USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AS A MODEL FOR CREATIVE WRITING: A HANDBOOK FOR GRADE TWO TEACHERS

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by

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to investigate children's literature as a major resource for enhancing the creative writing potential of young children. A major premise is that children learn to express themselves in writing most effectively through exploring and modelling the writings of others. The review of the literature indicates that there is a strong relationship between the study of children's literature and creative writing development. The literature examines how the study of children's literature promotes writing development in areas such as form and pattern, content, motivation, and vocabulary development.

The result of this study was the production of a handbook designed to foster the use of children's literature in creative writing programs. A sample selection from the handbook was given to two teachers to use with their grade two students. A description of the procedure followed, the observations made, and the effective results of the activities are discussed, along with some of the writings of the students.

The introduction to the handbook provides a rationale for the use of children's literature in writing programs. Also presented in the handbook is a list of suggestions which teachers will find helpful as they pursue in their classrooms the writing activities mentioned in the handbook. The major portion of the handbook consists of

the presentation of several prose and poetry selections with ideas for incorporating and applying them in creative writing programs. Each prose selection is presented with a brief annotation, an introduction which points out the strengths of that selection for writing development, a detailed description of some writing activities which can be suggested to students, and, in most cases, a bibliography which can be used to further enhance the same strengths presented by the selection discussed. Each poetry selection presents the poem itself with suggested activities, based on the form, pattern or content of the poem.

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CHAPTER I

NATURE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Is the writing potential of primary students being fully realized in our schools today? Research by Calkins (1986) indicates that it is not. She states:

> ...in our schools, our students tell us they don't want to write.... The bitter irony is that we, in schools, set up roadblocks to stifle the natural and enduring reasons for writing, and then complain that our students don't want to write. (pp. 3-4)

Graves (1983) expresses the same concern. He states:

> We ignore the child's urge to show what he knows. We underestimate the urge because of a lack of understanding of the writing process and what children do in order to control it. Instead, we take the control away from children and place unnecessary road blocks in the way of their intentions. Then we say, "They don't want to write. How can we motivate them?" (p. 3)

Hipple (1985), Hauser (1982), and Milz (1980) state that writing skills must be nurtured and encouraged early in the primary grades, and yet many teachers in our schools neglect writing development at these early ages. Haley-James (1982) believes that many teachers feel that creative writing skills are better developed in the elementary grades where the abilities to spell, to punctuate, and to use correct grammatical forms are more fully developed. Many teachers also believe, says Haley-James, that children must be taught to read before they

can be taught to write. These attitudes may, in fact, be a result of a weakness in the Language Arts program which is currently being used in most classrooms in Newfoundland. An examination of the Nelson Language Development Reading Series, which is prescribed for the primary language arts curriculum, reveals that while some effort is made to address the area of creative writing, the major emphasis continues to be on reading skills. If creative writing is to be done in the classroom, then the teacher must develop her own program with very little guidance from the prescribed language arts curriculum. Too often the work done on worksheets and in reading skillbooks is equated with writing, and writing of this nature may be the only kind of writing done at all. Calkins (1983) maintains that if creative writing is done in the classroom, it is usually done "just before the Halloween party, when the film projector (breaks) down, or during the last minutes before afternoon bus call" (p. 82).

Children need much more than this. Basal readers, skillbooks and impromptu writing periods do not inspire children to write. Good books, stories and poetry can. Children need teachers who know this and who can guide them into meaningful and rewarding writing experiences. Learning should be a pleasurable and meaningful experience. For many children, however, the process of developing writing skills is a very frustrating and

meaningless one. As more and more researchers explore the complex nature of the writing process, a great deal of new information continues to surface concerning how creative writing skills should be introduced, explored, and expanded. Sloan (1980) believes that literature must be used here and she argues that "the child who never thrilled to words will remain indifferent to reading or writing them" (p. 136). Literature is genuine creative thought and expression. It has the power to captivate and motivate children to read and write, and it is very important that teachers understand this and utilize it in the development of writing skills.

Applebee (1977), Wilcox (1977), Sloan (1980), McConaughy (1980), Jett-Simpson (1981), and McClain (1986) are among the many authors who have written that literature has been found to be helpful in the development of writing skills. Children's literature can provide models for students to follow as they write. It can provide a lot of the prerequisites necessary for success in writing development and, as well, can remove many of the blocks which so often cause children to approach writing with reluctance and anxiety.

Rubin (1980) states:

> Primary-grade teachers have a great responsibility, because what they do in school may influence students' attitudes towards writing all through their lives. (p. 257)

It is very important, therefore, that young children who are building a good foundation for writing be given every

advantage in order to ensure not only success in writing, but joy in trying to achieve that success. Children's literature is a great resource which can help children find worth and satisfaction in their writing endeavours. Teachers need to be cognizant of the interrelationships which exist between children's literature and creative writing development. They must exploit this relationship to the fullest so that their students will grow and mature in writing, confident in the fact that they are using one of the best possible resources for the enhancement of writing skills. It is the intent of this study to examine the use of children's literature as an effective means of enhancing writing skills in primary children.

Statement of the Problem

The creative writing abilities of many of our province's primary grade children are not being given a chance to flourish and grow. The main reason for this is that teachers are given very little direction for developing creative writing skills. Evidence to support these statements can be found in the Program of Studies issued by the Newfoundland Department of Education and in the Nelson Language Development Reading Series, which is the prescribed language arts program for provincial schools.

The Program of Studies acknowledges that the intention of the language arts program is to assist students "in increasing their power over the language processes of listening, speaking, writing, and reading through the exploration of a wide range of linguistic forms and functions" (p. 18). It states that a whole language approach should be used, but then adds that a literature component should be included "as reading for entertainment and for information" (p. 18). It is this writer's contention that if writing is to be learned through a whole language approach, literature should play a much more central role than that stated in the Program of Studies.

One of the language arts texts prescribed for grade two is Magic-Story Box, published by Nelson. An examination of the teacher's guidebook which accompanies this text reveals several points concerning writing development. In the twenty-one units of work described in this guidebook, only seven suggest writing activities, and three of these consist of fill-in-the-blank workbook activities. In the remaining four units, there are some suggestions given to children for writing activities. However, there is very little direction given to teachers which will enable them to help their students organize their thoughts and ideas. Different models of writing can accomplish this. Basal reading texts contain a limited number of models, compared with the many and varied models

which can be explored in children's literature. As well, in order to cover the units prescribed for this reading text, a teacher would need to spend approximately eight weeks on the activities offered. Since only four units contain creative writing activities, this seems like a rather long time for students to be writing so infrequently.

Although the guidebook does list the titles of some selections from children's literature, no suggestions are made about the way such selections could be used to enhance writing development.

The aboye observations clearly indicate that if teachers wish to develop the creative writing talents of their students, they will have to look elsewhere for needed directions. The preparation of the handbook at the end of this study is intended to meet this need, to provide for teachers a practical solution to the problem of finding much needed resources for creative writing.

Need for the Study

Recent research emphasizes the necessity of strengthening the relationships which exist between the language arts. New research findings clearly show that the study of children's literature has a positive effect on children's ability to write. An examination of the basal reader, Magic-Story Box, which is one of the grade

two readers published by Nelson Canada Ltd. and prescribed for use in our province's schools, reveals that there is very little emphasis placed on the development of creative writing skills. Since so few ideas are given in the basal's guidebook for writing development, teachers must look to other resources for activities and ideas which will initiate, promote, and enhance student's writing. Teachers, therefore, need practical guides which demonstrate and describe how forms and patterns, content, and language from children's literature can be modelled by beginning writers. It is for this purpose that the handbook at the end of this study was developed. It is this writer's belief that more should be done in our primary grades to foster creative, imaginative thinking and writing. The selections and activities suggested in the handbook are designed to meet the needs of teachers who are ready to make the literature-writing connection, to provide teachers with practical ideas for writing based on literary selections, and to provide for young writers rewarding and satisfying experiences through initial creative writing ventures.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of this study:

1. To show how children's literature can be used to motivate and stimulate children to write.

2. To show how forms and patterns in children's literature can be modelled by children in their own writing activities.
3. To develop for grade two teachers a handbook which will assist them in planning successful creative writing programs for their students, using selections from children's literature as models.
4. To test one of the selections presented in the handbook with two groups of grade two students and to present subsequent observations and results regarding writing development.

Design of the Study

The study is divided into two parts. Part I consists of Chapters I, II, III, IV, and V. Chapter I presents the nature of the study, the problem, the need for the study, the objectives and the design of the study. Chapter II presents a review of the related literature. The procedure followed in the development of the handbook is discussed in Chapter III. Chapter IV presents a sample of the contents of the handbook. A literary selection is given, and the suggested activities described in detail. This selection was given to two grade two teachers to use with their students. A discussion of the results and observations is submitted, as well as some of the writings.

of the students. In Chapter V, some recommendations directly resulting from this study are presented.

Part II of the study consists of the handbook. Included here is an introduction to teachers which provides background information about the study and establishes a rationale for the use of literature in creative writing development. It also gives some suggestions to teachers concerning the use of the handbook, and a discussion of some points to remember about the teaching of writing. The major portion of the handbook consists of the presentation of several literary selections (children's books and poems) with ideas for incorporating them into creative writing programs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The role of children's literature in fostering improvement and growth in the writing process is a concept which, for the past few years, has been receiving a great deal of attention in writing research. This review examines this research in order to present to the reader a rationale for developing creative writing skills using children's literature as a major resource. It presents an examination of the features of children's literature which have been deemed essential to the development of effective writing skills and shows the strong relationship which exists between both literature and writing.

Children's Literature and Writing

Children's literature provides many aesthetic experiences for children. Many teachers in our schools recognize the importance of literature in developing good listening and reading skills. The enhancement of these skills is a very valid reason for reading aloud to children and exposing them to the world of books, and the development of such reading and listening skills has long been established as benefits of a good literature program.

Unfortunately, the benefits which accrue in writing skills as a direct result of literature are often overlooked. Many teachers have not yet recognized the capacity of literature in helping students cultivate their potential in the area of written expression.

Children's literature and creative writing have a very valid relationship. Tway (1976) writes, "Children's literature is someone's creative writing" (p. 2). Literature is writing; it is the result of creative thinking and expression and there is no better way to teach children to write creatively than to expose them to literature, to the best that our written language has to offer. Wilcox (1977) echoes these feelings:

> Given the interaction between reading and writing, what a bonus to learn the techniques of writing while being continually involved with poetry and stories that demonstrate writing craftsmanship. (p. 551)

Children's literature can be used effectively as a springboard for creative writing. More and more authors who discuss writing growth and development acknowledge the role which literature can play in enhancing writing skills (McConaghy, 1985; Watson, 1986; Graves, 1983; Smith, 1983; Stewig, 1983).

Mills (1974) cites a longitudinal study conducted from 1968 to 1972 in which primary grade children in experimental groups were exposed to various literary models for certain periods of the school year. The objective of the study was to see if exposure to

literature through listening, re-telling, dictated stories and individual compositions had a significant impact on the development of writing by the time these students reached the fourth grade. Mills reports that there was indeed a significant difference between the control and the experimental groups. She says that the experimental group, which practised literature-based writing, made considerable gains in both cognitive and affective learning.

Children's literature should be the hub around which creative writing programs revolve. Wilcox (1977) believes that "exposure to good literature is probably the best experience future writers can have" (p. 549), and continues by saying that "exposure to the fine writing in many children's books can constitute the foundation for a young writer's unique self-expression" (p. 550). Watson (1980) expresses these same views. He believes that while reading, listening to, and discussing well-written pieces of literature, children have an opportunity to develop an awareness of the impact written expression can have on the reader.

Most teachers are already familiar with a large selection of children's stories and poems. What they need now, state authors like Calkins (1983) and Applegate (1978), in order to promote writing development, is to make the connection between writing and literature. Teachers must see how stories and poems can be used for

motivating, initiating, and expanding writing skills. They need to know that in children's literature there is a wealth of information and knowledge that can be used to enhance writing. And teachers also need to know and understand that children "need opportunities to explore writing as a means of learning about writing" (DeFord, 1980, p. 162). Exploring the vast amount and types of writing already available to them through literature can serve to heighten written language experiences. But exactly what is it about children's literature that can help students learn to write more effectively?

Researchers have found literature helpful in several ways. Many authors have discussed some of these ways and the following review draws attention to their ideas. In essence, they state that literature can help students develop a sense of story and provide them with knowledge of the forms and patterns found in different genres; it can provide experiences for children, giving them a flow of ideas about which to write; it can provide the motivation to write; and it can help students develop an extensive vocabulary and a feel for the rhythm and flow of language.

In using literature to enhance the development of these areas which are so vital to growth in writing, the writer hopes that the process of learning to write will become a most memorable, enjoyable, effective, and rewarding experience.

Forms and Patterns

In order for children to write a story, they must have some knowledge of what constitutes a story. Many authors have expressed a belief that through exposure to the stories found in literature children will develop a story schema or sense of story (Smith and Bean, 1983; Sadow, 1982; Rand, 1984; Whaley, 1981; McGee, 1982; Applebee, 1977). They agree that this knowledge of story can then be utilized by children as they create their own stories. Through literature, children have access to many selections which can serve as models, providing them with a great deal of information about the structure and forms of poems and stories.

A sense of story begins to develop at a very early age. Applebee (1978) presents evidence which suggests that a sense of story is achieved by children as early as two and a half years of age, and possibly earlier. Reading aloud to children has been determined an essential factor in the development of a story schema. King (1980) looks at young children's tacit knowledge of written language forms and writes:

> ...intuitive knowing develops as children participate with adults in enjoying pieces of literature. As they join in chanting rhymes and jingles or repeatedly share favorite poetry or stories with adults, children become sensitive to...the structure of often-told tales (The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood); they develop a sense of the path stories should follow....They develop an intuitive sense of story, an internalized schema,.... (p. 165)

King continues by saying that children's early success in reading has for a long time been perceived to be related to their knowledge of story. Now, she contends, "we are beginning to see its relevance for early writing" (p. 165).

