! We sometimes do a play or puppet show."

*Teresa*

Try this site for fairy tale ideas.... <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/9893/f.html>

"We usually do plays with fairy tales. The Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Boy Who Cried Wolf, The Mitten, The Three Bears, etc., all can be made into short plays, and it isn't hard for the students, even those with reading difficulties, to memorize the lines."

"We write about 'If I Were a King/Queen'. After writing, the children draw a picture of themselves as a king or queen. We use large manila paper to draw a picture of a castle. The kids LOVE this because they are able to draw huge moats with alligators around the castle. We use a book (I believe from Usborne) that has a picture of a castle in it to help the kids draw one.

"A take home project: Students create their own coat of arms. The children use a variety of materials, such as aluminum foil, poster board, markers, ribbons, glitter, bells, etc. The sky is the limit!"



# Reading Ideas

Here's a Making Words lesson for the word OLYMPICS:

- is
- so
- soy
- mop
- spy
- limp
- lips
- slim
- spoil
- slimy
- spicy
- clips
- simply
- Olympics



## Funny Words

English has some funny words  
 They give my mind the jitters  
 They sound the same to you and me,  
 But are spelled with different letters.  
 There's see and sea  
 And be and bee  
 It's terrible confusing!  
 There's new and knew  
 And through and threw.  
 It's really not amusing!  
 There's deer and dear  
 And here and hear.  
 It's horribly disturbing!  
 There's there and their  
 And bare and bear.  
 It's really most perturbing!

## Running Records

“Running records are probably my favourite, and easiest, way to check on a student's reading level and what types of errors he/she is making. I have made up my own template. Just use a regular sheet of paper horizontally. Draw lines so there is a space at the top and 10 or so blocks going down and 10 going across. As you read with the child you make a check in each block for every individual word that is correct, and write the word that the child says with the correct word under it when they make a mistake. If they self correct, I put a little SC in the corner. If I have to tell them the word I write ‘T’ for told. There are more marks, but those are the key ones. I get them to read 100 words or more and the scoring is really easy: 93 words right = 93%, etc. At the top of the page I draw a line for the child's name, the book title, the level, and the score. 90-95% is instructional; higher than that is independent reading level, below that is too challenging. When the child gets a few 95 type scores, we move up to the next level.”

## Choosing the Right Book

Is this book just right? Ask yourself these questions.  
 If your answer is YES, the

The idea for the 5-finger rule is to open the book up to a page and try reading it. Each time you come to a word you don't know you put up a finger. Once you have 5 fingers up for one page, that means the book is too hard for you at this time...or at least for reading alone. I do tell the children if they want to read it badly enough, it is a book they could read with their parents (or the like) and could get a little help with the hard words.



You may start out with the Goldilocks rules...before you take the book back to your desk for reading, try to read a page or two. See if it is too easy, too hard, or just right.

## The Goldilocks Method

book is probably:

### **Too Easy**

- Have you read it lots of times before?
- Do you understand the story very well?
- Do you know almost every word?
- Can you read it smoothly?

### **Just Right**

- Is the book new to you?
- Do you understand a lot of the book?
- Are there just a few words a page you don't know?
- When you read, are some places smooth and some choppy?

### **Too Hard**

- Are there more than 5 words on a page you don't know?
- Are you confused about what is happening in most of this book?
- When you read, does it sound pretty choppy?

# The Writing Block

*The Writing Block includes modeling of the writing process by the teacher in a mini-lesson, student writing, and sharing of the writing by selected students. This block should be 40 minutes long, and writing should be done every day. The modeling is extremely important. At this time the children are learning how writers write.*

## Modeling the Writing Process

“An overhead works well with this block. The teacher models a writing passage first and thinks aloud as he/she writes. Students love to copy the teacher, so by modeling you can guide them in the direction that you wish the class to go.

Model the thinking to find an interesting topic and brainstorm what you can write about that topic.

Model punctuation and capital letters.

Model good printing and correct spacing of words.

Model the process of finding the words you need and spelling them correctly.

- I remember how to spell the word.
- I look for the word on the Word Wall or around the room.
- I look in my personal dictionary.
- I sound out words.

Model the process of reading what you have written to make sure it reads correctly.

At the end of the modeled writing, you should edit the passage with the students. This is a editor’s checklist that you can use:

- name and date on page
- capitals
- punctuation
- circle words when you are not sure of spelling

You should also teach a mini lesson after you finish writing. Pick a topic that you feel your children need that day. Here are some ideas:

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| - punctuation and capital letters       | - run-on sentences                |
| - quotation marks, commas, etc.         | - making stories more interesting |
| - what to write about                   | - using interesting words         |
| - writing on one topic                  | - spelling                        |
| - stories have a beginning, middle, end | - editing                         |
| - re-reading                            | - I’m done                        |
| - titles                                |                                   |



## Student Writing and Conferences

Then students write in their journals on topics of their choice. There are 3 things that students are NOT to say during this portion of the writing block!

- I’m through.
- I’m finished.
- I’m done.

Students can always write another story if they think they are done. They need to use the editor's checklist before moving on.

While the students are writing, meet with 3 – 5 students each day to help them edit their work.

## Sharing

At the end of this block, students share what they have written (2-3 a day is fine). You can use an author's chair if you wish. Students who have published their work should share their books with their classmates. You may choose another way to share: share your story with a partner or one table member shares his/her writing with his/her tablemates.



# One Rule Discipline Plan

The following is by Zita Hamann, a Grade 2 teacher in Murdock, MN, and used with her permission.

## Our Rule

Treat others the way you want to be treated.

## Our Rights:

**1. I have the right to be happy and to be treated with compassion in this room.**

(This means that others will laugh **with** me but never **at** me. No one will **try** to hurt my feelings.)

**2. I have the right to hear and be heard in this room.**

(This means that no one will shout or make noises at inappropriate times. I will have times when I may talk and times when I may listen.)

**3. I have the right to be myself in this room.**

(This means that I will be treated fairly in this room. It does not matter whether I am a boy or girl, dark or light, or tall or short. **But**, I will not be treated **equally** since we all have different needs. I have the right to learn in my way and to be helped when I need help.)

**4. I have the right to be safe in this room.**

(This means that I will not **purposely** be hurt by other students or adults.)

**5. I have the right to learn about myself in this room.**

(This means I will be free to express **my own** feelings and thoughts without fear of being interrupted, teased or punished.)



## My Responsibility:

I must remember that everyone else also has these rights. I will respect everyone else's rights.

*Students and parents are asked to sign this.*

## Procedure:

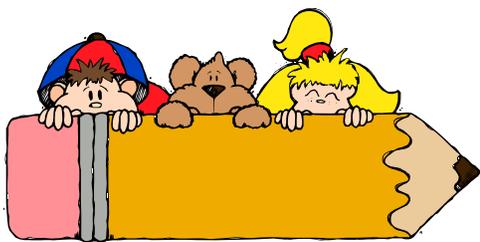
1st violation – verbal warning

2nd violation – verbal warning and the student's name is recorded in the teacher's behavior book

3rd through 5th violations – a check mark behind the name

Any violent behavior will result in immediate removal from the classroom.

## Consequences:



1. The students will miss 5 minutes of recess for each check mark received. During recess the student will record the violation and the steps needed to 'fix' the violation in their notebook. The student will do whatever steps are agreed upon with the teacher.

2. After the 5th violation (or three check marks) the student will be removed from the classroom and sent to the principal's office. Parents will be contacted.

3. If a student, because of behavior violations, is required to miss any part of recess twice within one week, that student will be required to meet with the principal. The principal, teacher and student will determine together what will be required to end the inappropriate behavior. Parents will be contacted.

---

Actually I have changed this every year that I have used it, but it works pretty well for me. I realize each school is different and each principal gives a different type of support, but mine is really good at helping out with this.

Just a note about recording students names. I never put the names up where they can be read by others. I believe that the child does not need that humiliation. It only serves as a reminder that they are 'bad'. I have a notebook on my desk that I write the names in. I have found that making a big show of trying to 'find' the notebook will many times end the inappropriate behavior.