Many aspects of story knowledge are learned through exposure to literature. Children learn how stories are organized; very simply, they learn that stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Golden (1984) says this can be seen in the following story written by Mike, a first grader:

> Once in China there was a Siamese cat who ate fat and then he got fat. Good bye. (p. 581)

She believes that "reading aloud and storytelling should be done daily" since "children can discover links between reading and writing as teachers create awareness of story language, events, and character descriptions..." (p. 583). Golden also states that through experiences with stories, children develop a knowledge of setting, character, and plot which constitute the three basic elements of a story.

McConaughy (1980) discusses the many components or categories of information found within a story schema which help children gain a sense of story. She labels these as a setting, an initiating event, the goal, a number of attempts, a series of outcomes, internal responses, and reactions. She labels theme, plot and resolution as "higher order" components which override all the others (p. 158). These categories, says McConaughy,

represent what students remember most about stories they encounter. They provide a structure for comprehending and recalling information which can be used by children as they write their own stories. Not all of these components are remembered or used to the same extent or in the same order by all students, since sense of story is developmental.

Golden (1984) describes writing samples done by primary children which indicate that sense of story is developmental. She states that in examining these writing samples, one becomes aware of "the increasing complexity of stories across grade levels" (p. 582), emphasizing the fact that individuals do use concept of story in their writings and "this concept develops further as the individual matures" (p. 578).

Brown (1977) also concurs that concept of story is developmental and looks at factors which affect its progress. He states:

> The child's sense of story, being developmental, would appear...to influence differentially--because of age, experience with stories and facility with language--the reception and production of story. In other words, the extent of a child's sense of story or internalized representation of story...affects the ability to retell and create stories. (pp. 358-359)

Literature can provide experience with stories, and follow-up discussions of these stories can help children enhance their language. As children mature in their reading and writing abilities, a reflection of this maturity can be seen in their writing styles in such

things as, for example, more elaborate event structures. McConaughy (1980) describes how children will progress from simple description schema which provides the basic information about events and actions, to information processing schema at which level inferences supply missing information that fits logically in the story, and finally to social inference schema, the higher level, where story components are added to explain the motivation behind the character's actions (pp. 159-161).

Not only does exposure to literature provide children with the knowledge of how stories are organized, but according to King (1980), it also helps children develop "a concept about how certain characters should behave" (p. 165). Such information reveals that, within a story schema, predictions and expectations play a major role. Stories such as Little Red Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs, for example, help children draw the conclusion that foxes and wolves are evil characters. Exposure to other stories in which these animals are characters helps children to predetermine how they will act in these new stories, and also helps to determine their actions in stories written by children. This explains what Hacker (1980) means when he says that children process information they read or hear according to prior knowledge. Prior knowledge, broadened and deepened through extensive exposure to literature, helps

to develop a set of expectations about story components such as events, actions, and characters.

Applebee (1977) discusses how six and nine year old children perceived characters such as lions, foxes, fairies and rabbits. He concluded that such characters offer children consistent patterns of behavior, and children are therefore able to set up expectations. These expectations, he insists, are of utmost importance because they

> shape encounters with new stories, providing the child with a framework which governs both general orientation (toward spectator or participant roles) and specific assumptions about such features as sequence, character types, tense, linguistic forms, and themes. In Piaget's terminology, every new story will derive its meaning from the way it is assimilated to this system of expectations, just as the system itself will change, accommodating itself to the unique characteristics of the particular story. Thus the mechanism is a progressive one, providing both continuity and growth. (p. 346)

Sadow (1982) also believes that through the experiences of reading and listening to many stories,

> ...people develop a set of expectations which serves as a guide as we organize story information, somewhat like slots that we fill as we listen and read. (p. 519)

A set of expectations helps children to predict and process stories they read and, when they compose stories of their own, they can draw on this information as well. Golden (1984) relates an example of how prediction aids the development of story setting; "A little cottage in a deep, dark forest" signals a certain kind of story (p.

578). Golden also adds that expectations and predictions can be used in the structure of plot, since some plots follow a certain series or chain of events, such as those stories where the youngest son leaves home to go on a journey (p. 579).

Knowledge of story, then, can be gained through much exposure to literature and the information gleaned through reading or listening to stories or poems can help provide children with a good basis for structuring their own writing. In this way, all the language arts work together to provide a good foundation for writing success. Gay (1976) discusses the interrelationships which exist between the language arts, and notes:

> Reading aloud is inseparably linked with learning to write. If elementary-school teachers fail to read aloud to their students often, regularly, and for reasonably long periods of time, those students are going to be severely handicapped in learning to write. (p. 87)

The more we learn about story schema, the more we realize that Gay's warning is well-founded. It is of great importance to total language development that children be exposed to story structure before they can read or write, since a knowledge of story will facilitate learning the processes of both reading and writing.

Extensive exposure to literature will also help children appreciate and understand the many different forms and patterns of stories and poems. Borrowing or

copying these forms and patterns is a very important step in writing development.

In the years before coming to school, children learn an amazing amount of knowledge and information, and one of the methods by which they learn is imitation. Children learn to speak, for example, by imitating adult models. This has prompted many educators to look at the role imitation plays in writing development. In his article, Flanigan (1980) quotes Barth, who says, "just as the child learns to speak imitatively, so he learns to write imitatively" (p. 212). Imitation, according to Flanigan, is "a necessary activity in the growth of a writer" (p. 212). Young children who are just learning to write often have difficulty in getting their thoughts down on paper. This may be so because they have not had active role models in writing in the way that they have had models in speaking. Children's literature can help solve this problem. In reading aloud to children from the vast amount of literature available, we are exposing children to what they need in beginning writing development. We are exposing them to forms and structures and patterns of writings which they can imitate in their own work.

Sloan (1980) believes that if we want children to write then we must give them literature to imitate. She states:

> A proven way to remove writer's block and free children to write is to provide them with forms and patterns to shape their own expression. (p. 135)

Wilcox (1977) also believes that literature is an ideal resource which children can use to pattern their own writing. She writes:

> Through good books prospective writers are introduced to form and structure which they will imitate when they begin to create their own stories and poems. (p. 550)

The most effective way to provide knowledge of forms and structures is to steep children in quality literature. In creating an environment where children can experience many forms of written language, teachers and parents are laying a most effective foundation for the realization of writing potential.

Children must not have to wait until they are independent readers in order to learn about the many forms of written expression. It is very important for them to be introduced to prose and poetry at very young ages. Applebee (1977) states that many young children obtain a tacit understanding of some of the conventions peculiar to certain forms even before they come to school. He made this statement based upon the stories told by two and five year old children who adopted three simple narrative conventions when asked to tell a story. These conventions were a formal beginning ("once upon a time..."), consistent past tense, and a conventional ending ("...happily ever after") (p. 343), all of which echo those used in fairy tales. The most common form of story read to young children is the fairy tale so it is not surprising that children would assimilate parts of this

form. What is of significance is the fact that these children were not specifically taught this knowledge, just as they were not specifically instructed how to speak. Such knowledge was learned unconsciously, and learning took place because an environment existed which stimulated that learning and which constantly and continuously presented materials necessary for that learning, i.e., spoken words and the reading of fairy tales.

Children learn intuitively a great deal about their language. Just as they unconsciously learn about some of the conventions of the fairy tale form, so too can they learn about other forms. Moffett and Wagner (1976) caution teachers about simply telling students what the forms and patterns in stories are. They state that children must have an opportunity to discover this on their own because when they

> ...steep themselves in a form and share it with others, they come to their own understandings of it, which are far more solid than any verbal overlay that describes something they have yet to experience and internalize. (p. 306)

Telling students, for example, that a limerick is a humorous poem of five lines in which lines 1, 2, and 5 are a rhyming triplet and lines 3 and 4 a rhyming couplet, will do very little to motivate students to write a limerick. Children will benefit more from exposure to limericks which have already been written. Saturating the environment with limericks written by Ogden Nash, Edward Lear and David McCord will no doubt prove to be a more

enjoyable, effective and stimulating way to introduce the form of a limerick. In this way, children are given the opportunity to assimilate as much as they can about this form, and they are able to determine for themselves any unique features existent in that form.

It has been stated that children can learn unconsciously the forms and structures of stories and poems. This does not mean to imply that all learning takes place in this manner or that this is the only way in which children should learn about forms and structures. In many cases children may not see certain features or forms in a piece of writing until they are pointed out. The teacher must carefully guide the child to see them. After a great deal of exposure to a particular form, there must be time for discussion. During this discussion, the teacher draws upon what the children have learned about the form and guides them to see significant details or features of the form that they might have missed. Gordon and Braun (1983) believe that quite often "children may not be aware of their own knowledge" (p. 116). Discussions with teachers and peers serve to bring this knowledge about form and structure to a point of greater understanding where it can be utilized and applied in subsequent writing activities.

In providing literary experiences for children, it is important that teachers expose them to more than one kind of literary genre. They should, state Burns and Broman

(1979), make every effort "to give children experiences with a variety of literary forms" (p. 460). It is through exposure to various forms that children learn the differences between parables and fables, myths and legends, realism and fantasy. It is in seeing and understanding the differences that attention becomes focused on the features of these forms. Chambers and Lowry (1975) also believe in the importance of experiencing the many forms of written expression. They maintain:

> ...expository writing, fanciful writing, poetry, and all the examples of how man communicates with other men through the medium of putting words on paper are available to him. For the fledging writer this experience is invaluable! (p. 354)

Huck (1979) reiterates the importance of having a variety of forms upon which to draw when children want to write. She says:

> Just as a child may choose to create a picture with paint or collage or scratchboard; so, too, may he choose a folk tale, a fable, or a poem as the best form for what he wishes to write. This is the young child's way of indicating that he has assimilated the idea of form and can accommodate his writing to create it. (pp. 743-744)

Wilcox (1977) says that children enjoy the pourquoi stories from folklore and she presents the following example by a student named Eric, whose story closely follows the form of Kipling's "The Elephant Child":

How the Whale Became Large

> Once there was a whale and he was very, very small. One day some fishermen caught him in a net, but he was very strong so he started to stretch and finally got away. But from his stretching he became thirty feet long and that's why whales are so big. (p. 552)

McClain (1986) also reports a successful attempt in helping children learn to write through imitating forms of literary selections. She describes a study in which student teachers used Peter Rabbit (Potter, 1971) and In a Dark, Dark Wood (Melser and Cowley, 1980) as models whose forms could be copied. The first book is a traditionally structured picture book with setting, plot, and characters strongly developed, while the second represents a predictable pattern book in which a repetitive pattern is developed. The following is an example of a primary student's writing completed after listening to and discussing Peter Rabbit:

> Once upon a time there was a bee named Stripy. He lived in a hive with his mom. Stripy wanted to go outside when his mom wasn't looking, he flew out a hole in the hive. Stripy was thirsty. He saw a bowl of water. When he dived in to take a drink, he couldn't get out. He yelled and yelled. His mom heard him and saved him and Stripy never went out of the hive again. - The End (p. 4)

The following example shows what another primary student wrote after listening to and discussing the second book, In a Dark, Dark Wood:

> ONCE, in a big, big city there was a big, big garden. In the big, big garden stood a big, big house. In the big, big house was a big, big room. In the big, big room was a big, big shelf. On the big, big shelf was a big, big chest. In the big, big chest WAS A ..... tiny kitten. (p. 6)

McClain concluded from writing samples such as these that children can effectively use good books in order to pattern their own writing. In assessing the major objective of the study--that of determining which type of book motivated and elicited more effective writing responses--McClain found that the pattern book received the more favourable rating.

Donham and Icken (1977) submit that "nearly any picture book can offer the teacher starting points for creative activities" (p. 555). Zoophabets (Tallon, 1971), for example, is an alphabet book containing a collection of made-up beasts. A pattern is used to describe the names of the beasts, what they eat, and where they live. Children would enjoy imitating this pattern and creating similar books. Another book mentioned is That's Good That's Bad (Lexau, 1963), in which happy and unhappy events are alternated. Such a book "provides an easily followed pattern for narrative writing" (p. 556). Donham and Icken's article is an annotated list of picture books, each of which can be used in patterned writing, and each of which can effectively help students develop writing skills.

Bent and Plaskon (1983) describe the success of a project which saw children writing for other children. Elementary students used "concept" books, "issues" books, fairy tales and nursery rhymes from which to draw on in order to formulate their own books. According to the authors, the concept books were especially good.

Stewig (1983) discusses what he terms "parallel plot construction" to help children understand the development of plot. Children look at a story and discuss its step by step development. Then they write their own story along the same path but use different characters and different incidents and situations.

Wason-Ellam (1986) describes an imitating procedure called "literary patterning". Children are expected to use an existing literary structure in which they substitute their own words and ideas for those of the author's. The following example is cited from the book Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? (Martin, 1970):

Text: Brown bear, brown bear what do you see?
I see a red bird looking at me.

Storyteller: Brown bear, brown bear what do you see?

Child 1: I see a black witch looking at me.

Storyteller: Black witch, black witch what do you see?

Child 2: I see a (adjective)?, (noun)? looking at me. (p. 35)

Moss (1980) writes about a program for gifted children which involved the production of a unit of modern

fables. She describes how exposure to and discussions about fables lay the groundwork for the development of the children's own fables. She claims that units such as this one, which serve to focus attention on a particular form of literature, tend not only to promote and encourage good writing skills, but also to afford more understanding of literary forms.

Petty et al. (1976) discuss the many forms of poetry that children may pattern. They state:

> There are several short and rather structured forms...that children particularly enjoy using because the form itself creates a challenge and furnishes rather definite guidelines, thus helping them to achieve greater success with their first efforts. (p. 282)

Such forms include rhyming couplets and triplets, cinquain, limericks and haiku. The following example of a limerick was written by Brian Princing, a Grade two student:

> This is a pea that I ate,
> By the time I was finished, it was late
> Later no question
> I got indigestion
> and that little pea boy! I hate.
>
> (Language Arts, 1980, 57: 314)

Smith and Bean (1983), in discussing strategies which helped to develop a sense of story structure, looked at four different approaches which could help writers "guide the construction of their own original stories" (p. 295). The first is labelled Story Patterns. A short picture book such as The Wonderful Feast (Slobodkina, 1967), which

has a simple theme, is read aloud and discussed. Children discover the pattern used in the book and a sketch is made on the board. The pattern is firmly established through repeated retellings and then the children may use the pattern to write a similar story.

The second strategy is labelled Circle Stories. Visual diagrams (sketches) are again used to guide the children. For this pattern, a book such as The Runaway Bunny (Brown, 1942) is used because it illustrates a circle pattern where the main character starts out at home, goes through a series of adventures, and finally ends up back home again, usually to live happily ever after. A large circle is drawn and cut into pie-shaped sections. Drawings in each section illustrate the adventures, and the drawing of a house is used to designate the beginning and end-point. In order to promote the writing of original stories using this pattern, children are given large paper circles on which to illustrate another character's adventures (this one of the children's own making) and are then encouraged to write their own story to tell what is depicted in the drawings.

Story Pictures represent the third approach. A familiar nursery rhyme, "Little Miss Muffet", is depicted as an example of how to use this pattern to develop a format for following, discussing and eventually writing other stories. Pictures are drawn to illustrate

noticeable story grammar categories such as whom the story is about, where the story takes place, what the character is doing, the initiating event (something happens to change the action), and finally the story outcome. Such a pattern helps students remember the important events of a story and can be used as a framework in developing their own narratives.

The fourth approach is a much more complex one known as Story Maker. As in the others, a diagram is of central importance. The diagram develops in the form of a tree with many story lines. Again, the development of story structure is described where children can use the diagram as a framework to improve writing skills.

Smith and Bean (1983) conclude by saying that these approaches help children create their own stories in a very effective way, largely because the writing is begun with pictorial or visual representation to help them understand the pattern or structure of the story.

Jett-Simpson (1981), as well, looks at the advantages of using model structures in order to write stories and presents a detailed discussion of how to use the Circle Story structure as a model. She states that many children "are often uncertain about how to plan and organize the writing" (p. 293), and she feels that in following the nine steps outlined in the article, children will become more adept at organizing their thoughts and their writings. The nine steps she discusses include: (1)

Presentation of the Model Story, (2) Guidance in Comprehension of Model Story Structure, (3) Discussion of Comprehension Activity, (4) Development of a Group Circle Story, (5) Children Plan Circle Stories, (6) Children Write Stories, (7) Children Reshape Stories (Optional), (8) Children Publish Stories (Optional), and (9) Children Share Stories. Jett-Simpson uses the circle story Millions of Cats (Gag, 1928) to illustrate how this model can effectively help students overcome the obstacle of structuring their writings.

Teachers must be aware of the fact that if they want to help children write their own forms of literature, they must guide them toward an understanding of the features and characteristics of those forms so that they will have a framework on which to build their own expression. Within the many forms of literature, there are also many different creative patterns, and imitating these patterns helps to eliminate writer's block, thereby giving children the freedom to write.

Content

Merely asking children to write is not enough. The content and flow of ideas must come from somewhere. According to Gaskins (1982), "the starting point in teaching writing is the student and what the student knows" (p. 856). Students need experiences in order to write. They find it very difficult to write about

subjects or ideas which are not part of their own experiences. The ideal experiences for writing about are those which children have obtained firsthand. Petty et al. (1976) state, "a person can be creative only within the realm of his experiences" (p. 273). Matthews (1984), Logan (1985), and Fisher and Terry (1977) recognize this fact and stress the importance of developing writing with young primary students through the personal experiences they already have. While this may provide a good starting point, unfortunately the limited background of experiences possessed by some students will result in this becoming a starting point only. As Wilcox (1977) notes, "little productivity comes from boys and girls whose background is so meager that they have nothing except the latest TV series from which to draw" (p. 550). Since many young children have limited firsthand experiences upon which to base the content of their compositions, an alternative needs to be found and utilized.

Coody (1979), Cullinan (1981), Sebesta and Iverson (1975), Glatthorn (1982), and Blackburn (1984) claim that children's literature, much of which is written about life and about experiences in life, offers an excellent alternative because it provides vicarious experiences which can be used most effectively in helping to supply content and ideas for writing. Cramer (1975) agrees that literature can provide essential vicarious experiences. He states:

> The firsthand experiences of all children are limited. Vicarious experiences are essential in order to broaden the child's understandings of the world. Literature is the greatest resource available to provide vicarious experiences. (p. 461)

Chambers and Lowry (1975) discuss how experiences from literature can serve to enrich the content children use in their writings:

> ...reading from children's books is experiencing. It is a time of input. It is a time of gathering new ideas, meeting new people, visiting new and different places. It is a time for exploring new and familiar worlds. These books, therefore, provide background experiences from which the child can draw when he begins to compose. The enriching experiences a youngster gleans from interacting with literature (either read or heard) helps provide a background from which he can draw when he begins to write. (p. 352)

Rubin (1980) also extols literature and its ability to provide vicarious experiences for writing. She declares, "the more vicarious experiences children have through books, the more they will converse and write" (p. 179). Oral expression is a requisite activity for the young beginning writer. Children enjoy talking about the adventures (or misadventures) of Curious George (Rey, 1941) in the same way they enjoy talking about the circus they have just seen or the birthday party they have just attended. Literature contains many memorable characters and situations about which children can converse and, in doing so, provides ideas for writing.

Hickman (1984) discusses what she terms "The Human Context", saying that children must have an opportunity to

explore books through talk since this provides them with "a chance to explore and build meanings" (p. 281). Conversing with others about what they have read or listened to gives children a chance to broaden their knowledge of stories. They discover how others interpret actions, situations and vocabulary within a story and consequently broaden their own understanding of the story. Marcus (1977) also notes that it is essential "to let exploratory talk precede writing" (p. 146). When children are reading about or listening to content that is not of their direct experience, talking about it is their way of assimilating the new information they are learning. Hennings (1978) and Brock et al. (1977) agree with this idea and add that many stimuli such as discussion, dramatization, examples, and pictures, when used with books, promote a greater understanding of the content of the book and as a result, can have a very positive influence on the content of the stories children subsequently write.

Children are always fascinated by the world of fantasy where animals act as humans and where magical deeds are performed. When children read books, their imaginations are stretched and they are motivated to write about the experiences they have encountered in these books. Such books include The Borrowers (Norton, 1953), Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass (Carroll, 1982), and Rabbit Hill (Lawson, 1944). Through

literature, as well, children are able to gain experiences with, and to explore the worlds of, science fiction (The Space Ship in the Park, Slobodkin, 1972), dinosaurs (Digging for Dinosaurs, Swinton, 1962), foreign countries (Crow Boy, Yashima, 1955) and the historical past (Little House in the Big Woods, Wilder, 1932). Experiences gained from books such as these offer extensive and endless possibilities in supplying content for writing.

Marcus (1977) discusses the child's urge to borrow content, stating:

> The literature read to children or the stories and poems they read for themselves strike echoes in the children that they learn to use consciously or unconsciously in their writing. The content of such writing may borrow so heavily from a single story that a child's writing appears to be an adapted or plagiarized version of the original. Or the content of several stories may be woven together to create a new story. (p. 150)

Some children may employ this practice as a crutch to get their own writing started; however, it should not be discouraged. More time and more exposure to other stories and books will eventually help these children to discover a writing style of their own and to realize their writing potential. It is important that children have continuous exposure to literature in order to keep the ideas for writing flowing. The more ideas and experiences children have to write about, the more successful will be their attempts at writing.

Some children may have the necessary experiences for writing, yet still have difficulty in getting their

writing started. In order to alleviate such problems, many authors suggest that creative ideas can be cultivated from certain books. Donham and Icken (1977) discuss ways in which picture books can be used for creative writing activities. As an example, these authors cite Jim and the Beanstalk (Briggs, 1970):

> ...a witty revision of the classic "Jack and the Beanstalk". The famed giant is now an aged shadow of his former self. Toothless, with fading eyesight, and a nearly bald head, the giant is depressed. He enlists the aid of Him to restore some of his former vigor. After reading this tale, the teacher and children can suggest some other familiar fairy tales which they could revise. (p. 557)

Donham and Icken also state that children might like to write tales of reciprocated friendships after reading such stories as The Lion and the Rat (LaFontaine, 1963) and Amos and Boris (Steig, 1971) to include characters of their own choosing who help each other out of some predicament.

Fisher and Terry (1977) state that children can

> ...write their own versions of Chicken Soup with Rice (Sendak, 1962) using their favorite food and doing either the months of the year or days of the week. (p. 213)

Petty and Bowen (1967) state that children might also begin by using a character from literature with whom they are familiar to write a story about. They suggest supplying titles which children might use, such as:

> Pinocchio in our Playground
> Puss-in-Boots at the Supermarket
> A Visit from George the Monkey
> (p. 31)

These authors also show how a descriptive passage from a book can help children write selections which pay particular attention to details in order to describe a setting and to create a feeling (p. 91). The following passage, taken from On the Banks of Plum Creek (Wilder, 1937) helps to illustrate their point:

> Soon after Ma came back from the stable, the frost on the eastern window glowed faintly yellow. Laura ran to breathe on it and scratch away the ice until she made a peep-hole. Outdoors the sun was shining!
>
> May looked out, then Mary and Laura took turns looking out at the snow blowing in waves over the ground. The sky looked cold about that fast-blowing flood of snow, and the sunshine that came through the peer-hole was no warmer than a shadow.

After the reading of this passage, a discussion ensued in which questions about the content were asked and explored. The following product stemmed from that reading and discussion:

> Joey came around the corner of the old brick school building, scuffling his feet in the dead leaves which had blown onto the walkway. Although the sunlight was bright enough to make him squint his eyes, the day was cold. Behind him the small dog followed in a zig-zagging way, moving from one pile of leaves to another whenever the leaves were stirred by the slight breeze. (p. 93)

McConaghy (1985) describes how a writer might take a theme from a familiar story and transfer the message to his or her own life. She says:

> ...children would use the literature more as a jumping off point to write their own story about their personal experiences which were reflected in the stories they had heard. (p. 354)

She cites an example of a child who listened to the reading of the story The Bus Ride by Nancy Jewel. This story is about the friendship that develops between a child and an elderly woman who sit next to each other on a bus one day. When the little girl gets off the bus, she says good-bye to her friend, knowing that they will probably never see each other again. McConaghy gives an account of the stories written by two children as a result of exposure to this book.

Cathy wrote:

> One day I went to the Doctor's office. I met a friend. We played. She went into her Doctor and I went into mine and we never saw each other again.

Susan wrote:

> Once upon a time I went to school and I knew everybody because I knew them before. I stayed there for three days and I moved. I didn't see the friends again. (p. 350)

Pilon (1978) presents rich suggestions in the form of an olio (a miscellaneous collection) which teachers can use to supply literature-based content for writing. If Everybody Did (Stover, 1960) is a hilarious book that tells what would happen if everybody squeezed the cat or stepped on Daddy's feet. Pilon says, "Through discussion children can be led to compose their own "if" predicaments" (p. 255).

Pilon also discusses the book Happiness is a Warm Puppy (Schulz, 1962) which presents various definitions of what happiness means to people. After reading this book,

children can create their own versions of what happiness is and can expend this idea to include other words, such as "Misery is..." and "Security is..." (pp. 262-63).

Pourquoi (why) stories, states Pilon, are exceptional stories for giving children ideas for writing. The Amazing Adventures of Archie and the First Hot Dog (Le Grand, 1964) is a story about not only the origin of the first hot dog, but also "the beginning of the hot dog roll, and the reason why people put mustard and relish on their hot dogs" (Pilon, p. 246). Children are bound to want to write some of these pourquoi stories of their own and some of the titles suggested by Pilon which might prove inspiring include "The First Stove", "The First Laugh", "Why Dogs Chase Cats", and "Why the Sky is Blue" (p. 246).

When children sit down to write and cannot think of anything to write about, chances are it is because they have not been exposed to sufficient experiences and ideas to explore in their own writing. The teacher plays a very important role in providing these experiences, and wise teachers will make certain that children are immersed in good literature from where they can get a storehouse of ideas to write about. Pilon (1978) concludes her book with this message to teachers:

> ...(these suggestions) are meant to be a starting point for you as you search for materials and ideas that will stimulate children to speak, read, and write creatively. Try to be constantly on the watch for poems and stories that will help to give every child an

> inexhaustible reservoir of ideas--a magic pitcher like Baucis and Philemon's that never empties. (p. 268)

Motivation

Sloan (1980) states that too much time in language classes is devoted to "exercises on bits and pieces of the writing process, like grammar and usage" (p. 135), and is quick to point out that research has continually proven that in the past such exercises have had no effect on children's compositions. What does make a difference, however, according to many authors, is children's exposure to literature. Learning when to use "is" and "are" or how to add "ed" and "ing" to words will not stimulate children to write; writing a letter to Winnie the Pooh or writing descriptions of things in a fairy tale museum will.

Children cannot simply write on command. Even when the experiences and the ideas are in abundance, children sometimes need more. As Trauger (1963) states, "a pupil may not be stampeding to express his ideas. He may need encouragement" (p. 251). Dixon (in Raskin, 1979) shares this view and reiterates:

> Children are not pent-up reservoirs of creative energy waiting to emit fantastic statements in writing at a mere nod from the teacher. But youngsters do have imagination and many of the other attributes related to creative expression. If we, as teachers, learn to stimulate and effectively direct this ability, then we will be rewarded with a richness of creative statement. (p. 77)

Motivation, then, is a key element in writing success. In order for children to benefit from daily writing activities, they must want to write. And in order for them to want to write, they should be motivated and stimulated to do so.

Burrows et al. (1972) state that "the power of literary stimulation for writing cannot be underestimated" (p. 185). Good books can do much to stimulate children's minds and motivate them to write. Dixon (in Raskin, 1979) observes:

> We all write most effectively when we are really motivated--perhaps by anger, maybe by love, amusement, the wish to communicate with others, or one of a thousand other reasons. But there must be a motivating reason. (p. 77)

One of the most profound and pleasurable ways of giving children the incentive and inspiration to write is to give them a firm base in literature (Moss, 1977; Smith, 1967; Wilcox, 1977; Rukavina; 1977). Literature can, in many different ways, motivate children to write. First of all, children will not write if they see no meaning for their writing, or if they see no reason to write. Gay (1976) has determined that children gain a motive for writing when they are read to, since this serves to introduce them to the world of books. She contends that, because of the oral nature of our society, many children do not recognize how important writing is and adds that, in being exposed to the writings of others, children have "an opportunity to describe, define, and perhaps understand (their) world"

(p. 93), and this will be reflected in their own writings. When children read or listen to what others have written, they gain inspiration and appreciation for that product. They realize the amount of pleasure there is in reading the thoughts and feelings of others, and this can motivate students to write about their own thoughts and feelings.