The recess time is spent writing the problem in the notebook and planning ways to solve it. Usually the students leave happy that we have talked about the problem. It gives me a chance to find out what is causing the problem (home, bus, friends, not feeling well, work too difficult, etc.) I learn a lot during this time. Last year I found out a child's mother was in the hospital. This was a student who was expected to be 'mature and handle things without getting the school involved'. I believe the inappropriate behavior was that child's way of being able to tell me about the problem. We spent the rest of the recess making a get-well card together.

# Class Management

## 'No Name' Papers

"I have the children highlight their names before they hand their papers in."

"I have a basket that they put their completed work in. I alternate between a highlighter, stamp, and stickers. I put them next to the basket and they can highlight their name or put a stamp or sticker by their name. I used to work with a teacher who had a faceless man on the wall. He was called 'Mr. No Name'. All papers without names were posted around him. The children took them down when they saw their paper, put their name on it, and turned it in."

*Lisa*

"When the children write their names on their papers, I always ask them to put a yellow (or some other colour) dot, square, heart, etc. next to it. If they have nothing to put it next to...they know that they forgot their names."

*Marion*

## You're Never Done!

Do you think you are finished?

1. Read a book.
2. Edit a story in your journal.
3. Practice your handwriting.
4. Read the word wall.
5. Write a poem.
6. Piece a puzzle.
7. Write in your science journal.
8. Make up a math word problem and illustrate it.
9. Choose an SRA activity.
10. Practice math facts. (I have timed test sheets for all the facts. There are 100 on each page. They can do these with a timer or without when practicing.)

*Barbara*



## A Great Plan Book

"This is the blank template of what I use for lesson plans. It is the whole week, so it is long. I make one master copy, then copy it double-sided for my lesson plan binder. I feel it is complete enough that if I was ever unexpectedly ill, the sub could figure it out. I have been using it for four years now and love it."

*Sharon*

*A part-day sample.....*

**Monday Lesson Plans** Date \_\_\_\_\_

8:30-9:00 Arrival

\*Children come into classroom. When entering the room students put bookbags in the baskets, coats on hangers, and put their card in the correct cup for their lunch choice. Messenger can take attendance and lunch count to office.

\*Children then have assignment of either handwriting, journaling, or incredible equations.

Assignment for today: \_\_\_\_\_

\*If they finish the assignment, they can choose a book from a basket and bring it back to their seat.

9:00-9:20 Morning Meeting and Calendar

\*Go over calendar with children. Discuss the date, a few incredible equations to go with the date, and money exchange.

\*Review helpers chart with children.

\*Discuss any schedule changes or special events.

9:20-10:05 Reading

\*Introduce story to class

\*Pre-reading: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Read story \_\_\_\_\_

\*Activity with Read-Aloud: \_\_\_\_\_

10:10-10:40 Independent Reading

\*Read aloud for 5-7 minutes

\*Children take self-selected reading baskets. They read by themselves. The children have their poetry notebook and at least four other books in their basket. During this time the children read as teacher makes observations and conferences with them.

## A Tip!

"A tip to new teachers or anyone thinking of using ziplock bags for books or other storage. Invest in the ones that have the sliding clip on top. I found that with regular press/lock bags my students often didn't get them 'zipped' or when they opened them they would pull and the bag would rip at the sides. They cost a little more but end up lasting longer."

*Terri*

## Keeping Things Tidy

“One little trick I have learned: CAMOUFLAGE! If you have work tables or display tables for author centers, etc. You can drape them with fabric or a fun bedsheet. If you have a piece of plexi-glass to put on top, that is really great. You can store unit boxes, etc. under the tables without looking cluttered. I have also seen teachers use that plastic gathered sheeting (available in craft and party stores) that can be velcroed or stapled on around the perimeter of the table.

“To keep the kid’s desks organized, this is a great idea! Collect ‘pop flats’ (those cardboard trays that several six-packs of pop fit in at the grocery store) so that each child has one. These boxes become their ‘drawers’. Kids place their materials in the boxes and slide them inside the desks. When they want something out of the desk, they slide the box out. There is still a little room off to the side of the box to store some additional supplies. The kids keep plastic containers that resemble the bottom half of a babywipes box to the side of the pop flats. With this method, kids are less able to shove things inside the desk, and it is very easy to do desk inspections – just plop the drawers on the top of the desks!” **Karen**

“I use plastic tubs...Rubbermaid dishpans - labeled for different scribblers or booklets. For example, one is Journals, another is Social Studies, etc. They stack nicely on top of each other. I am also fond of themes...and took a tip from my predecessor and put all theme materials in a file box. They stack nicely. When I am doing a theme I bring out the box and dig from it! When I am finished a lot of displays, materials, etc. go back in the box ready for the next time I use it. My predecessor had every theme under the sun for Grade 1 and Grade 2 in filing boxes stored in storage rooms all over the school.” **Dinene**

“For things like displays, borders, etc., I had our custodian put nails in a piece of wood and then bolt it into the closet space I have. But a wall works fine too, especially if it's behind a door. Then you can hang borders, etc. It keeps them from getting curled and ruined as well. I've also done this with plastic hooks that have a sticky tape on them (you can buy these at hardware stores) and I put them on the side of my filing cabinet.

“A lot depends on your room itself. My room is not huge, but it works. I have a long counter with shelves underneath that runs the length of the classroom. The shelves are not great as they are not always the right size for everything, plus I just have way too much stuff. So I have 2 bookcases on top of the shelf just for my files and teacher resource books. This keeps them nice and handy.

“With plastic tubs you might be able to convince your custodian to store a few somewhere in the school's storage system, especially things you do not use as often.

I store my big themes and especially science units in tubs. Resource books, resources, student books, etc., then I never have to worry about where everything is. The plastic tubs keeps out mice, water, etc.” **Cathy-Dee**

## Using Your Computer

“If you have a computer with a printer in your classroom for your own use, it can save you oodles of time! Make a master page of your daybook for each day of the week, then before you go home each night pop the lessons for tomorrow into the master and print it out. (If you print it on 3-hole paper it can go directly into a binder.) It looks neat, it can contain extra directions for a sub, and it very quick to do. If you have to do previews for the year, do them on the computer, too. Most provinces have websites with the curriculums. Copy and paste from these and then change what you want. It’s so much easier than making them up from scratch! If you want different things next year, just cut and paste to make changes.

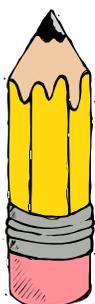
“Make a file for each child where you can put anecdotal notes at least once a week. For marks on tests and math speed sheets, use a data base and then you just pop the marks in. These can be sorted in many different ways and brought up on the screen for an individual child when you have parent conferences.

“If you search the web or belong to a listserv you can collect a great amount of information. Keep this information in computer files labeled with theme names, poetry, seasonal ideas, etc.”



## Sharpening Pencils

“If a pencil breaks throughout the day, they quietly go to the pencil bucket and get a pencil. I make sure the pencil bucket is just a little bit high to them, and points are up. That way, they don’t search for one with a good eraser. I also sometimes say “Don't pick and choose, just grab and go!” The kids were saying this to each other by the end of the year. Or, if a less than desirable pencil emerges, “You get what you get, and don't throw a fit.” They love to say it when someone is whining!”



# Math

## Review of Addition and Subtraction to 10

“The first couple of months in Grade 2 I want to get the children adding and subtracting to 10 quickly without using manipulatives. I show them ‘tricks’ to use. Here are some of them.

- adding 1, 2 and 3 by counting on
- subtracting 1, 2, and 3 by counting down
- doubles and doubles + 1
- ‘4 stories’ showing that addition and subtraction are related
- using a ‘mental’ number line”

*Barb*

## Question Table

“During my math time, the kids work independently. This is a hard time, because the kids are really needy. They have a lot of questions or don’t understand. I have the question table where I have 4 chairs open. Kids come to the table when there is a free seat open. We brainstorm what they can do while waiting (i.e. skip questions to the next, ask a friend, read a book...) I have found that many kids have the same questions. I explain it to a small group of kids with the same question so I don’t have to repeat myself many times.”

## All About Me Math

Have the students make a math ‘All About Me’ book.

They can include measurement...height, weight. They can measure the length of their feet or fingers.

Teach centimetres, metres, grams and kilograms.

You can make a counting ‘All About Me’ book by having each page a different number, and writing the following:

I have one \_\_\_\_\_. (mouth, family, school, bicycle)

I have two \_\_\_\_\_. (eyes, parents, cats, hands)

I have three \_\_\_\_\_. (notebooks, favourite TV shows)

I have four \_\_\_\_\_. (friends, grandparents, pencils) etc.