Secondly, teachers who read constantly to their students and who allow much time for discussion about stories and poems being read are helping to motivate children to write. Through reading and discussing literature, teachers and students can make connections between what someone else (in this case, the author) and they themselves have experienced. Morris (1984) feels that many students will not write because of a "fear of exposure". She explains:

> Children often feel that exposing themselves to the class can be dangerous. Differences may seem funny or stupid or weird. (p. 37)

By showing children that others (authors and peers) have felt the same fears, shared the same sadness, or enjoyed the same elation, teachers not only establish a motivating atmosphere of acceptance and honesty, but they also motivate their students to write their own stories about their own experiences.

Blake (in King et al., 1970), in discussing the importance of talk before writing, says that "Having a topic in which children are interested and with which they have had experience does not guarantee a good piece of

writing" (p. 173). They contend that the real motivation comes through talking about the story or poem or experience, where children can "compare their feelings with those of their friends, and somehow set the language that expresses their feelings" (p. 174). A poem from Mary O'Neill's Hailstones and Halibut Bones may be used to illustrate. Primary children know their colours and, upon listening to the poem "What is Yellow?", may not see it as anything but a poem about the colour yellow. It is through an ensuing discussion, however, that the students develop a motivation to use their senses in a similar fashion to describe colours in their own ways. The following was extracted from the poem "What is Yellow" and shows how O'Neill employs the senses in describing this particular colour:

> Yellow is the color of the sun
> The feeling of fun
> ....
> Dandelions and
> Daisy hearts
> Custard pies and
> Lemon tarts.
> Yellow blinks
> On summer nights
> In the off-and-on of
> Firefly lights.
> Yellow's a topaz,
> A candle's flame.
> Felecity's a
> Yellow name
> Yellow's mimosa,
> And I guess,
> Yellow's the color of
> Happiness.
>
> (pp. 55-56)

A third way in which literature can provide motivation for creative expression is found in the raw materials it provides in the form of ideas and experiences. Asking children to write about trees, for example, may not prove very motivating for some children. However, through the introduction, reading, and discussing of The Dead Tree (Tresselt, 1972), The Tree (Carrick, 1971), A Tree with a Thousand Uses (Fisher, 1977), A Tree is Nice (Udry, 1956), and the poem "Tree House" (Silverstein, 1974), children will find that they have all kinds of ideas to write about and will not hesitate to begin their writing. When the opportunity arises, the motivation will be there to write about the experiences which they have gleaned through this exposure to literature.

When experiences are personal or memorable ones, there is a very high degree of motivation to write about them. Hauser (1982) states:

> When children write about events which are memorable to them, their work is often rich in expression, showing logical sequence and clarity of thought. (p. 64)

Characters, places and events in literature can be so powerfully and skillfully portrayed that they become very memorable to children. Those who have read or listened to Charlotte's Web (White, 1952) will long remember the tearful goodbye at Charlotte's death and the care Wilbur takes of her egg sac, an indication of the friendship which existed between them. Such strong memories are

ever-present as a motivating force for creative expression.

Another way in which literature can be a motivator is in the forms, patterns, and structures it provides for writing. When children want to say something but find it difficult to actually express it in writing, they may abandon their writing attempts. However, if they turn to a familiar story or poem and imitate its form, they can be motivated to finish their work. Being able to draw upon a familiar framework provides motivation and frees children to write.

Hauser (1982) comments that the teacher and her class can take "a critical look at what makes a good book enjoyable" (p. 684). Books which children find highly motivating to read can help motivate them to write as well, if students and teachers discuss exactly what it is about the book that makes it so appealing.

Finally, children need words in order to write--lots and lots of words. When children have an extensive vocabulary and a repertoire of unique words and memorable phrases to use in their writings, they will be motivated to use them. Motivation is damaged when children try to write but cannot find the right words to use, often because their language background is not as developed as it might be. According to Moffett (1968), children must have stimulants for writing because "their language is more limited..." (p. 118). The more exposure to

literature that children have, the more chance they have of building a good vocabulary to use when writing, and therefore the more excited, confident, and motivated they will be to put their thoughts, ideas, and feelings into writing.

Many authors suggest practical ways in which books can be used to motivate young writers. Coody (1979), for example, in examining children's literature as a motivator for creative writing, lists several motivational activities which promote writing through a literature-based program. These include:

> If the teacher reads "The Elephant's Child" from Kipling's Just So Stories, some children (will be) stimulated to create excellent "why" stories of their own.
>
> Animal stories read aloud by the teacher or aide trigger memories of all kinds of experiences children have had with pets and animals, and original stories are often the result.
>
> Writing a new ending to an old favorite such as The Pied Piper of Hamelin, Miss Hickory, or Down, Down the Mountain.
>
> Writing an imaginary letter to a well-known book character, or an imaginary conversation between two characters. (pp. 82-84)

Huck (1979) discusses how children are often motivated to write diaries and journals which might have been kept by storybook characters such as Amos, the whale, and Boris, the mouse (Amos and Boris, Steig, 1971). Literature itself, states Huck, is a great motivator for many reasons. It presents many different forms of writing to be explored; it presents sensory images and beautiful

language; it depicts true-to-life situations which children can relate to; and it gives children characters who can be remembered because they make us cry or laugh or shiver with fear. All of these things give children the motivation to write.

Hall (1981) suggests that teachers "Collect samples of published student writing so that students may see what their peers elsewhere around the country are writing" (p. 51). This, says Hall, will help to stimulate and motivate writing sessions.

Nilsen and Greenwell (1977) suggest that one activity which always seems to be motivational is that of extending a favorite book "by writing another incident or a similar happening" (p. 788). They suggest the book Mouse Soup (Lobel, 1977) which contains a collection of separate little stories which mouse is telling to a weasel "in hopes of permanently postponing being cooked in mouse soup". The authors recommend that children write other stories for Mouse to tell Weasel.

Motivation, says Sloan (1980), is an important factor in developing literacy, and literature is a readily available resource for this purpose. She states:

> The exploits of Curious George, Madeline, Henry Huggins, Deenie, George and Martha, Encyclopedia Brown, Pippi Longstocking and other characters from books turn young readers on. (p. 133)

It is the contention of authors like those mentioned here that these characters and their exploits not only turn young readers on, but they also turn young writers on. If

teachers want to motivate writers to write, they must be sure to introduce them to the motivating and stimulating models found in literature.

Vocabulary and Language Development

Dale et al. (1971), in discussing techniques for teaching vocabulary, begin their unit on literature by confirming and drawing attention to the relationship which exists between literature and vocabulary development. They explain:

> Reading literature and building a vocabulary go hand in hand. One is dependent on the other. Reading is probably the single greatest contributing factor to the building of an extensive vocabulary. (p. 244)

Many authors agree that children's literature is one of the most effective resources which can be used to enhance the development of children's vocabularies (Pfau, 1967; Hoban et al., 1972; Cazden, 1980; Russell and Saadeh, 1962; Deighton, 1960; Martin, 1968; Cullinan, 1981; Coody and Nelson, 1982; Carlsen, 1960). If opportunities for vocabulary building and enrichment are limited to reading periods where basal readers are the only reading materials used, then a grave injustice is committed. Basal reading programs use controlled vocabulary and therefore do not provide much resource material for vocabulary development. When basal readers are the only books read by students, their writings, as Gay (1976) maintains, will reflect "the vocabulary and the (stiff) constructions of the basal

reader" (p. 88). This example presented by Gay shows very artificial writing:

> Yuki is Linda's friend.
> One day she came to play with Linda.
> "Hello, Linda," said Yuki.
> "I see something new about you."
> "Yes, my hair," said Linda.
> "I like it that way! said Yuki.
> "That is not all I have to show," said Linda.
> "What do you have?" asked Yuki.
> "Do you have some new dolls?"
> "No," laughed Linda.
> "They are not dolls." (p. 88)

Mangieri et al. (1984) agree that children do not obtain a rich and lasting vocabulary from simple exposure to basal word lists. They contend that such a vocabulary

> ...grows with varied experiences using everyday words in new ways. One of the most effective--and most pleasurable--ways of developing a wide vocabulary is to read to students, selecting the best of children's literature. (p. 98)

Wiseman (1984), in discussing the effect of literature on vocabulary development, notes:

> Frequent oral reading of a variety of materials encourages children to expand their listening, speaking, and eventually writing vocabularies.... (p. 342)

Writing vocabularies, therefore, are vitally linked with and an outgrowth of the development of other vocabularies.

Ames (1964) feels that the interrelationship between the speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies is a very important one, and states:

> Children will not frequently use words in their speaking or writing vocabularies that they do not already understand. The words that they have heard and understand form the basis for the speaking, writing, and reading that the child will do. Thus the larger the size of this understanding vocabulary, the richer the

> foundation on which these other vocabularies can be built. (p. 64)

Pilon (1978) also discusses how competencies in oral language lead to proficiencies in writing. She states:

> Their (children's) knowledge of, and intuitions about, spoken language provide the keys for decoding written language; and although there are differences between written and spoken language, writers, whether they are children or adults, write with the sound of their own voice in their ears. (p. 119)

In reading literature aloud to children or in providing ample time for wide reading and an opportunity to explore the language of books, and in making a wide range of books available for children to read, teachers are opening up the world of words to eager young writers. In order to be able to write effectively, children must have a wealth of words at their disposal and this wealth of words comes, first of all, from a solid listening and speaking vocabulary. It is exposure to the language of prose and poetry that develops a vocabulary which is so vital to success in writing.

Children's literature is a unique combination of words, phrases, descriptions put together in unique and creative ways, and it is only through exposure to literature that children can come to know and understand these ways and eventually make them part of their writing repertoire. The unique presentation of language in literature does much to help children in their writing development and, more specifically, in vocabulary and language growth.

Chambers and Lowry (1975), Dale et al. (1971), Fisher and Terry (1977), and Martin (1968) discuss the importance of learning vocabulary in context. They concur with Sloan (1980) who says that reading aloud "is a more natural way to enlarge vocabulary and develop an abiding interest in words than lists of them in exercise books" (p. 134). Children's literature provides the natural surroundings for vocabulary and, as Pilon (1978) claims, "vocabulary study is in its rightful place--in context" (p. 125). In reading The Duchess Bakes a Cake (Kahl, 1955), for example, children learn the words "a lovely light luscious delectable cake" in a natural and effortless way--in the context of the story surrounding them.

A large store of words will do much to enhance children's writings and, while most educators agree that building a vocabulary entails adding a quantity of words to those already known, Dolch (1953) reminds teachers that increasing the meanings of existing words is also a vital part of vocabulary growth. Cramer (1975) believes that "Depth and breadth of vocabulary is enhanced" (p. 460) when children are exposed to literature.

"Children are thrilled by the sight and sound of polysyllabic wonders" (p. 134), writes Sloan (1980). Big words do not frighten eager young readers and writers; they serve to intrigue and interest them. Teachers who draw attention to such words and give time and opportunity for discussing them are whetting children's appetites for

knowledge and growth in vocabulary. Jacobs (1965) claims that many students will not be able to read some books because the vocabulary in the books is above the child's reading vocabulary. These same books may not be above the child's listening vocabulary, however, and by being read to, children can still avail themselves of the vocabulary and language presented in the books. Sloan (1980) believes that it is not essential to have "word-perfect understanding", and qualifies this by saying:

> ...what children can't understand from context can lead to interest in words and profitable discussion after the reading. Vocabulary, after all, develops through encounters with unfamiliar words, not suppression of them. (p. 134)

Children's writings often reflect what they hear or read in good stories and poems. Blackburn (1984) quotes an example of Robert who was writing a book about dinosaurs. He wrote: "Tyrannosaurus attacked with his terrible teeth and his terrible claws" (p. 374), borrowing words which he obtained from Where the Wild Things Are (Sendak, 1963). Blackburn states that children have a good memory for words and phrases they read. Huck (1979) illustrates this same view in discussing a group of 8-year-olds who heard the story of Amos and Boris (Steig, 1971). The children wrote diaries such as those Amos or Boris might have kept. After their first entry had been written, the rich use of language in the book was discussed. A comparison, then, of the second entry with that of the first revealed that simply as a result of

calling attention to Steig's rich use of language, the children's second entry was much more creative, since children tended to use some of the colorful and descriptive words from the story text (p. 671).

Huck (1979) believes that it is essential for children to develop sensitivity to language, and sees children's literature as the means by which this can be accomplished. She writes:

> Skill in descriptive writing may be developed by helping children to become aware of the power of words in conveying sensory images. After a story has been finished, the teacher and children may reread and relish particularly enjoyable words, phrases, or paragraphs. (p. 670)

This discussion following the story serves to "set" such language in the minds and memories of children and the words are often at their fingertips when they want to write. In this way such words and phrases can act as a stimulant to writing. Many words have great power in conjuring up sensory images, and children who read extensively can build on these experiences to strengthen their expression in writing. Very young children who need more than this can expand their vocabularies and experiences by using the pictures which accompany the stories and poems. In relating the words of the text to the pictures, children can bring a great deal of meaning to the vocabulary they are exposed to and, as a result, can have a more meaningful vocabulary from which to draw on when they write.

Through literature, children become familiar with the many different forms of language which authors use in their writings. Exposure to literature, according to Petty and Bowen (1967), will help acquaint beginning writers with a variety of ways in which words can be used. They discuss such forms as (1) personification, a figure of speech in which human characteristics are given to nonhuman objects--for example, Br'er Rabbit and the Gingerbread Man; (2) onomatopeia, which occurs when the sound of a word resembles its meaning, such as "buzz", "whoosh" and "tinkle"; (3) alliteration, which describes the use of the same beginning sounds in a series of words, such as "a lovely light luscious delectable cake" (The Duchess Bakes a Cake, Kahl, 1955); (4) simile, a figure of speech which is used to express likeness by using terms such as "like", "as", and "so"--for example, "as poor as a churchmouse" and "as busy as a bee"; and, finally, (5) metaphor, a figure of speech in which one thing is compared to another as in the sentence, "The ship plowed up the sea" where a ship is being compared to a plow". In introducing children to forms of language such as these, Burrows et al. (1972) remind teachers, students at the primary level "need not be taught the formal terminology at this point" (p. 160). At this level, it is sufficient to simply provide the exposure.