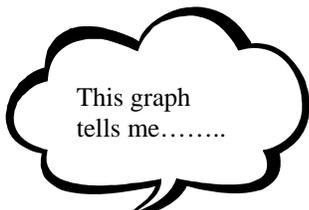
Have them expand on each idea.

You can make many class graphs telling about the children...the colour of their eyes or hair, number of people in their family, how they get to school, how many older siblings, how many went to this school last year, how many know how to swim, etc.

Have the children count the letters in their name...graph the numbers, find some manipulative in the room to represent the letters in the name. Make up math stories about who has more or less letters than a specific name.

## The Talking Graph

“Another favourite twist to graphing is our ‘talking’ graph: I have a little guy who peeks over our graph... we call him Grady Graph. The graph question is written in a speech balloon pointing towards Grady. When the graph is complete, the children interpret the graph and each child is given a speech balloon to write down one fact. (It can be something like: ‘Most people chose \_\_\_\_’ or it could be a math sentence like:  $6 + 7 = 13$ ... anything they get from looking at the graph.) The speech balloons are attached around the graph as if Grady is talking.”



This graph  
tells me.....

## The ‘Magic Ten’

“Spend time every day drilling the combinations of 10 until the children are very confident with them. When you begin to add numbers with sums over 10, find the ‘magic ten’ hiding in the question.

$$6 + 5 = 6 + 4 + 1 = 10 + 1 = 11 \quad \text{and} \quad 9 + 6 = 9 + 1 + 5 = 10 + 5 + 15$$

# The Popcorn Ghost

“Cut out a ghost shape from a posterboard. Show the ghost and have kids estimate how many pieces of popcorn it will take to cover the ghost. Record their answers and discuss the numbers...for example, which numbers are even; which are odd; which number would come next in this pattern: 25, 30, 35, \_\_\_; which estimate is the largest; which is the smallest; which estimate has 3 tens; etc. Allow each child to take out a handful of popcorn. Give each child a blank piece of paper to count their popcorn pieces into groups of tens. The children circle each group of ten pieces of popcorn and leave the leftover 1's uncircled. They then write the number that tells how much popcorn they had by writing the tens and then ones. The children then take unifix cubes and make groups of ten to match their circles and have loose unifix cubes to match the ones. The children take their popcorn to the ghost and glue it on. This works best with an adult using a paintbrush to smear the glue around a small area at a time. The children put their unifix cubes together... all the tens in one group and the ones in another. After the popcorn ghost is complete, the children watch as the teacher takes the loose unifix cubes and puts them together to make as many groups of ten as possible. Then the teacher takes the groups of ten and makes as many groups of hundred as possible. When it's all complete, the children easily see the number of popcorn pieces on the ghost.... the hundreds, tens, and ones. I usually go back and glue eyes and a mouth on top of the popcorn pieces. The kids love this activity and the finished ghost is so cute.”



# Money, Money, Money.....

“One of my favourite things is to put a number of coins in a small metal or plastic container. I tell the kids how many coins are in the container but not which coins. As they take guesses at which coins are in there we get lots of practice adding a variety of coins as we total each guess. This is very simple and much more fun than just counting money.

“Another thing I do is attach triangle shaped construction paper to straws. On each one of them I write the value of a coin - 1 cent, 5 cents etc. I have the kids sit in a circle and pass the coins out to various kids starting with the largest value coin. We start counting with the largest coin value – each child says that amount until we reach the child with the next pennant. Example 25, 50 ---Reach pennant that says 10--- 60, 70 pennant that says 5--- 75, 80 reach pennant that says one-- 81,82, 83. Then to change the activity I just take up the pennants and re-distribute.”



*Hilda*

“One of the activities my kids loved last year was working with coins and dice (1 or 2). You put a pile of coins in the middle of the table. Each child in turn rolls the dice, and takes that many pennies. If they have more than 5 pennies, they exchange them for a nickel, then a dime, etc. The first one to have one dollar is the winner. You can choose which coins you want them to work with. You can do the same with \$1 and \$2 coins.”

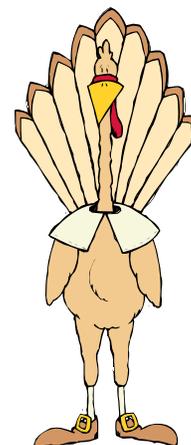
*Jeanne*

# Homework Bingo

“I have a 100 square grid (write and wipe kind). On the top I wrote ‘Play Homework Bingo’ and on the side I numbered each row. Once a child brings in their homework they write their initials in an empty square. Once they are all filled I pick a letter and number. That person that is in that square will get a prize.”

*Kim*

# Thanksgiving



## Scratch and Sniff

“We combine the five senses with Christmas and Thanksgiving. I have a picture of a fruit bowl full of delicious fruit. This kids get to use magic markers to colour their picture. After they have coloured, we put glue that dries clear on the different fruits and pour either koolaid powder or jello powder and let it dry. When you are finished, you have a scratch and sniff picture. Oranges smell like oranges, lemons smell like lemons, etc. The kids love it and the smell lasts forever.”

“I am using this poem for our main Thanksgiving poem. I am going to have each child write a piece of the poem and then illustrate it for an activity i.e., for all my hands can hold child will illustrate something they like to hold such as a kitten, apples red illustration of apples. I will reconstruct the poem on a large bulletin board with the heading Thanksgiving.”

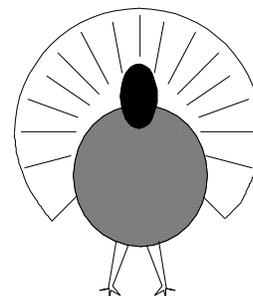
*Susan*

## Make Turkeys!

“We did a project for Thanksgiving using coffee filters. I had the students fold the filter in half, then in half again (It looks like a slice of pie). They opened the filter and cut out  $\frac{1}{4}$ . Then they took markers and coloured wedge shaped stripes from the point out to the outer edge of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  piece in any colour except black or brown. They need to try to make solid colours. They folded the filter a couple of times and dipped it into a shallow pan of water. Leave it in about 5 seconds. Unfold the filter and lay it on newspaper to dry. It should be dry in a very short time. The colours will run.

“We then made turkey legs, a round body, and a head and attached to their filter which made the feathers. When hung in the window they looked like suncatchers.”

*Cindy*



## A Thankful Mural

“You can do a ‘Thankful’ mural. Make a large turkey body (big circle), feathers and have the children colour them with crayons. Tell them to make them colourful. Then have the children list a few things that they are thankful for on the feathers. They should do this with black markers. You can add corn husks - made from graph paper and brown lunch bags - around the border. On graph paper draw two ears of corn. Have the children color each square using yellow, orange, red, brown. Cut off the bottom of the lunch bag. Make long ‘fringe’ cuts on the part of the bag that is left. Then fold it over and attach the 2 ears of corn.”

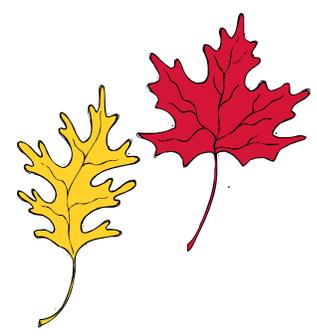
add a head. Make big tail

### A Time for Thanksgiving

A time for thinking...  
about good things,  
like food, and home, and  
friends.

A time for wishing...  
for a world,  
with peace that never ends.