Howell (1987) asserts that "vocabulary development strategies combined with good tradebooks can be both

stimulating and enriching" (pp. 500-1), and suggests uses of different kinds of vocabulary which can be explored with young children. She states that some children's books are excellent in the way in which they present contextual clues to gain meanings for words:

> For example, from The Amazing Bone (Steig, 1976): "It was a brilliant day, and instead of going straight home from school, Pearl dawdled" (p. 1). (p. 501)

Howell says that teachers should guide the children to look for clues in the sentence which help them to understand what the word "dawdled" means.

Howell also discusses the use of synonyms in many books as a means of extending vocabulary. She states that "synonyms enable writers to define the "color" emphases and imagery of their work" (p. 501). This is particularly helpful for children because it provides them with a storehouse of words which can be used as substitutes for ordinary words. As an example, she cites Sylvester and the Magic Pebble (Steig, 1969):

> "The lion came bounding over, sniffed the rock a hundred times, walked around it, and went away confused, perplexed, puzzled, and bewildered" (p. 7). (p. 501)

Not only do children learn synonyms for the word "confused", they can also discuss synonyms for such words as "went" and "bounding". Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day (Viorst, 1972) also makes use of multiple synonyms which can be explored in discussion and in children's own writing.

Antonyms can also be studied as children read stories. In Frog and Toad Are Friends (Lobel, 1970), we read: "That button is black. My button was white." (p. 31) and "That button is thin. My button was thick." (p. 25). Other concept books which provide exposure to antonyms include Push-Pull Empty-Full (Hoban, 1972), Fast-Slow, High-Low: A Book of Opposites (Spier, 1972) and Is It Easy? Is It Hard? (Green, 1960).

Alberghene (1985) also looks at how children's vocabulary can be increased through reading or listening to stories. She discusses the writing in Charlotte's Web (White, 1952), and states that just as Wilbur's use of language matures as a result of Charlotte's guidance, so does the reader's. Alberghene cites this passage from the book:

> "Salu-what?" he cried.
> "Salutations!" repeated the voice.
> "What are they, and where are you?" screamed Wilbur.
> "Please, please, tell me where you are. And what are salutations?"
> "Salutations are greetings," said the voice. "When I say 'Salutations', it's just my way of saying hello or good morning. Actually, it's a silly expression, and I am surprised that I used it at all." (pp. 35-36) (p. 35)

In defining this word for Wilbur, Charlotte is also defining it for the reader. Alberghene states:

> "Untenable", "sedentary", "gullible", "versatile", "magnum opus", and "languishing" also become a part of his (Wilbur's), and the reader's, vocabulary. (p. 35)

The experiences which literature presents to its readers have endless possibilities in language and

vocabulary development, and when teachers wisely choose books which encourage this, the writing vocabulary of their students will, as a result, be enhanced.

Summary

Montebello (1972) has stated, "to teach children to write well and to enjoy writing is one of the major concerns of elementary teachers" (p. 37). It has been a concern for many teachers because the development of writing through a piecemeal teaching/learning strategy has shown itself to be very frustrating and most ineffective. Authors and educators are now beginning to realize that if they want children to write, they do not give them hours of isolated drill exercises on bits and pieces of grammar and language. These authors state that what teachers need to do instead is to give their students hours of exposure to good literature. Through literature, children can experience the language, forms, patterns, and know-how of master writers. Literature is creative writing and, through exposure to fine books, stories and poetry, children can develop a sensitivity to and an appreciation of the writings of others. In this way, as it has been demonstrated, children will gain much knowledge about what constitutes good writing and, as a result, will reflect this knowledge in their own compositions. The importance of literature in preparing, guiding, and motivating good

writing cannot be overestimated. It is essential that teachers make the literature-writing connection so that students will grow and develop as best they can in the area of creative writing.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE HANDBOOK

Introduction

The following steps were employed in the production of the handbook: (1) the selection of various books and poems, through the use of various selection aids, which could be utilized as models; (2) an examination of these stories and poems to determine their specific strengths in fostering writing growth; (3) a description of the selected books, including bibliographical data, annotation, introduction of special features pertinent to writing development, suggested list of writing activities, and a bibliography of books with similar features or books from the same genre; and (4) the compilation of the handbook.

The Selection of Stories and Poems to be Used as Models

Various selection aids were used to compile a list of books suitable for inclusion in the handbook. While it is true that almost any book can be used as a model for writing, it is very important that the books chosen be of good quality and be recommended as those which would appeal to the wide range of interests and abilities of

students in a typical grade two classroom. The selection aids used are listed in Appendix A.

Critical Examination of the Books

There is a great variety of books available to students which, when used as models, will help them to develop good writing skills. The following represent some specific criteria used in examining those books chosen for inclusion in the handbook:

(1) Grade level. The books chosen are suitable for students from Kindergarten to approximately grade four level. It is important to have a variety of books because of the wide range of interests and abilities usually found within a classroom. Also, research has found that students can readily comprehend, through listening, a book which is too difficult for them to read on their own. Since many classes have not used literature as a model for writing, it is suggested that students begin writing, using books at a Kindergarten level in order to build up confidence in writing abilities. Picture books written for early primary grades are generally very simple to follow and therefore to model. Selection aids were used to

help determine the recommended grade level for each book.

(2) Interest level. Since motivation plays a very important role in writing success, the books in this study are those which appeal to seven-year-olds. When children enjoy what they read or hear, they will be stimulated to write their own stories. The content of the books chosen deals with what children at the grade two level can relate to, such as friends, family, pets, and magic; and they are presented in very stimulating and imaginative forms. Children will gain the incentive to write and will also acquire experiences about which to write when the books they explore are at their particular interest level.

(3) Literary elements. The stories and poems selected are those which contain a simple plot or story-line. Seven-year-old children need uncomplicated plot structures to model, and they will write most successfully when exploring and constructing those plots which are simple in nature. Also, characters are well-defined, interesting, credible, and consistent, and their actions plausible and life-like. The books are written in styles which show the beauty and the rhythm of language. In presenting many books in

class, teachers expose children to the many ways in which language can be used effectively, uniquely, and purposefully in students' own writings.

(4) Availability. The author has attempted to present in the handbook a great many books which may already be familiar to most teachers. Books with a high degree of popularity have been included since these may already be part of the school library or classroom collection and are therefore easily accessible to teachers and students. In this way, teachers can begin a literature-based writing program without delay. Many stories or poems have a pattern in common. If the selection presented is not available, the teacher may check the bibliography presented with that selection to find another selection with a similar pattern.

In conclusion, it should be noted that all the stories or poems chosen for the handbook were chosen because each contained some strong element or feature which would help to foster creative writing development. All books may not meet all the criteria, but may be strong in one or more features. Hailstones and Halibut Bones (O'Neill, 1961), for example, has been chosen for its portrayal of beautiful sensory images; it is unsuitable for character or plot development.

Presentation of the Selected Books

Each book is presented with the following information:

1. The following bibliographic and publishing data:
   Title of the book,
   Author of the book,
   Publisher and place of publication,
   Date of publication,
   Edition (if more than one).
   Teachers and librarians who wish to order copies of these books for classroom or school use in creative writing programs will find this information beneficial.
2. An annotation is provided for each of the books selected and presented. This will prove especially helpful to teachers who, throughout the year, want to use these books with certain learning themes.
3. Teachers are further introduced to each book through a description of the literary qualities of each book. The purpose of this is to point out to teachers those areas which may be best utilized in developing good creative writing skills.
4. Teachers are then presented with a suggested list of writing activities which may be used as a follow-up to the reading of the book. These suggestions are designed to help motivate and stimulate the student to write in various ways, using the book as a model

for vocabulary expansion, for patterning a form, or for providing content and ideas about which to write.

5. A bibliography of books containing literary qualities, content, or forms similar to those of the chosen selection is presented. Teachers may refer to this list in the event that the selected book is not available. It should be noted that many of the writing activities suggested can be adapted to fit the titles mentioned in the bibliography. The bibliography is also useful as a comparison tool. For example, a teacher can use the list of alphabet books in order to compare the different patterns used by each different author, or a teacher can use the different books listed for 'witches' in order to draw attention to good witches, bad witches, little witches, old witches, and strange witches as she develops a theme on witches.

6. Poems are presented in full to familiarize teachers with the exact forms being described and to allow them to elaborate on certain features of the poems. Some of the poems (such as limericks) presented in the handbook have definite structures. Other poems have creative and imaginative forms which do not have a specific label or name, such as 'Shore' (Jacobs). It is important to explore both kinds.

Compilation of the Handbook

The following features are discussed in the handbook:

1. Introduction.

   The introduction explains the nature and purpose of the handbook and also explains how the chosen selections are presented in the handbook.

2. Rationale.

   In this section, the relationship between children's literature and writing development is discussed briefly in order to show how literature can be utilized as a resource for aiding growth in writing.

3. Guidelines.

   Specific guidelines are presented so that teachers will be able to make the most effective use of the information and the suggested activities mentioned in the handbook.

4. Selections from Children's Literature.

   This part of the handbook presents many selections, both prose and poetry, which may be used as a resource to enhance writing development. Several suggested writing activities are presented with each selection in order to explore the forms, content, and vocabulary used by different authors.

Part II consists of the Teacher's Handbook.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF A UNIT FROM THE HANDBOOK

Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to a detailed description of one of the units presented in the handbook. The unit Hailstones and Halibut Bones (O'Neill, 1961) was given to two teachers who used the suggested activities for this unit in their grade two classrooms. The chapter discusses the procedures used by the teachers in introducing the unit and in preparing the students for writing their own compositions. Several examples of student compositions are included in this chapter, and a brief description follows each composition in order to point out pertinent background information about the child and some of the significant features of his/her writing. The poems are presented first in the exact way in which they were written by the student and then in a version edited by this writer, who had the children read what they had written.

SAMPLE UNIT FROM THE HANDBOOK

TITLE: Hailstones and Halibut Bones

AUTHOR: Mary O'Neill

PUBLISHED: Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961.

ANNOTATION: This book of poems describes the many colours we know. The author presents each colour in terms of sensory images, describing what sounds, smells, tastes, feelings, and visual images each colour represents and reminds her of.

Introduction

The main purpose of introducing this selection is to look at content and form, to emphasize how the author uses sensory awareness to describe colours, and to encourage children to model their writings on the same form. The fact that this selection is written in poetry adds a great deal to the rhythm and flow of the language, but students should not be forced to write their compositions in rhymed poetry. Some children find it very difficult to write poetry that has to rhyme and quite often, if they are forced to do so, write in a very artificial way, just to make it rhyme. Other children, however, may welcome the challenge of making things rhyme and may do so without hesitation. The main thing to remember is that while teachers should introduce students to rhyme, they should also allow the students the freedom to choose the way in which they want to write their compositions. The emphasis

of this selection should be on the content and the method used by O'Neill to present her poems.

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss one of the colours with the class. After the discussion, the appropriate poem from O'Neill's book should be read, and the fact that she uses all her senses to describe that colour should be emphasized by the teacher. Discuss which parts describe which senses.

2. Discuss with the class another colour, and during this discussion, make a class composition from the ideas presented by the children. Read O'Neill's poem about the same colour.

3. Have the children choose any colour they like and write about it in a similar way.

   The purpose of these activities is to have children think and write about colours in a unique way. Initially, if asked to describe what red, for example, reminds them of, the children are very likely to answer with a list of 'objects' which are red, such as apples, tomatoes, and hearts. They may not think of red as being hot, sore, loud or screaming. These activities will help children write about something familiar (colours) in a new way, and will also supply them with a pattern to use in their writings. The pattern consists of a question (the title) and answers based on the senses.

   The involvement of the students in making a class composition in which the teacher acts as scribe will help many children see how to compose such a work. Learning to write can be very effective when the students are able to model the teacher, as well. The students are able to see that what they say can be written down, and what is written down can be read by others. Writing a class composition will also help the students become more familiar with the way in which the pattern is made, since the teacher can draw attention to it as s/he writes the sample poem or story.

4. Have the children think of other things to write about in the same way. The following topics might be posted in the Writing Centre or on the bulletin board

for children to use if they cannot think of their own topics:

What is Hot?	What is Soft?
What is Scary?	What is Wet?
What is Happy?	What is Fast?
What is Dirty?	What is Slippery?
What is Lucky?	What is Dark?
What is Christmas?	What is Love?

The purpose of this activity is to take what the children have learned in writing about colours and extend it to writing about other concepts, using the same idea of utilizing sensory awareness and images in their compositions.

Bibliography

The following books also deal with colours and can be used in conjunction with Hailstones and Halibut Bones:

Friskey, M. What is the Color of the Wide, Wide World? Children's Press, 1973.

McCord, David. "Yellow" in The Random House Book of Poetry for Children, ed., J. Prelutsky. Random House, 1983.

McGovern, Ann. Black is Beautiful. Scholastic, 1969.

Provensen, A. and M. Roses are Red. Are Violets Blue? Random House, 1973.

Reit, S. Adventures with Color. Golden Press, 1970.

Rossetti, Christina. "What is Pink?" in The Random House Book of Poetry for Children, ed., J. Prelutsky. Random House, 1983.

Stinson, Kathy. Red is Best. Toronto: Annick Press, 1982.

The following book illustrates the idea that the same pattern used by O'Neill in her book about colours can be used with other topics. It should be noted that while O'Neill has written her book in poetic form, Zolotow has written in prose.

Zolotow, Charlotte. Summer Is.... New York: Crowell, 1983.

TEACHING THE UNIT

Background Information

To ascertain whether the children could utilize the units in the handbook to enhance their writings, a sample unit developed on Hailstones and Halibut Bones was given to two teachers of grade two students. The teachers were asked to familiarize themselves with O'Neill's book and to follow the activities suggested in the unit. Neither teacher had previously used literature as a resource for writing development.