# Autumn Art



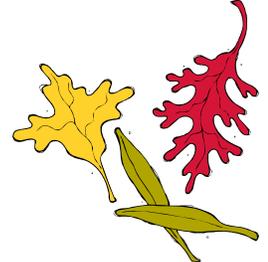
“Draw 4 leaf outlines on 12x18 white paper with black felt pen. Wet the paper. Drip orange, yellow, red paint onto wet paper. Swirl to mix colours. Let the sheet dry. Cut out the leaves. Beautiful fall colours will result. Hang around your door, or make a wreath by gluing them into a circle.”  
*Kris*

## A ‘Multi-Media’ Tree

“My favourite fall art activity is a multi-media fall tree. We start by doing a sunset on construction paper with watercolours (in the style of Harris with bands of colours), then draw and colour bare trees in the foreground with crayons using 'y's and 'v's, then add autumn coloured leaves using either tissue paper squares over the end of a pencil or gluing on small triangles of coloured construction paper. I glue them on larger construction paper pieces for stability and to act as frames. They were quite beautiful last year and drew many comments when I mounted them in the hall.”  
*Elizabeth*

“For fall art I have the children trace their hand and part of their arm onto paper. Then find bricks (my old school was built out of them) or a textured wall board. Put the paper on the brick and colour with brown crayon to create a texture of bark. Have the children cut the tree out and put it onto construction paper (blue). The children can make the grass using finger painting on the bottom part of the page before gluing on the tree. Then the children dab on leaves using sponges (small ones that have two sides grabbed into a clothes peg for a handle) using a couple of different colours. Let dry and hang up. They look great and meet parts of the BC Visual Arts IRP.”  
*Ann*

## Leaf Prints



“One of my favourite activities is to make leaf prints. Have the children collect leaves of various types of trees. Then have them paint the back or veined side of the leaves and then use them to make prints on manilla paper. Usually you can make 2 or 3 prints before needing to paint the leaf again. I have used this with kids from kindergarten up to grade 5 and they seem to enjoy it.”

## Fall Suncatchers

“Trace a large leaf onto wax paper using permanent marker. Then the children put down layers of fall coloured tissue paper squares onto the wax paper using liquid starch. Go out beyond the leaf shape. The leaf must be filled with tissue paper - a couple of layers is great. Let dry, cut out the leaf and remove the wax paper. Hang on windows and they look wonderful. Do not use brown or dark green tissue paper. They are too dark and take away from the orange, yellow, red and light green.”  
*Ann*

## Beautiful Trees

1. Either you or the students cut out the bark of the tree w/ brown construction paper and glue it onto paper. The paper the project will be done on is shiny, white paper. (I don't know if it works on construction paper).
  2. It is better if individually the students come up to you to carry out this part b/c it could be messy. They either drop or squeeze out various (fall leaf) colors of paint onto the paper( where the leaves would be).
  3. Next, you put a piece of wax paper over the paint and the students with their hands press down on the paper.
  4. Take the wax paper off and allow the paint to dry.
  5. That's it!! The result is a beautiful, colourful fall tree that when displayed impresses everyone who walks into your classroom.
- Carol*

# Newsletters to Parents

“In our weekly newsletter my team partner and I always include what we're doing in our subjects: reading - phonics, sight words; writing, spelling, math, science, social studies, computers, art etc. Then, we devote a portion to school news such as Picture Day, fundraisers, assemblies, etc. We also make it a point to recognize students who have reached certain goals such as reading 100 books, and we write thank you notes to parent helpers and guest speakers. We include information on homework and ideas the parents can try to help their children learn at home.

“To write up our newsletter I made a basic template that has the subject headings, fonts and size set so that doesn't have to be done every time. Then this week's business is filled into the blanks. It's sent home on Mondays. We run extra copies so we can give back copies to parents of children that join our class later in the year. We also give a copy to our principal so he has a running record of what's going on in our class. He says they are very helpful when he get questions from parents.

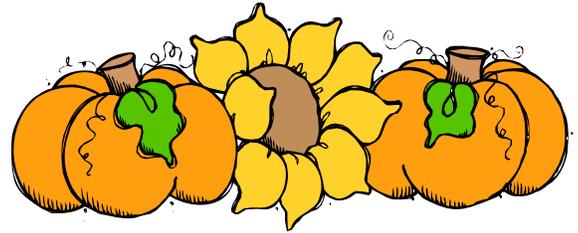
“We've had very positive comments from parents. The newsletter takes time to create, but we think the benefits of better communication and fewer misunderstandings are worth it. It must be, we've done it for over 20 years!”

*Linda*

“I do a 2-3 page weekly newsletter. Some columns I include are:

- homework for the week
- words of the week list
- monthly theme with suggested activities
- books which will be read
- the school's Word of the Week with definition
- Student news and stories (which the children contribute).
- Happy birthdays
- A short article which I write (called Dear Parents.) In the article I address questions parents have asked, ask for volunteers, parent support to solve general behavior problems, thank parents for support given, or give suggestions for parents to help their child at home.
- Upcoming events

“It sounds like a lot, but once I figured out a format it didn't take long to put together. Some items were added because parents requested them.”



*Liz*

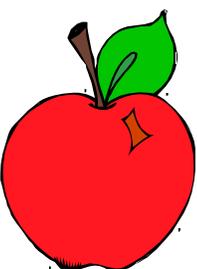
“At our school, class newsletters are sent home on Mondays so parents know to look for them. I try to keep them to one page so that parents will read them – and they usually do.

1) I write about what we've been learning – notice the past tense. I rarely say that ‘This week we're going to . . .’ I do that purposely. I don't like to ‘foreshadow’ the week just in case we get off schedule and it doesn't really happen. So I say things like ‘Last week we began our unit on \_\_\_\_\_.’ Then I write about what we did.

2) I also write some parent education. I try to help them understand the what and the why of my teaching. It helps parents be more supportive if they understand.

3) The other thing I include briefly is reminders (e.g., book orders are due).”

*Janet*



“I have a small, hallway bulletin board solely used for messages to parents. On it are things like copies of my newsletters, party sign-up sheets, class schedule, etc. Last year I just called it ‘Parent Bulletin’, but this year I am going to try to think of a catchy title. I thought of calling it ‘Communication Station’, but it's not really a station!”

***Help stamp out, eradicate and abolish redundancy!***

# Open House

“Before Open House I send home notes asking the parents to send in one of their child’s tee shirts (they get them back after open house). On white bulletin board paper, I trace the children’s arms up to just past the elbow. The children cut them out. I give each child a white paper plate on which children make a likeness of their faces, using proper skin eye and eye colour. They glue on strands of yarn for their hair. I pin the arms inside the sleeves of the tee shirts. Just before dismissal on the day of Open House, the children put their tee shirts over the top of the chair. I tape the arms to their desks. I staple a second paper plate to the face plate leaving a large opening on the bottom. I slide the faces over the top of the seat, using scotch tape along the bottom to make sure they don’t fall off. I put a piece of stationary at each child’s desk.

“When the parents come in, they love finding their ‘children’. While the parents settle in, they write a note on the stationary for their child. After the parents leave I write notes to those whose parents don’t show up. The parents take home the children’s bodies, and the next day the children are excited to find notes from their parents (or me) in their desks.”



“Last year, I video taped ‘a day in the life of a Grade Two class’ and got footage of my kids doing all sorts of things. I included songbook time, PE, each child telling what they like best about school, lunch in the cafeteria, working hard in math, silly stuff, etc. It was about 20 minutes long and I played it continually throughout the open house. Our open house is a ‘come and go’ event so the parents could stand and watch it at any point. I’d rewind it when it finished and start it over. The parents loved it and many asked to borrow it over the next few weeks to take home and make a copy. It was so easy and so rewarding. I’ll definitely do it again this year.” *Sara*

## Music

“As we learn songs I hand out a song sheet with the words. The children can illustrate the sheets, and then they put them into a binder (or duotang). There are lots of sites on the web where you can get the words to songs – try <http://www.kididdles.com/> and then go to the ‘Musical Mouseum’ for almost 2000 songs. The children can add each song to a table of contents so they are easily found in singing time. The children will love this book, and often take it out to read and sing at other times, too.”

“Most children are not familiar with classical music. Classical music can become a favourite if it is played often as background music. You can play a Mozart tape, for example, in silent reading time, in art, or as transition cues. Play a classical tape in the mornings as the children come in. You may be surprised at which children enjoy this most! Remember that different music creates different moods. Tell the children the name of the selection you are playing and the composer so that they become familiar with the different composers and the different music.”

## Teach Drawing

“I model drawing for my students starting on the first day of school. I ask them what they want me to draw a picture of. One year I had to draw a moose! (YIKES) I showed them how I start with a pencil so that I can erase if I need to. Then I ask them what we might find around a moose. Mountains, trees, water, grass, etc. So I draw some of that in. Then I colour the whole picture always asking their opinion and what they think would make the picture better. By the time the picture is done – two or three days later – the entire picture is coloured. There are no white spaces left. Then I tell them that every time they draw a picture I don’t want any white space left. If a student finishes a picture of a person and that is the only thing on the page I ask questions to make them think. Such as: Can a person float in air? What is your person doing then? What did you forget? Where is that person/animal? In the house? outside? What would help me know that? I always tell the students before they start a picture I want to be able to tell what is happening in your picture without having to ask. By the end of the year I only have to ask, “What did you forget?” High expectations!”

# Behavior Management

*“I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanized or dehumanized.”*

*Haim Gigot*

1. Make it very clear and consistent.
2. Make it simple.
3. Put the onus on the children to remember guidelines.  
'What are you supposed to be doing right now?'
4. Work on mutual respect. ('Whose turn is it to be talking?')
5. Repeat, repeat, repeat. Every time you line up, briefly set expectations.
6. Explain. Get them to explain it to you. ('Why don't we run in the halls?')
7. Proximity is powerful. Keep the ones who have trouble close to you.
8. Develop a 'teacher look', or some kind of non-verbal reminder for situations where you can't stop and talk (assemblies, etc.)
9. Develop a relationship with each child. If they know you like them, they'll be much more inclined to go along with you.
10. Develop clear, predictable routines so the kids can take some responsibility for their tasks.

*Betty-Ann*



## Lining Up and Going Places

“I play ‘If you talk, I win’ game with the kids. The deal is to walk to our destination without making a sound. If I talk, the kids win and vice versa. You'd be surprised how hard it is for me to keep quiet when other teachers want to talk as we pass by. Some teachers try to get me to talk much to the delight of the kids. We play this quite a bit at the beginning of the year (but not every time we're out in the hall.) There are no prizes but I keep a tally count score on the board. They absolutely love this game and beg to play it. It's really quite funny if you think about it!” *Kathy*

“Here's another management trick I use for lining my kids up. In the past, my kids would come running full speed to the line after recess so they could be first. So after about the first week of school, when I get to know personalities, I create a line list. I have two lines that are usually boy, girl, boy, girl. I try to separate those that I think will talk or play in line and put my ‘busier’ kids toward the front. The line leaders change everyday according to the helpers of the day. We practice lining up in our new order for the first few days. They learn who stands in front of and behind them. I teach them to leave space for the kids who stand in front of them, in case they are dismissed to line up before others in their line. They usually look for a marker on the wall next to where they line up, to help them remember to leave space. I change this line order every quarter for a little variety!”

“If you number your children in the rollcall sequence, they can line up according to the number. You can make any number the leader and then number 1 goes after the last number. For example, if there were 5 kids and number 4 was the leader, the children would line up 4, 5, 1, 2, 3. They could line up with even numbers first and then odd numbers, in reverse order, etc.”

## A Tattle Box

“I took an old shoe box and converted it into a wonderful ‘Tattle Box’. I told my class that as long as someone was not crying, bleeding, or cursing, whatever they had to say could be written down and stuffed into the box. By the time a month passed, many children decided that they really didn't want to take their free time to write out a tattle.”

## Salami!

“I say **SALAMI** (Stop And Look At Me Immediately). The silliness of the word makes them pay attention.”

# Teaching Manners

Teach:

- introductions (for example, introducing a new friend or parent to teacher)
- greetings
- telephone manners
- giving and receiving gifts
- sharing or borrowing supplies in the classroom
- taking turns
- asking permission
- respect for adults
- not interrupting others
- listening manners - waiting to say 'excuse me' when two other people are having conversation



a

## Short and Simple

1. **Respect people and things.**
2. **Cooperate**

“That's it. Short and simple. First the kids brainstorm what they think the rules should be and we usually end up with a huge list. Then we talk about how all the rules they came up with really fit into one of these 2 rules. As for discipline, I'm just very upfront with my expectations and the consequences and, most importantly, I'm consistent with how I deal with problems.”

*Paula*

“The schools I have worked at have had broad rules and I've used those as my classroom rules. For example, my current school has 3 rules:

- Be safe.**
- Be responsible.**
- Be respectful.**

If you teach these rules thoroughly by modeling them and discussing them, children can become good decision makers. They will internalize the rules and make good judgments about being safe, etc. (Well, most of the time anyway!) I use lots of praise – particularly early in the year – when children are making good decisions. I don't have any set consequences. It all depends on the situation and what seems appropriate.”

*Janet*

## Children With ADHD

“Children who suffer from ADHD are living a life of negativity. The first thing that I would recommend to you is to try to focus on the positive instead of the negative. These children are used to receiving punishment and often become negative attention seekers. This then perpetuates the problems that they have. Here's what I do:

1. Realize that the children are suffering too. No one likes them (sadly enough - this often includes the teacher), they are always 'in trouble', and they are likely failing miserably.
2. Realize that these children don't have brains that function the way yours probably does. They oftentimes can't see past their impulse to do something in order to focus on the consequence of their actions. Then, having to focus on a whole day can be too overwhelming for them to even contemplate.
3. I find at least one positive thing about them and make that my focus. If he's constantly talking, allow him opportunities to do so - maybe as the class messenger.
4. I've found that behavior contracts work extremely well with ADHD children. If I break our day into smaller, more manageable chunks of time, the child is able to focus on one chunk at a time. for example: our chunks are the following - arrival and up until recess; after recess until lunch; after lunch until SSR time; after SSR time until dismissal. I have a form that the child and I work together to complete and that child sets individual goals (with my help) and we determine a reward for accomplishing that goal. For example, for every time period that the child achieves his goal (maybe staying in seat or raising hand before speaking but only one goal at a time), he gets a stamp on the contract. After 10 stamps (or whatever) he can choose a prize.”

*Marie*

# Pumpkin Time!

*There are so many activities you can do with a pumpkin! This is a great mini-theme.*

## How Many Seeds?

“Cut the top off. Allow the class to scrape out the seeds. Clean the seeds and let them dry on newspaper at least 2 days.

1. Cut black construction paper into 5cm. x 8 cm. rectangles – approximately 150.

2. Cut a VERY large pumpkin out of orange paper, and put on bulletin board.

1. Show the class the seeds that they removed from the pumpkin. Each child will have the opportunity to estimate how many seeds there are. Write each child’s name and their estimate on the board. The person who is closest wins the pumpkin.

2. Show the children how to glue 10 seeds on each rectangle, 2 vertical rows of 5 seeds.

3. After the glue is dry, have the children come up and help you put the rectangles on the pumpkin. Try to get 10 rectangles in each row. Work together to find the final tally.”

## A Pumpkin Day

“I have a pumpkin day in October when everyone brings in a pumpkin. We spend the whole day with various pumpkin activities.

1. Sort the pumpkins as many ways as you can: size, color, stem or no stem, bumpy or smooth, painted or not, etc.

2. Weigh the pumpkins using a food scale or a balance scale. Put the pumpkins in order from smallest to largest.

3. Measure (using string) the outside of the pumpkins and put them in order from the skinniest to the fattest.

4. After all the comparisons are done, I put the pumpkins in the middle of the circle and we play a game where I choose a pumpkin in my head and the children try to guess which one it is by my clues.

5. I always bring in two pumpkins—one big and one small. We graph which one we think will have the most seeds and how many we think are in each. Bring in probability – use words such as ‘likely, not likely, most likely’. I cut the pumpkins and we count by putting the seeds into piles of 10 on a paper that has 10 circles on it. Each time we fill the paper, we know that we have 100 seeds counted. Every year I have done this, the smaller pumpkin has the most seeds!

6. We cook the seeds in the oven or you could send them home with a student to be toasted and we eat them. .

7. Make pumpkin cookies, pie, or bread with the pumpkin or just cook it and add butter or brown sugar.

8. I give every student an award for his/her pumpkin at the end of the day. Categories could be: biggest, smallest, bumpiest, roundest, etc.

## Pumpkin Pie in a Baggy

“Have each of your children spoon a few pieces of baked pumpkin (see below) into a Ziplock sandwich bag. Have each child measure 1 tsp. of sugar, a dash of allspice, and a dash of cinnamon into his bag. The children press the air out of their baggy and seal them shut. Then have the children squish their bags to mash the pumpkin and to mix the spices. Cut a corner from each bag and let the children squeeze the pumpkin mixture onto graham crackers. Top with Cool Whip.”