One of the classrooms contained twenty-six students made up of thirteen boys and thirteen girls. The other classroom held twenty-three students, consisting of eleven boys and twelve girls. Both teachers considered their classes to be typical of grade two classes, and stated that there was a wide range of interests and abilities within the class make-up.

Procedure

Both teachers chose a colour (one chose red, and one chose green) and brainstormed with the students during a discussion period about what that colour reminded them of. As anticipated, the students generally gave the names of objects which were that colour. Both teachers wrote on chart paper the responses of the students. The teacher

who chose red wrote the responses with a red marker. Both teachers then read the poems which corresponded to those colours and, through questions and statements, helped the children see how O'Neill had used her senses in describing the colours.

During the next session, both teachers chose the colour white to explore. At this time, they both created with their students the following class compositions which were dictated by the children and written by the teachers on chart paper:

What is White?

White is snow.
White is a cloud in the sky.
White is paper.
White is happy.
White is potato and cold, fresh milk.
White is heaven.
White is blank.
White is tickly feather.
White is a lamb.
White is clear.
White is white.

What is White?

White is....

A ghost floating by.
Big, cold snowflakes falling slowly down.
A big chubby snowman sitting in my backyard.
A white polar bear looking for food.
Warm white igloos for the Eskimos.
You find white skeletons in closets on Halloween.
Pale white is your colour when you are scared.

Following the class compositions, both teachers told the children they could choose a colour they liked and

tell what that colour reminded them of. Both teachers gave their students special paper to write on which could be coloured and decorated by them to emphasize the colour they had chosen.

Both teachers also had a chance to look at other topics besides colours. The teachers reported that it took them three and four sessions to complete the activities suggested for the unit. Some of the topics suggested in the handbook for this unit were chosen by some children, for example "What is Happy?", while other children chose their own titles, such as "What is Mad?".

The Writings of the Students

The following are some examples of the writings of these grade two students:

What is Red?

Red is....

A sweet juciy red apple.
Nice red roses growing in my graden.
A pretty red valentine given to me.
A juciy red tomato joust for you!
A nice pretty red velvet bow in my hair.
Red ketuhup I put on my food.
My nice warm red mittens to keep my hands warm.

(Child's Writing)

What is Red?

Red is....

A sweet juicy red apple.
Nice red roses growing in my garden.
A pretty red valentine given to me.
A juicy red tomato just for you!
A nice pretty red velvet bow in my hair.
Red ketchup I put on my food.
My nice warm red mittens to keep my hands warm.

(Child's Writing edited)

This poem was written by a very bright student who enjoys writing and who caught on very quickly to the pattern to be modelled. She has used a variety of vocabulary in her composition to describe how red appeals to the senses.

7

What is Red?

Roses growing in my backyard
Growing so pretty and red
I smelled it it smelled so Good
So I bent down and took it and said,
Roses, are red Volites, are blue,
theres no outher rose as Ouite as pretty as you!

(Child's Writing)

What is Red?

Roses growing in my backyard
Growing so pretty and red
I smelled it, it smelled so good
So I bent down and took it and said,
Roses are red, violets are blue,
There's no other rose
Quite as pretty as you!

(Child's Writing edited)

The child who wrote the poem above chose to write about only one particular image (roses) which came to mind when she thought of the colour red. The teacher was impressed with her work, even though it did not follow the same pattern as that of O'Neill's poem. This was the first time that this child had attempted to write something that rhymed, and she was very proud of her composition. In her attempt to use the senses in describing red, she has mentioned the sense of smell. She has also included in her poem a line which is very familiar to young children, "Roses are red, violets are blue".

What is Green?

Green is The colour of April.
And a Green apple on a apple tree.
And green is a witches face on Hallawe'n.
Green is The colour That is a chaulkboard is.

(Child's Writing)

What is Green?

Green is the colour of April.
And a green apple on an apple tree.
And green is a witch's face on Hallowe'en.
Green is the colour that a chaulkboard is.

(Child's Writing edited)

The little boy who wrote this poem, according to his teacher, is a very slow student, but one who grasped very quickly the idea of using the form of O'Neill's poem. His teacher had not previously discussed the colour green, so

she was very surprised and impressed with his statement that green is the colour of April, and with the vivid image he paints as he describes green as a witch's face.

What is Green?

Green is.....
A Little Leprecon Looking for gold.
Some green clovers that Somebody Sold.
Green sometimes is the ocean,
Sometimes a magic potion.
A butterfly floating around in the Sky.
Green is bueatiful.

(Child's Writing)

What is Green?

Green is.....
A little leprechaun looking for gold.
Some green clovers that somebody sold.
Green sometimes is the ocean,
Sometimes a magic potion.
A butterfly floating around in the sky.
Green is beautiful.

(Child's Writing edited)

The child who wrote this poem was also experimenting with rhyme for the first time. She commented to the teacher that she wanted her poem to sound nice like the one she (the teacher) had read, referring to the poem "What is White?" by O'Neill. The rhythm and flow of the language in O'Neill's poem made an impression on this student which resulted in her experimenting with rhymed poetry.

Wath is Yellow?

Yellow is a flower.
yellow is a big sun.
yellow is a nice good fresh cheese.
yellow fells refreshing.
yellow is like a sunrise.
yellow is like a smile.
yellow is a big ball.
yellow is a banana.
yellow is a camel
yellow is all kidns of colour.

(Child's Writing)

What is Yellow?

Yellow is a flower.
Yellow is a big sun.
Yellow is a nice good fresh cheese.
Yellow feels refreshing.
Yellow is like a sunrise.
Yellow is like a smile.
Yellow is a big ball.
Yellow is a banana.
Yellow is a camel.
Yellow is all kinds of colours.

(Child's Writing edited)

Some children chose to write their poems with many different sentence patterns; for example, some sentences began with a phrase such as 'Some green clovers...', and some began with a description of the image in the child's mind such as 'A sweet juicy red apple". This child chose to answer the question "What is Yellow?" by using a pattern in which the first words of each sentence are "Yellow is...." (except in one instance where "Yellow feels...." is used). She has modelled O'Neill's idea of listing descriptive images for a particular colour and has attempted to appeal to the senses, as well, in her

descriptions. Evident in her writing is the sense of taste (nice good fresh cheese, a banana), the sense of feeling (the big sun, a smile), and various examples of visual images.

Black

black is the darkest storm clud.
black is a rotatn alpple.
black is a lead.
black is very darck licorie
black is a very gloomy day

(Child's Writing)

Black

Black is the darkest storm cloud.
Black is a rotten apple.
Black is a lead.
Black is very dark licorice.
Black is a very gloomy day.

(Child's Writing edited)

This particular poem is presented in a different format from the one used in the sample poem by O'Neill, in that the student uses the colour word as the title instead of the question "What is Black?". He followed the same pattern as the previously discussed student in beginning each sentence of his poem with the same words, "Black is...". This student is a very bright student who reads a great deal and has no difficulty in expressing himself. His teacher commented that he always enjoyed creative writing activities but that this was the first time he had chosen to write in poem form. She felt that he did so

because he had a framework to follow and a pattern to imitate as he wrote. This student has used vocabulary which aptly describes images and feelings characteristically associated with black.

What is Black?

Black is....
the blacknas of the night.
the fluter of a bats wing outside.
Dracula's cape.
and a raven flying.
and tar in a pail.

(Child's Writing)

What is Black?

Black is....
the blackness of the night,
the flutter of a bat's wing's outside.
Dracula's cape,
and a raven flying,
and tar in a pail.

(Child's Writing edited)

The young boy who wrote this poem was always most reluctant to put his ideas down on paper. His teacher commented that he always needed a lot of encouragement and one-to-one conferencing (talk between him and the teacher) in order to get anything in written form. She was very impressed by the way that he 'blossomed' during the discussion of this unit. He became very enthusiastic about his writing and, with the exception of asking the teacher for help in spelling the words 'Dracula' and 'raven', he worked on his own to produce this poem. Some

of his friends shared their poems with him and he seemed to grow more enthusiastic as a result. His teacher noted that long after the activities with the sample unit were completed, he was still thinking of new titles to write about. This poem was very much a result of the interests and experiences of this student, since he particularly enjoyed talking and reading about scary things. He not only appeals to the senses in his poem, but also establishes a mood of fear.

What is Blue?

Blue is on ocean
Blue is the sky
Blue is a bluebird flying in the sky.

(Child's Writing)

What is Blue?

Blue is an ocean
Blue is the sky
Blue is a bluebird flying in the sky.

(Child's Writing edited)

This poem was written by a very slow student. She cannot work without constant help and guidance from the teacher. What is most significant about her composition is that she dictated to the teacher the words and ideas she wanted to use for her poem, while the teacher helped her to write her ideas on paper. In dictating her ideas, she made them rhyme, a great accomplishment for her. Her poem was very

simple, but it was a great source of enjoyment and pride to her.

After the children had written several poems about colours and after the teachers had read aloud to the classes the poems about colours in Hailstones and Halibut Bones, both teachers introduced to the students the possibility of using the same form to write about other ideas. Examples of these ideas are listed in the Suggested Activities in the sample unit. The following are some of the poems written about several of these suggested topics, as well as some topics chosen by the students themselves.

What is Easter?

Easter is the feeling of surprises.
Easter tastes like eggs.
Easter is all full with happyness.
Easter is all full with colours.
Easter is full with bunny.
Easter is fun and excited.
Easter is good.
Easter is went everyone is shareing.

(Child's Writing)

What is Easter?

Easter is the feeling of surprises.
Easter tastes like eggs.
Easter is full of happiness.
Easter is full of colours.
Easter is full of bunnies.
Easter is good.
Easter is when everyone is sharing.

(Child's Writing edited)

This poem was written by a student who enjoys writing and has no problem finding words to express what she wants to say. She included in her poem several instances which allude to the sense of taste (...like eggs), the sense of feeling (fun and exciting, surprises, happiness and sharing), and the sense of sight (bunnies, colours).

What is Funny?

a Big drooly monster and
amanda dressed up as a punk.
and alligator with filss teeth.
Peter with elephant ears.
a tree made of a Big Bloob of clay.

(Child's Writing)

What is Funny?

A big drooly monster and
Amanda dressed up as a punk.
An alligator with false teeth.
Peter with elephant ears.
A tree made of a big blob of clay.

(Child's Writing edited)

The topic for this poem was chosen by the child, and he seemed to have a great deal of fun writing about it. The teacher observed the fun students were having as they talked about their writing among themselves. She made particular reference to this boy. He talked, wrote, read aloud to the group, added to his poem, changed parts of it, re-wrote it, and shared it again in reading aloud, a procedure which was duplicated by the others in the group as well. O'Neill's poem did serve as a model in helping

this student gain insight into a form he could use for discussing what funny is.

What is Hot?

hot is....
hot is a crlingiren.
hot is the stove.
hot is the brning forest on fier.
hot is the blasing sun.

(Child's Writing)

What is Hot?
Hot is....
Hot is a curling iron.
Hot is the stove.
Hot is the burning forest fire.
Hot is the blazing sun.

(Child's Writing edited)

This poem is modelled by a little girl from the example written by her teacher in the class composition. She begins every new sentence with "hot is...". Because of the topic chosen, the most prominent sense explored here is the sense of touch or feeling. This student is an average grade two child who has at times experienced some difficulty with creative writing exercises. Her teacher was pleased that she enjoyed this exercise and that she wrote several other poems like this one, but on different topics.

What is Love

Love is caring and loveing.
Love is sweet
Love is kiss and hug.
Love is my hime.

(Child's Writing)

What is Love?

Love is caring and loving.
Love is sweet.
Love is kisses and hugs.
Love is my home.

(Child's Writing edited)

This poem is a very significant one. The little boy who wrote it, according to his teacher, made the most dramatic improvement. His teacher states that before this activity he would sit while others in his class were writing, and would write nothing. It was very difficult to get him to write anything. The teacher often sat with him and asked him questions about events in his life, or special activities taking place in school, or events which were happening at home in order to give him some ideas about which to write. He remained reluctant to write, however, and the teacher was not certain what she should do to help him become comfortable with writing. When he was introduced to this activity, he did not, at first, attempt any writing; but a few days later she noticed that he had started to write a poem, too. His poem, written to model the teacher's, is very simple yet effective in what it has to say.

What is Mad

mad is beting someone up wen thay tses you.
mad is your Temper rizen.
mad is being made to eat a supper you dont' like.
made is geting a test wrong.

(Child's Writing)

What is Mad?

Mad is beating someone up when they tease you.
Mad is your temper rising.
Mad is being made to eat a supper you don't like.
Mad is getting a test wrong.

(Child's Writing edited)

The poem above was written by a child who enjoys creative writing exercises and who is usually never delayed for lack of ideas or words. He chose the topic himself and followed the pattern established by the teacher through exposure to O'Neill's poems.

Interpreting the Results

Both teachers involved in working with this sample unit expressed satisfaction with having a model on hand to help their students in their writing. They were also very pleased with the poems which were produced as a result of exposure to this model. Several significant comments were made by these teachers as they discussed the effects this model had on both the children's desires to write and on their finished products.

The teachers commented that the brainstorming sessions at the beginning of the unit were most effective in getting the children to think about and talk about ideas which they could write down. The fact that this session was done as a whole group session was productive in that it helped some of the children who have a great deal of difficulty gathering ideas for writing activities. These slower students were able to gain much information about particular topics discussed, and their writings reflected this information.

Both teachers remarked on the positive effect the writing of the class composition had on the students. After reading the poems in Hailstones and Halibut Bones, these teachers discussed with the students how the information in O'Neill's poems was organized. The teachers then wrote their own version of the pattern used and, in doing so, made available to their students a pattern they could follow in their own compositions. In looking at the class compositions and the poems written by the children, it is very easy to distinguish which poems were patterned after which composition.

The increased enthusiasm of the students was a point brought up by each teacher. There was, before the introduction of the sample unit, some hesitation in writing on the part of several of the students in both classes. When the students began to write following this model, however, there was no hesitation, except on the

part of one little boy in one of the classes. This boy eventually did write a poem by himself (see What is Love? in the samples of children's writing) before the unit was completed. Some of the children were so zealous that they wrote as many as eight poems on eight different topics, using the same model.