## Baked Pumpkin

“Cut off the top of a small, washed pumpkin and discard. Cut the pumpkin into quarters. Scrape out the pulp and seeds. Place the pumpkin quarters, skin side up, in a baking pan. Bake at 325 for 1 hr. or until the pumpkin is tender when pierced with a fork. Allow the pumpkin to cool slightly and then remove the skin. Note: I put the cooked pumpkin through the blender, which made it easier for the children to mix in the bag.”

## Pumpkin Math

1. Estimate the weight of each pumpkin. Graph the pumpkins by weight.

2. Estimate how fat the pumpkin is (circumference). The students cut a piece of string and place it around the pumpkin like a belt. Graph the strings, as too short, too long, just right.

3. Estimate the number of seeds inside.

4. Graph: Where did you get your pumpkin? Store, patch, grew it yourself?

## Pumpkin Language

“Make a list of interesting adjectives that describe the pumpkins. Then, as it is carved, find more words for the insides – the pulp, the meat and the seeds. Read books about pumpkins. Write stories about pumpkins – fact and fiction.”



# Hallowe'en

## A Haunted House

"Draw a haunted house on 12" x 18" gray construction paper. Use uneven lines and lines that are not straight to make it look spooky. Cut three sides of the doors and windows so that they open. Glue spooky pictures in behind the doors and windows. Make ghosts, jack-o'lanterns, witches, etc., that will surprise your friends!"

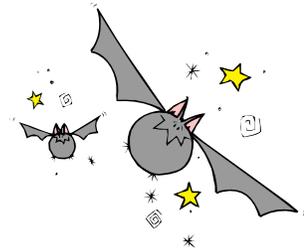
### The Twelve Days of Hallowe'en

On the first day of Hallowe'en  
My good friend gave to me -

1. An owl in a dead oak tree
2. Two trick-or-treaters
3. Three black cats
4. Four skeletons
5. Five scary spooks
6. Six goblins laughing
7. Seven pumpkins glowing
8. Eight monsters shrieking
9. Nine ghosts a-booing
10. Ten ghouls a-groaning
11. Eleven witches cackling
12. Twelve bats a-flying

### Five Batty Bats

Five batty bats  
Were hanging 'neath the moon.  
"Quiet!" said the first.  
"The witch is coming soon."  
"She's green," said the second,  
"With a purple pointy nose."  
"Black boots," said the third,  
"Cover up her ugly toes."  
"Her broom," said the fourth,  
"Can scratch you - that I know!"  
"I'm scared," said the fifth.  
"I think we'd better go."  
Five batty bats  
Escaped into the night.  
"Dear me," said the witch.  
"That's a scary sight!"



## Hallowe'en Crayon Resist

"Have each child design and colour a Hallowe'en object or scene on white paper. Instruct them to colour with heavy, bold strokes. Have the children put on a smock or old shirt to protect clothing. Lay newspapers under the drawing. Using very thin black paint, brush lightly over the entire picture. Let it dry. The wax from the crayons resists the tempera paint, yielding a spooky effect."

## Lollipop Ghosts

"These are great party favours. Drape a kleenex onto the top of the lollipop. Tie under the lollipop with a piece of yarn or fasten with an elastic. With a thin felt-tipped pen, draw a scary ghost face."

## Garbage Bag Ghost

"Crumple several sheets of newspaper into a ball about the size of a basketball. Cover with newsprint and place in white plastic garbage bag. Pinch together at the 'neck' and wrap yarn around it several times. Tie yarn in a knot, then a bow. Use a marking pen to draw a spooky face. Place a strip of masking tape at the top of head. Poke a hole under it and string yarn through the hole for hanging. Hang some from your classroom ceiling!"

## Slime Factory

*Note: I haven't tried this – if you do, let me know how it works! J*

There's a mad scientist in the classroom! When unwitting students get their hands on this gross stuff, it oozes delightfully through their fingers.

### **Brew 1**

3/4 cup warm water

1 cup Elmer's glue

Several drops of green food colouring

### **Here's the magic formula:**

Mix the ingredients for Brew 1 in a medium-sized bowl. In a large bowl, mix the ingredients for Brew 2. Pour Brew 1

### **Brew 2**

4 teaspoons borax

1 1/3 cups warm water

Note: Since borax is toxic, be sure to keep the slime away from very young children!

into Brew 2 but don't stir. Let it sit for 1 minute, then lift the congealed slime out of the bowl. Divide it up so that each child has his or her own piece of slime to play with. Provide a ziploc bag for each student to store the slime in!

# Spiders – A Mini-Theme

*The following ideas have been compiled from many teachers – too numerous to mention!*

## Learn About Spiders

Discuss that spiders are arachnids and are oviparous (lay eggs). They eat insects. Arachnids have eight legs and two body segments, a head and an abdomen. (Insects have 6 legs and 3 body segments.) We label body parts and the lifecycle of a spider. I like the children to use the vocabulary we have learned such as arachnid, oviparous, abdomen, etc.

We do sequence cards for the lifecycle of a spider. We glue the sequence cards of the lifecycle of a spider in our journals to write about.

Go to <http://www.stemnet.nf.ca/CITE/spiders.htm> for lots of information!

“Last year, I captured a Yellow Garden Spider and took it to school. We put it into an aquarium and I made a frame for it out of sticks. Our spider made webs and laid an egg sac for us. And it did finally die like Charlotte did in the story. It was quite sad, but a very good learning experience.”

Observing a Real Spider – It is interesting to observe a real spider close up and in a non-threatening way. Find a spider and place him in a clear jar. The children need assorted magnifying glasses or a magnifying tripod. Let the children freely watch and observe the spider. Stress to the children beforehand the importance of not shaking the jar or harming the spider in any way and that the spider will be let go again after class.

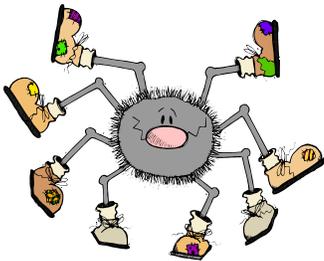
“At the end of our spider unit, we bring ‘Spiderman’ in and discuss spiders. No, he does not come in a costume, he is a man from a local college who knows a lot about spiders. It has always been an excellent presentation, real spiders and all.

“I haven’t tried this, but my principal has. She said that if you find a large spider web outside, you can spray it with hairspray against a black paper and the web will appear on the paper. Sounds like a great idea to try!”

Go outdoors on a short field trip to see if you can find spiders. Take magnifying glasses. See if you can find beautiful elaborate webs, too. Note the difference in the ways webs are formed. How are they attached?

## Language Arts

Thumbprint Spiders - I usually have the children do this in their journals and then write about spiders. They make their thumbprint with paint or stamp pad and then draw 8 legs on it. You could put two thumbprints together to make it have two body parts.



Spider booklet - We make a spider booklet with spider facts and our observations on each page.

“Halloween is fast approaching and time to start our spider unit. My partner and I have our Grade Two students do a small research report on the spider of their choice, make a model and do a presentation for the class. They do all of the work at home and take about three weeks. They turn out wonderfully! We video the presentations and show them at parent teacher conferences.

Go to this website to find a very simple websearch project for primary students. This is a good project to teach the children how to use the internet.

<http://webtech.pioneer.resa.k12.ga.us/bfulgham/spiders.htm>

Read “Charlotte’s Web”.

## Spider Art

Egg Carton Spider-Cut cardboard egg cartons into six sections, each having two egg cups. This will create a spider with two body parts. Paint the egg cups and glue on eyes. Using four 12" pipe cleaners, poke the pipe cleaners into the egg cup (you can make holes in the abdomen section with a hole punch) and bend them to form a set of legs.

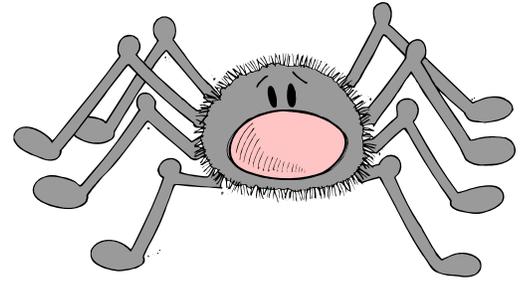


## More Spider Art

Glue spider web- have students draw a web on black paper and then trace it with glue. When it dries it looks like the web from *The Very Busy Spider*.

I have the children trace and cut two circles, fold and glue on 8 thin strips of paper and attach a string and hang from ceiling.

“Paint large styrofoam balls black. Once they dry.....use black pipe cleaners for legs and stick them in the balls. Then glue ‘googly eyes’ on. Afterwards, take a large needle and thread yarn up through the center to hang them. REALLY cute!”



“Another Spider activity we have done is to read some books on spiders, and then take a sheet of blue or black construction paper and a white crayon to draw spiderwebs after a brief demonstration on the board. They add details such as leaves, and 3-D paper spiders and tiny egg sacs and spiderlings. They always turn out really neat!”

Learn how a spider web is formed and draw a web.

“I like to make a spider web on my bulletin board with string and then have the kids make a spider out of a 2 sections of egg carton with 8 legs. Also with yarn I’ve built spider webs in the corner of the doorway. Using quilt batting spread thin is another way to get a spider web looking effect. I have the kids make a drawn spider web with a piece of paper to practice using a ruler for drawing straight lines. They connect the 4 corners through the middle and then connect the middle of the paper edges through the middle then they lay the ruler at the middle dot and connect two lines and then rotate the paper and connect each dot using the ruler to stay the width away from the center. Then they lay the ruler along each of those lines and connect the same lines higher up and keep going until the paper is full of an orb web. Then they make thumb print red spiders on their webs.”

“Something I did that turned out cute was stuff a paper lunch bag with paper, turn over the top and staple shut. Paint it black. Take 8 strips of black paper and fold accordian style and glue on as legs. Cut out eyes and mouths from coloured construction paper and glue on. We hung them from the ceiling and they looked great!”

Dip marbles in white paint and roll them across a large black paper to make a web.



## Other Activities

Make a class web - Have the students sit in a big circle. I start with a ball of yarn and then roll it to a child while holding on to my end. That child then holds the yarn snugly and rolls the ball to another child and so on and so on. When everyone is holding part of the yarn, you have a big spider web!

This is a way to show that spiders must wait for the food to come to their web - they don't go out ‘hunting’. Have each student draw a web on a 1/2 piece of paper or on a paper plate. They choose a location to place their web - somewhere on the carpet.

Then I use a hot air popper and pop some popcorn - with the lid off. The popcorn, representing the bugs, flies through the air (though not as far as you'd expect) and lands on some children's webs. Those kids (spiders) get to eat. You can then have them choose another place to put their web - it's not surprising how they all move into the zone the popcorn landed in. You get much fewer hungry spiders this time!

Make spiders with Oreos and licorice legs. The kids love them.

This long address will take you to a site that shows different spider webs and tells you how to capture a web.

<http://www.eecs.umich.edu/mathscience/funexperiments/agesubject/lessons/beakman/spider.html>

# Student Portfolios

“I will start out with the organization and management of it. If you aren't organized, you'll go nuts! First, I have a cubby for each child. After grading their work, they place the papers in the appropriate cubby.

“Each Friday, we do what we call a ‘Portfolio Pick’. I have modeled this process over and over again. I can't say enough for modeling exactly what you want a process to look like. Believe me, I learned the hard way, and during our first few Portfolio Picks I had papers flying (literally) everywhere! What the children do is gather their work out of their cubby and find their own special spot to work in where they go through their pile one paper at a time. After going through them once, they go through again and make their pick, something they are particularly proud of.

“I suppose I should take a step back here! Before we choose anything for our portfolios, we create a rubric as a class. This rubric changes each term. One of our classroom rubrics looked something like this:

1. I got the correct answers.
2. I thought carefully about my answers.
3. I worked neatly.
4. I did an interesting, well drawn picture.

I wouldn't have more than 5 things on your rubric. The rubric is a nice thing to refer back to when the children are busy working.

“When the children are making a pick for their portfolio, they keep one of the reasons in mind from our rubric for the reason why they picked that piece. Once they've made their pick, they fill out a form that I made on the computer. It's just a fill in the blank that looks something like this:

I am proud of this because \_\_\_\_\_.

They just choose a reason from the rubric (we have talked about what each rubric means) and write it in the blank. They staple the form to their paper and place this pick in a hanging file folder that each child has. This is where their portfolio picks go (different from cubby). The rest of their work goes in their Friday Folder and home.

“Last year, I had the children decorate a large piece of construction paper and make a folder. This year, I'm thinking of using duotang folders. We use our portfolios in our Student-Involved Conferences, and the papers were a little hard to manage in the decorated folders.

“Sometimes I have something specific in mind that I want the children to put in their portfolios. For example, I have writing samples at the beginning of the year, middle and end. I want them to include this. Autobiographies that they wrote...these are a definite keeper. If it is something that I picked for them, I hand out a form that says, “Miss G has chosen this piece because \_\_\_\_\_”. They staple it to their piece and include it in the portfolio.

“Portfolios are such a powerful tool. There was a noticeable change in the quality of my students' work after keeping portfolios. They take such ownership in their work and work toward more quality work with the thought in mind that this may be something that they can include in their portfolio and show off at Student-Involved Conferences later in the year.”

*Holly*

## Write a Letter!

“In Grade 2 I set up ‘mailboxes’ for different fairy tale characters such as Red Riding Hood, Goldilocks, the Wolf, etc. Then as we had read and discussed the different fairy tales, the kids would write letters to them. It was really cute. They would write to Goldilocks and fuss at her or ask Jack for some of his golden eggs. On Friday afternoon, I would collect all the letters and reply to them as if I was the character. Then on Monday they would have their mail waiting for them. I tell you I have never seen kids SO EXCITED about reading and writing! After awhile I had to take the mailboxes down because they were writing way too many letter for me to answer! They also had to use correct letter form (this was part of my English lesson on parts of a letter). I told them if it wasn't in the right form their letter would not be answered.”

*Nicole*



# Websites

*For those subscribers who are new to the newsletters, here are a few 'tried and true' favourites.*

**<http://members.aol.com/MGoudie/index.html>**

Marcia has a wonderful collection of links to great sites.

**<http://www.janbrett.com>**

Undoubtedly the best author's site out there. Great things to download for your classroom. The children will love her alphabet and activities to accompany her books, all with her marvelous illustrations.

**<http://atozteacherstuff.com/>**

All sorts of teacher 'stuff'!

**<http://www.stemnet.nf.ca/CITE/>**

Newfoundland Gander Academy's theme related resources. Wonderful!

**<http://www.worksheetfactory.com/>**

Download a free program that will make up math worksheets for you at the click of a mouse. This is a great resource (and Canadian – from a BC teacher).

**[http://www.mathstories.com/atop\\_12.htm](http://www.mathstories.com/atop_12.htm)**

Math Word Problems for Grade 2 and 3

**<http://www.eecs.umich.edu/mathscience/funexperiments/agesubject/earlyelementary.html>**

An excellent site with dozens of science experiments beginning with a simple question. Then there are hands-on activities and experiments, resources and conclusions – in an interesting primary format.

**<http://www.puzzlemaker.com>**

Make your own word search, crossword, and other puzzles to use in your classroom. Use the student's names or your vocabulary words. These look impressive and are very easy to do.

**<http://www.k111.k12.il.us/lafayette/4BSBppt/index.htm>**

A new PowerPoint Presentation which presents an overview of 4-Blocks for a gathering of teachers.

**[http://www.k111.k12.il.us/lafayette/fourblocks/word\\_wall\\_grade\\_level\\_lists.htm](http://www.k111.k12.il.us/lafayette/fourblocks/word_wall_grade_level_lists.htm)**

The Kindergarten, Second and Third Grade Word Wall Lists used at one school.

**<http://www.wfu.edu/~cunningh/fourblocks/>**

Pat Cunningham's website on the Four-Blocks.

**<http://www.disciplinehelp.com>**

Then go to "Solutions for Handling 117 Misbehaviors". This is an excellent site that you may find very helpful if you are seeking strategies to help a student with behavioral problems.

**<http://www.nea.org/helpfrom/growing/works4me/manage/index.html>**

This site offers strategies by which you can strike a balance between freedom and discipline. It offers valuable tips covering Attendance, Behavior Control, Prevention, Staying Ahead, and Inclusion.