Both of the grade two classes represented a wide range of academic abilities. It was commented upon by the teachers that not only did the slower students benefit from using the model presented, but many of the brighter students who were experiencing difficulty in getting their thoughts down on paper also gained much knowledge and information about organizing and presenting their ideas in writing.

The students in these classes became more independent workers as a result of the preliminary work done before they began their own writing. This preliminary work included the whole-group brainstorming, the writing of the class composition, the reading aloud of the sample poems, and the discussion centred around the characteristics of the model. Both teachers felt that this time was well spent, and that as a result the students had a better idea of what they were going to do when their time came for writing.

One of the teachers involved observed that the writings of the children were more descriptive. Previously, the children tended to write stories which

began with "I..."; these stories were generally always centred around themselves. Through exposure to this model, however, the children showed a great deal of variety in their work; for example, in sentence structures and in the different sentence beginnings used.

The children who took part in these activities were not asked to write in poetry form. Their teachers had done little or nothing with poetry writing and so the children were left on their own to decide whether they wanted to write in rhyme or in free verse. Some of the students, both low and high achievers, chose to experiment with poetry but the majority of the children wrote in free verse.

Another change in behavior noted by one of the teachers was that the children felt so satisfied with their work that many of them requested that they be allowed to read their poems to the rest of the class. This was the first time they had requested this, and writing behaviors were positively affected as a result.

The bibliography at the end of the unit was not used as extensively as it could have been. The main reason for this was that in both schools, the book Hailstones and Halibut Bones was available and so the teachers employed only this book. One of the teachers did read Red is Best (Stinson) to her class at the end of the unit.

In conclusion, it must be submitted that both teachers agreed that this method of getting children to

write was a very successful one. Exploring the form and content of well written selections from literature can help students enjoy writing, enhance their knowledge of writing skills, and give them the satisfaction of producing prose and poetry they can feel proud of. Both teachers expressed an interest in exploring other selections or units which could be used to further develop the idea of utilizing models in the development of creative writing skills.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to make the reader aware of the vast amount of research which indicates that children's literature can be used as a source for helping to develop creative writing skills in grade two children specifically, and in primary children generally. An outcome of this study was the preparation and presentation of a handbook which offers practical ways of developing creative written expression through each of the specific stories and poems presented. A sample unit from the handbook was used with two classes of grade two students. The introduction of the unit had a very positive effect on writing. The results discussed indicate to teachers the value of literature in enhancing a primary writing program.

There are a great many selections from literature which could be used in the handbook. Limitations on space dictate that only some samples be used. It is recommended that a more extensive list of books and selected activities be produced in order to broaden the choices available to teachers.

The ideas presented here are meant to constitute a beginning point for writing development through exposure to literature. Not only can primary children benefit from such exposure, but older students can also draw upon

literary selections as models for their writing endeavours. It is recommended, therefore, that a handbook such as this one be developed for elementary, intermediate, and senior high students utilizing books at their levels of understanding and interest.

The author also recommends that a more detailed study be carried out to determine the extent of learning within the area of creative writing development as a direct result of exposure to a literature-based writing program such as the one suggested in the handbook. Tests and inventories might be administered to the children before they begin these activities in order to determine information such as the children's interest or perceptions of writing, the extent of their vocabularies, and the characteristics of their written products and of their writing behaviors. After a period of time, i.e., at the end of the school year, the teacher might examine the children's own stories and poems, and look for any significant changes which may have occurred in their writing as a result of exposure to models in literature.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

SELECTION AIDS

SELECTION AIDS

Several selection aids, both books and journals, were used in choosing appropriate selections for the handbook. These selection aids were used in order to ensure that the books placed in the handbook were recommended for primary levels, both in age or grade level and on the basis of interest and motivation.

Journals

Bulletin of the Center for Children's books published by the Graduate Library School, University of Chicago.

Canadian Children's Literature published by the Canadian Children's Literature Association, Guelph, Ontario.

Kirkus Reviews published by The Kirkus Service, Inc., New York.

School Library Journal published by R.R. Bowker Co., New York.

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PART II

THE HANDBOOK

USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AS A MODEL FOR CREATIVE WRITING: A HANDBOOK FOR GRADE TWO TEACHERS

by

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INTRODUCTION

Learning should be an enjoyable and satisfying experience. The selections presented and the activities suggested in this handbook are meant to reflect this philosophy. Children's literature has the power to motivate and stimulate young students, and it provides models which children can use in their own writings. Young students enjoy hearing and reading about the tales of Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, and Finn McCoul. They can write their own tall tales if they are exposed to the many selections of tales presented in children's literature. In looking at the features of this type of story, children learn what constitutes a tall tale and can therefore model their own writings on these features. There are many types of stories, such as fairy tales, pourquoi stories, cumulative and circle stories whose framework or structure may be modelled by children as they write. There are also many kinds of poetry which pupils can model. There are, for example, limericks, concrete poems, acrostics, and sound poems, which may be utilized by beginning writers. Because there are so many models of stories and poems, children's literature can be seen as having considerable potential in initiating, promoting and sustaining growth in creative writing.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a guide which will stimulate, encourage, and assist teachers in developing a creative writing program for their students

by using children's literature as a medium through which to explore writing. It is the intention of this handbook to show teachers that many of the stories and poems available to teachers can be used to promote development in creative written expression. The handbook is designed to show that through motivational readings, discussions, and related activities, creative writing experiences can be brought to life and enjoyed by both students and teachers.

The books chosen for inclusion in the handbook were selected because this author (through past experiences with and knowledge of these books) has found them to exhibit qualities which can be used to enhance writing skills. A number of selection aids (listed in Appendix A of the thesis) were also employed in order to determine the literary merit of each book, as well as the suggested age or grade level for the book. The selections presented can be used effectively in most primary grades, and have been recommended for students from Kindergarten to grade three. The criteria applied to determine the suitability of the books consisted of an examination of features such as content, form, pattern, vocabulary, well-defined story-line, and interesting characters. When several of these features were evident in the selection, it was determined that the book would be chosen to be included in the handbook. The following information is supplied for each book:

(a) title, author, and publishing data;

(b) a brief annotation of the story;

(c) identification of some of the features of the selection in order to explain some of the writing skills which may be enhanced through the use of the selection;

(d) a discussion of suggested writing activities;

(e) a bibliography of other selections (titles) which may be used in conjunction with the one demonstrated and which can be substituted and used to develop similar writing skills should the one demonstrated not be available.

When poetry is used, the information above is modified: the poem itself is presented instead of the brief annotation.

The number of selections presented in detail in this handbook is, of course, very limited. It is the hope of the author that as teachers read and use the samples given, they will be stimulated to find other books and poems to use in similar ways to enhance writing development.

RATIONALE FOR USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AS A RESOURCE FOR CREATIVE WRITING DEVELOPMENT

An examination of the language arts program, the Nelson Language Development Reading Series, currently prescribed for use in our province's schools, reveals that there is a very weak writing component in that program. Very few writing activities are suggested for teachers to explore with their classes, and as a result of this, creative writing is quite often left out of the language arts program. While many teachers feel that creative writing is probably best developed in the elementary grades where children can read better, where they have more words at their disposal for writing, and where the conventions of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence and paragraph structure can be more fully developed, researchers do not agree that children should wait until the elementary years to explore writing skills. These researchers feel that the primary years are excellent ones for building a good foundation for writing development, and they encourage primary teachers to help their students get an early start in the development of the writing process.

In order to ensure that young writers do get off to an encouraging and successful start, many authors advocate the use of children's literature as an effective means of exploring and enhancing the writing process. A great deal

has been written about the interrelationships which exist between the language arts, and much emphasis has been placed on the relationship between children's literature and creative writing development.

There is a great deal about children's literature which makes it an excellent resource for writing. Children's literature is someone's creative writing; someone has found and used a unique way of expressing himself or herself in written language. By exploring these writings, young children can learn a great deal about organizing and presenting their own writings.

One way in which literature can help young beginning writers is through the development of language and vocabulary. Through both independent reading and being read to, children are exposed to a myriad of language forms, colourful expressions, synonyms, antonyms, descriptive phrases, and memorable passages. The most effective way of building a vocabulary is by learning words in context. Charlotte's Web (White, 1952) is a good example of this. When Charlotte uses a 'big' word in Wilbur's presence, she immediately defines that word for Wilbur's (and the reader's) benefit. Basal readers contain very controlled vocabularies and are therefore limited in their ability to extend the depth and breadth of a child's existing vocabulary. Literature, on the other hand, uses language in very creative ways, with less restriction on vocabulary. Conscientious and constant use

of literature in the classroom, therefore, is necessary for effective development of language and vocabulary.

Literature also presents many different forms and patterns in the many prose and poetry selections available. Students who have difficulty putting thoughts down on paper, find it easier to write when they can follow an existing pattern. Many authors state that borrowing words, phrases, sentences, characters, or plots from books they have been exposed to, is natural for children in the course of their development in writing. Children will learn much about writing in this way and will, in time, develop styles of their own. Children cannot be expected to write a story if they do not know what constitutes a story. Through exposure to literature, children come to learn the features which constitute the various kinds of stories and poems. Even children as young as two and a half years have exhibited knowledge of story structure through the process of being read to (Applebee, 1977). They intuitively understand that stories, very simply stated, have a beginning, a middle and an ending. As children grow in maturity and as they are exposed to more and more literary selections, their sense of story structure grows from the very simple to the more complex. Listening as stories unfold in sequence is an activity which effectively helps children to understand much about story structure.

Language, characters, actions, and illustrations in children's books help to motivate young writers. Children's literature abounds with the actions and adventures of such characters as Henry Huggins, Ramona, Wilbur, Snow White, Paul Bunyan, and Winnie the Pooh. Such characters serve to heighten the imagination of young writers and to provide them with all sorts of ideas to use in their own compositions. And they provide them with the motivation to write, both about their own similar experiences and about other experiences these characters might encounter.

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

There are a number of points of which teachers should be cognizant if they want to implement successfully the ideas and activities suggested in this handbook. These points are detailed in the following discussion:

1. Primary classrooms should be print-oriented. Children should see the value of print every day in their classrooms. Labels, poems, stories, and books should be displayed everywhere and should emphasize the importance of written language. Teachers should allow time in their day for children to read independently, to look through books in order to discover what books are about, and to share books with a friend.

2. Teachers should also share books with students through daily periods of reading aloud to them. There is a strong relationship between reading and writing, and the importance of reading aloud to students in order to facilitate language growth and growth in writing cannot be overestimated. Many authors agree that through oral reading activities, much prerequisite knowledge is gained for writing. Children develop a sense of story, enhance their vocabularies, develop a feeling for the rhythm and flow of language, and gain motivation and content for writing. Books which are sometimes too difficult for children to read on their own are not too difficult to understand when they are read aloud to them. Many teachers have found that children who are weak in reading skills are also weak in writing skills. If teachers do not read aloud to their students, the weaker students, who cannot read independently, will have very little chance of successfully developing their writing potential through reading literature themselves. For these weaker students, in particular, the process of being read to is a necessary one if writing growth is to take place.

3. Before a teacher reads a book to the class, he/she must take time to introduce it. The teachers should give students some idea of what the story or poem is about. Children will more readily assimilate what they hear if they can associate it with prior knowledge, or if they

have expectations set up. Books that are to be put in the Reading or Writing Centres should also be introduced to the students. As well as helping them set up expectations, this activity also serves to whet their curiosity and thus motivate them to read and to write.

4. After the reading of a poem or story, the teacher should allow time for children to discuss it. This is vital because it provides an opportunity to discuss certain new words or particularly interesting phrases or sentences. It also provides time for children to talk about the incidents in the story in their own way, as they understand them, and to relate such incidents to their own experiences. The teacher may also use this time to present thought-provoking questions or statements to the students so that they will come to understand such aspects as the form or pattern used by the author, cause and effect relationships, motives for the actions of characters, the genre, and the structure of the story or poem. Writing vocabularies develop as a result of good listening and speaking vocabularies. Ideas that may not be clear to some students are made clearer through discussion, and so discussion plays a vital role in helping children organize their thoughts for writing. It should also be noted that after a book has been introduced and read in class, it should be placed in the Writing Centre where children may have easy access to it if they wish to use it.

5. Teachers should do a lot of shared whole-class writing on experience charts, especially at the beginning of the year or at the introduction of a writing program. Teachers should act as scribes by writing down what students dictate. In this way, students can see how their thoughts and ideas can be expressed in writing, which will help them when they have to write on their own.

6. Teachers should set up a writing area or Writing Centre in the classroom. Such a Centre can be motivational, a special place for children to go when they want to write. The Writing Centre should be an interesting place filled with books, word displays, and writing materials. Ideas can be supplied for those children who need and want them, while a free hand can be given to those children who write confidently on their own with very little assistance.

7. Teachers should make allowances for the individual differences which exist in their classrooms. They know that some children are likely to write a lot while others will write very little. One method of dealing with individual differences is to include conferencing in the daily schedule. This is a time when the teacher sits down with a child on a one-to-one basis and discuss the writing activity. Through conversation, teachers can clarify some points for students, help them expand their ideas through asking questions, and help them see patterns, forms, structures or vocabulary which they may not have seen. It is important to remember that every child's work will be unique, and large group discussions cannot always meet the needs of all students. This makes conferencing a most valuable addition to the writing process.

8. Teachers should introduce students to certain forms or patterns found in the different genres and, if concentrating on one particular genre, should offer a lot of exposure to that style. For example, in order to acquaint children with the characteristics of fairy tales, the teacher would not simply introduce or read only one fairy tale. Several would be read and common elements found and discussed in order to produce a framework that might guide the students as they write their own fairy tales.

9. Teachers should recognize the value of aids such as pictures, models, and story items or props in helping children write. Children should be encouraged to draw, build, explore and examine aids such as these which might enhance stories and poems. Their writings will likely be more clear and meaningful, as a result. Huck (1977, p. 368) cites an example of a class of children who set up a Fairy Tale Museum where items such as the poisoned apple from Snow White and the needle that pricked the finger of Sleeping Beauty were displayed. Accompanying each item was a label or brief description.