# Odds and Ends

## Student-Created Puzzles

“I create word searches for my students all of the time. (Go to <http://www.puzzlemaker.com>) I think it makes them more aware of the letter order in words. My students also make crossword puzzles. I give them a list of words to choose from (usually 15-20) They might be vocabulary and spelling words or words that go with a unit of study. I did this in small groups the first time but after that they did them on their own, although some still needed help. I gave them a paper grid with 1/2 inch spaces. They write the words on the grid putting one letter in each space. After they have 5 or more words we look it over to make sure that the words only touch on the joining letter. I then number the down words with a red pen and the across words with a green pen. I turn their paper over and write Across and list the clue numbers. Down and list the clue numbers. They write the clues for the words. Usually this is a sentence with a blank or an opposite clue. Sometimes it is a descriptive clue. I create the crosswords on the computer and make a word bank of the answers. This has turned out to be a very high interest project for my kids and I make a booklet out of all of the crosswords for each child. The other first grade teachers get a copy too and often use them to review with their students.” *Bonnie*

## Great Tips!

“One tip I love is to use baby wipes to clean desks. It's a quick, easy, and efficient way to clean up the weekly grunge that accumulates - especially when there is no time to clean in a ‘fun’ way.” *Krista*

“My school is having a day where we can meet with other teachers and share ‘tricks’ that have really worked for us. These turn out to be extremely productive!”

“During Guided Reading I wear a special necklace. When I am wearing my guided reading necklace they are not allowed to talk to me, unless it is an emergency. I usually plan to have a parent or other adult in the room during this time. If they forget and come over to the table, I grab my necklace as a way to remind them not to interrupt. This has worked extremely well for me.” *Sherri*

“Last year I made a wish tree. Put requests for various items on apples (or leaves) on a wish tree, either just for your room or maybe your grade level. Parents can remove the apple or leaf and fill the wish. This could be left up all year so that teachers could add to it as needs cropped up. Ideas for the Helping Apple Tree: ziplock bags (the kind with the zipper tab), sticky notes, index cards, markers, coloured pencils, film; also add baby wipes, hand sanitizer, kleenex, paper cups, and coloured pencils. I try to think through each month of the year and write down items that we might need. For example, in February I like to have doilies. So I ask for them now and put them away until February. That saves me a trip to the store and a little money in February! Depending upon the income level of your parents, I've also put up requests for a game such as Candy Land (for rainy day recess) or a specific CD that I've been wanting for the classroom. Some parents are very happy to buy these bigger items. I also put out these wishes at parent conference time.” *Boni*

## Go ‘Shopping’ For Books

“I going to use heavy duty zip-loc freezer bags. I have experimented with these, and loved it! The children ‘shop’ for 5 books at their ‘just-right’ level and these go in their bag, along with a bookmark and their reading rings and then into their desks! We shop once a week for books. Their just-right level is determined by the running records I take. My books are leveled using Fountas-Pinnell's levels. Neat, clean, and convenient! Now, the book rings.....I used tag board to print cards, hole punched them and set a basket of them where the kids could reach them easily. They have to read their book to themselves, a buddy, and me (or a volunteer) with approximately 95% accuracy. I have them quickly and orally answer a few comprehension questions, state the main idea in one sentence, and then I sign my initials to approve on a card, record the level and the title. They complete the card front and back, draw and colour a small illustration, and add it to their metal ring. When school starts, I will figure out a way for each child to have a hook to hang their ring on since they will get quite large before the year is over! The cards are really simple...name, date, title, author, level, main idea, and on back, they circled either ‘great book’, ‘good book’, ‘not-so-good’ book, or ‘awful’ book. I managed to print three to a sheet. It is a good way for them to keep a record of their self-selected readings.” *Brenda*

# More Odds and Ends



## Happy Birthday

“I have a box that is decorated like a present. In it are things that I've collected from Hallmark and other places: Examples: birthday paper crowns, birthday pens, a birthday placemat, birthday watches (paper), a little flag that sits on their desk that says Happy Birthday, birthday stickers, pencils, etc., a happy birthday seat cover that I painted, and little happy birthday signs that sit on their desks. They can pick anything out of the box that they want to use for the day. I have done this with Grade One and Grade 4. It was funny, but many grade 4 boys loved wearing the paper crowns. Some would use every item, and some would be more picky.”

*Emmy*

## Getting To Know You Web

“On the first day of school each year I have all of my students sit ‘like pretzels’ in a circle on the floor. I go first and tell the students three things about myself: “My name is Mrs. Blaess. I have two cats and two dogs. I like to go swimming and read” I then toss a yarn ball to one of the students carefully explaining that when it's their turn to toss the ball they have to make certain they hold on to the string tightly. Each student then gets a turn to tell three things about themselves and to toss the ball. The ball eventually is woven across the circle. This activity is great for building community spirit because as the students are taking their turns I explain how they each have an important role to play and if a single person lets go the entire web is damaged. Depending on the attention span of the group you can reverse the web when everyone is done asking each student to recall the name of the student who passed them the ball. I have done this activity with various grade levels and everyone has loved it.”

*Fran*

## Brainwork!

“I always have BRAINWORK on the board for the class to begin after they've placed their markers in the Attendance/Lunch chart. This gives me time to read notes from home, check in homework folders, help the student of the day get the Math board ready. Brainwork is always review material. For example:

1. put words in alphabetical order
2. count on from a number
3. an addition or subtraction question
4. the cat is sad (2 errors – rewrite correctly)
5. Draw a picture

As kids finish, they are to read silently or write in journals. The timer goes off after 10 minutes, we go over the answers together, and proceed with Math meeting.”

*Susan*

## All About Me!



“I am preparing to repeat a project I did a couple of years ago. I have ordered enough empty books for each child in my class to have one. I am going to send one home with each child and ask the family to help the child write a book about him/herself and return it to school to share with the class. Many add snapshots, drawings, all sorts of things to truly personalize their book. I ask that they be returned by the end of September. As the books come in, they are shared with the class. These books will be stored together in a tub in our classroom library and returned to the child at the end of the year. When I did this before, the kids loved looking at each other's books. Maybe I will do one on me this year....that should be a scream!”

*Sue*

## A Time Capsule

“The first day of school my Grade 2 students make a time capsule. They are asked to bring an empty paper towel roll and begin their first day by decorating a piece of construction paper that will cover the roll with their name and a picture. A good part of the rest of the day is spent completing the contents of the time capsule. They include a tracing of their hand, a picture of themselves, and a questionnaire which asks about their favourite books, movies, TV shows, friends, etc. It also asks them to write three things that they want to learn this year. I measure each student with a piece of string and the string is also put into the time capsule. I collect them all and hide them until the last day of school. It is fun to remind them of their time capsule goals throughout the year. Reopening them on the last day of school is a much anticipated event!”

*Alyson*

Dear Colleagues,

There it is – issue #1..... Please pop a sheet into the fax machine or write a note by e-mail and let me know what you think. Say.....”I would like to see more of.....” “I liked the .....” “The .....part is useless” “Next time .....” - or say whatever you like. I do need your input to improve. It has been longer than I want to think about since I actually taught Grade 2.

I would really appreciate it if you added a note to tell me your favourite tip so I can pass it on to the rest of the subscribers. Also, what are you doing for themes in November and December? I would like to begin thinking about ideas for issue #2. I have also been writing other Grade 2 material for the last several months. I will need feedback on that, too....

I hope you have a great beginning to the new school year and a terrific bunch of children coming through the door!

*Jean*

**"My First Poem"**

This week at school in Language Arts,  
We studied Poetry.  
“It's your turn now,” Ms. Cratchett said,  
“To write a poem for me.”

So here I sit, it's after school,  
I'm at the kitchen table.  
I want to get this over with  
As quickly as I'm able.

Now every poet uses words like  
“Lo,” “forsooth,” “sublime.”  
The reason, if you ask me,  
Is they need them for a rhyme.

So they come up with weird old words  
That no one uses now,  
That make the students cough and gag  
And teachers say, “Oh wow!”

Here's a few more antique words:  
“Bemoan,” “methinks,” “foray.”  
I'm not sure what they really mean,  
I think I'll get an A.

Well, that's enough, I'm done with this,  
I hope you didn't choke;  
This poem might be a classic  
Years after we both croak.

*Bill Dodds*

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