10. Teachers should be aware that all of the books read to the students do not have to be used to initiate immediate writing responses. Literature is meant to be read and enjoyed. Simply reading aloud to students for enjoyment helps to develop a sense of story, a wide vocabulary, and an imagination with lots of ideas for exploring through writing.

11. Teachers should understand that children need lots of time to write. Their work should not have to be finished in a twenty minute period, say, at eleven o'clock every morning. They should be encouraged to work on their compositions any time they wish, for as long as they wish, and they should share these compositions with the teacher when the students feel they are ready to be shared.

12. Teachers need to know that the first copy that the child writes may not be the copy he wants to submit to the teacher. The teacher should encourage the child to write down what he wants to say, and later to go through it and edit it by taking out, adding more, or rearranging to make his composition more explicit. A lot of writing is usually done before the final copy is made.

13. Teachers should not overemphasize spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and correct grammar. Students should be allowed to take risks with writing, to experiment with words and with language. Errors which are noticeable in children's writings may best be corrected through discussion in the individual conferences.

14. When children write, they may have difficulty finding the exact words or manner in which to express themselves. They may borrow words, sentences, characters, or whole plots from certain stories they may have read or heard. This is not plagiarizing. This is their attempt to say in writing what they want to say but cannot find the words. It is important for teachers to tolerate this "borrowing". Children will find it easier to express themselves when they have had more exposure to literature.

15. It is a very good idea to publish some of the students' work. Display their writings; make small individual books and large whole-class books. Children feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when they see their work being read and enjoyed by others. Such an activity will increase their motivation to write more. Some of the books made might become part of the class library and the children might be permitted to take these books home to share with their families.

RATIONALE FOR SELECTIONS IN THE HANDBOOK

In children's literature, there are many forms and patterns that can be used by students as frameworks for organizing and presenting creative writing compositions. There are some selections, of course, which are best suited for use by grade two students, and this section presents a rationale for those selections which are included in the handbook.

Concept Books

Bent and Plaskon (1983) describe concept books as very apt models for creative writing. Hansen-Krening (1982) agrees with this and uses alphabet books as an example. She states, "alphabet books can provide a format for fascinating and creative composition" (p. 118), and she continues by saying that such books stimulate language through vocabulary expansion.

Ohanian (1987), in her article, investigates the use of alphabet books in inspiring critical thinking and wordplay. In relation to writing development, she states that these books can provide a springboard to help students find relationships in their world, to explore the fun of working with nonsense words and rhyming, to invent new words, to explore alliteration and tongue-twisters, and to examine the many unique and descriptive ways in which alphabet books are written. Through alphabet books,

she claims, young writers "come to appreciate the wonder of words" (p. 40).

Alphabet, counting, and other concept books are usually very simply written. Quite often only one line or sentence is used for each page. There is a high motivational factor here in that grade two children are writing about concepts which they know and understand. The simple nature of some of these books can be utilized to build confidence in young writers.

Two selections are presented in the handbook for both the counting and alphabet books in order to point out to teachers the many forms and styles which various authors use to present their material. Those presented are:

The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Carle)
1 is One (Tudor)
Applebet: An ABC (Watson)
Pooh's Alphabet Book (Milne)

Picture Story Books

Donham and Icken (1977) submit that "nearly any picture book can offer the teacher starting points for creative activities" (p. 555), and they offer numerous suggestions as to how this can be done. Many different kinds of writing skills can be developed through exposure to many different kinds of picture books.

Some picture books, for example, have very simple and uncomplicated plots or story-lines and they can therefore be used to help children develop a sense of story

structure. Using similar plots, children can write stories by changing the characters, incidents, and endings. Cumulative tales present strong story lines which are easily patterned, and so the following examples of cumulative tales are presented in the handbook:

Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present (Zolotow)
One Fine Day (Hogrogian)

Many picture books also make good books for modelling because they are written about topics which children can easily relate to their own experiences. Watson (1980) states that young children enjoy writing stories that are steeply based in reality" (p. 14). He says that children more readily accept the challenge to write about their own experiences when they have been exposed to "the structure and framework of a well-written story that is rich in language and sensitive to their needs and interests" (p. 13). The following books are about 'real' children and they explore the everyday experiences of these children. These books, therefore, can provide the framework and incentive for writing activities:

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day (Viorst)
Evan's Corner (Hill)
I"m Not Oscar's Friend Any More (Sharmat)
Martin's Father (Eichler)
Sadie and the Snowman (Morgan)

Repetitive language is an outstanding feature of some picture story books. Wason-Ellam (1986) discusses how repetitive language in stories can enhance the learning of both language and literary structures through oral story-

telling activities. Teachers can use repetitive stories not only for story-telling but for writing as well. Children are invited to play with language through the repetition of sentences or responses, and, in many cases, can use a given structure and substitute words to match the literary or grammatical pattern. Through activities based on this particular kind of book, young readers and writers can explore, test, and practice language. In the handbook, the selection used to illustrate this is Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? (Martin).

Although there is no language to model in wordless picture books, these books nevertheless can help students with creative writing development. The very clear and distinct illustrations help to build a sense of story, portray cause and effect relationships, establish mood and feelings, and assist in descriptive writing. Rose (1982), in discussing how books can serve as springboards for creative growth, suggests that some children "are not quite ready to trust their own perceptions" (p. 230) in writing. She says, "these youngsters need further experiences rearranging old and familiar ideas into new relationships", and further comments that some of these children "might enjoy creating their own stories for wordless picture books" (p. 230).

Hall (1981) also sees the value of wordless picture books in developing written expression. She suggests that "students write the narrative for each picture" (p. 54) in

wordless books and then draw pictures to illustrate that narrative.

Hennings (1976), as well, advocates using wordless books to stimulate language production, saying children can "(write) the script to a wordless book and (use) the pictures of the book as a story-writing guide..." (p. 25).

In order to show teachers how this type of picture book can be used in writing activities, the following selection is presented in the handbook: Frog Goes to Dinner (Mayer).

Other kinds of picture story books which can help stimulate writing are those which appeal to fantasy and magic. Books about witches and wizards, dragons and dwarfs, princesses and magic powers are highly motivational, and children enjoy writing about them. Included in the handbook as an example is The Witch Next Door (Bridwell).

Pourquoi Stories

"'Pourquoi' stories which abound in children's literature provide a natural impetus for expression" (p. 372), says Rose (1982), in discussing the use of literature as a catalyst for writing. Coody (1979), Burns and Broman (1979), Wilcox (1977), and Moffett and Wagner (1976) are some of the other authors who agree that exposure to this kind of story will not only enable

children to write their own such stories, but they will also motivate them to do so. Pourquoi stories are fanciful tales which children very easily relate to since they challenge their imagination. The structure of pourquoi stories is very easy to understand and to model. After some exposure to this kind of story, children begin to see the features of these tales. They are usually written about some very distinctive feature of an animal and they tell why or how the animal came to have such a feature. The authors mentioned above offer suggestions for writing and present some examples of children's writings. They add that a good place to start would be in the reading of Kipling's Just So Stories. Chosen for inclusion in the handbook is the pourquoi story, How The Chipmunk Got Its Stripes (Cleaver).

Fairy Tales and Folk Tales

Huck and Kerstetter (1987) discuss the idea of shared writing experiences, and comment on the ability of folk tales to stimulate and motivate children to write their own folk tales using ideas and features of those stories they are familiar with.

Petty and Bowen (1967), as well, give many suggestions to teachers for getting writing started. One of the ways they suggest is to expose children to examples of the forms found in fairy tales. They state, "Children

will be quick to note the types of events and characters which typically appear in fairy tales..." (p. 52).

Applebee (1977) describes how very young children develop a sense of the structure of fairy tales at a very early age. Young children, he states, learn intuitively three basic conventions of fairy tales simply because they are read to from fairy tales at a very young age. Those conventions are the 'once upon a time' beginning, the consistent use of past tense, and the 'happily ever after' ending. When children write, they can include not only these features in their compositions, but they can also explore other features as well, including characters who are either very good or very evil, objects of magic or characters who have magical powers, and heroes or heroines who are either rescuing or being rescued.

In order to show teachers how to use fairy tales as models, the following examples are discussed in the handbook:

<u>The Three Billy-Goats Gruff</u> (Norwegian Folk Tale)
<u>Jack and the Beanstalk</u> (Old English Fairy Tale)

<u>Tall Tales</u>

Many authors write that tall tales can be used as models for creative writing. Rose (1982), Rubin (1980), and Petty and Bowen (1967) agree that children enjoy listening to and writing tall tales because of their fascination with the element of exaggeration. Petty and

Bowen state, "After children have heard about John Henry or Paul Bunyan they can hardly be stopped from writing tall tales" (p. 53). In order to provide practical ideas on how tall tales can promote writing development, an example is presented in the handbook. That example is Paul Bunyan Swings His Axe (McCormick).

Poetry

Wilcox (1977) states that children who are exposed to many positive experiences with poetry are quite often very eager to write poetry themselves. The poems presented in this handbook have definite forms or structures, whether rhymed or unrhymed, and the children will find that they can utilize and produce poetic expression by imitating the patterns of those presented. Some poems presented have special names, such as limericks or acrostics, while others are simply poems written in unique ways. All of them will help to provide a framework which students can use for experimenting with and exploring still another dimension of creative writing.

In some cases, the text of the whole picture books is written in poetic form. Examples are presented in the handbook and can be seen in the following:

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do you See? (Martin)
Hailstones and Halibut Bones (O'Neill)
1 is One (Tudor)
Some Things Go Together (Zolotow)

Rhyming couplets are basic poetic patterns. Many poems are written in this form and the text of many picture books, some of which are listed above, is often written in couplets. Children enjoy the rhythm and flow of poetry and this form should probably be one of the very first forms presented when helping children write rhyming poetry. Hennings and Grant (1973) state, "One of the basic building blocks of rhyming poetry is the couplet" (p. 183). They continue by saying, "Requiring only two rhyming words, the couplet can be an easy introduction to the writing of rhyming-word patterns" (p. 184). Hennings and Grant describe how dictionaries and lists of rhyming words can help children build rhyming couplets. Eventually, these authors claim, children will be able to write poems which contain a series of couplets in sequence. Examples in the handbook, other than those listed above, include the following poem which is made up of a rhyming couplet for each month: "The Months" (Coleridge).

Concrete poems, according to Rubin (1980), are "a favorite among children of all ages, who enjoy experimenting with many of the poetic styles utilized by modern poets" (p. 268). Concrete poems can be read and perceived simultaneously. Rose (1982) states that these poems "blend form and content as the poem takes on the shape of the subject matter" (p. 364). Examples of

concrete poems presented in the handbook are "Watermelon" and "Hand", both written by Marion.

Acrostic poems are also easily modelled by children. Hennings (1978) feels that "even very young children, who have just learned to differentiate among beginning sounds of words, can write or patch together simple acrostics" (p. 263). She describes the acrostic poem as one in which "the letters of the subject word are written in bold print and form the beginning letters of the lines" (p. 263). Included in the handbook is the example "Marvin", written by Marion.

Children really enjoy humourous poetry. There are many other poems available which can be used to provide patterns for children who want to explore writing humourous poems. Children love to hear the poems of Lee and Silverstein, for example, over and over. Included in the handbook is the poem "There Was An Old Lady" by Dennis Lee to help provide a framework and ideas for writing nonsense and humourous verse.

Tiedt (1983) agrees with many authors who discuss the appeal of limericks. She states that children enjoy this poetic form because of its characteristic humorous, nonsense verse. Limericks basically consist of a couplet and a triplet. Children very easily see how this form is written, and using the beginning words "There once was..." or "There was..." can be helpful to young children who are beginning to imitate this form. In beginning writing

stages, too much emphasis must not be placed on the exact number of syllables in each line. Rather, the children should read and hear limericks, so that they may experience the rhythm and rhyme of the verse, and thus intuitively grasp its structure. Lobel's limerick "There Was A Small Pig Who Wept Tears" was chosen for inclusion in the handbook.

Hall (1981, p. 133) discusses a "sound" poem as one which is a list of words which tell about a particular object or event. Children can use this kind of poem to enhance and extend their vocabularies, and can use the framework for making their own sound poems. The sound poem "THUNDER" (Hall) is included in the handbook.

There are many other poems which can be modelled, as well. These poems do not have specifically labelled forms, but they do have patterns which are easily modelled and which can be used to enhance creative writing of poetry. The following are included in the handbook:

"Shore" (Jacobs)
"The Circus" (Magnan)
"Trees" (Bauer)
"Good-by and Hello" (Anthony)

It should be remembered that many children feel very uncomfortable writing poetry, especially poetry that must rhyme. Teachers should make every effort to introduce children to as many forms and patterns of poetry as possible so that they can gain a better understanding of and appreciation for this form of writing. Teachers should read poetry aloud to students, discuss the language

used, and let children experiment with poetry writing in a very relaxed and non-threatening environment and atmosphere. The selections presented in the handbook are meant to help children learn about poetry, both rhyming and free verse, so that they will have a greater understanding of the nature of poetry and therefore find more freedom in expressing themselves in written poetic forms.

As an aid to helping teachers, Burns and Broman (1979) suggest five steps as a procedure for preparing pupils to write poetry. These steps include:

> 1. Reading and study of a well-known poem. (Put it on the overhead projector or the chalkboard.)
>
> 2. Reading of a child's poem (perhaps from a previous year) to convince the children that they, too, can do it.
>
> 3. Asking questions to discuss the form under consideration.
>
> 4. Pooling experiences and opinions by the class members to gather ideas for their own poems.
>
> 5. Writing suggested, distinctive words, phrases, and ideas on the chalkboard.
>
> At this time, children are invited to move into the creation of their own poems. (pp. 250-251)

The steps described here may be applied effectively to the teaching of prose as well as poetry, and are considered, therefore, in the activities suggested for each unit of the handbook.

ACTIVITIES BASED ON

SELECTIONS FROM CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

TITLE: The Very Hungry Caterpillar

AUTHOR: Eric Carle

PUBLISHED: Toronto: Scholastic, (no date).

ANNOTATION: A hungry little caterpillar literally eats his way through the pages of this story book and finally emerges as a butterfly.

Introduction

This is a very popular book which looks at the concept of counting. Children enjoy and catch on very quickly to the pattern used in the book, and this pattern can be used by students to write similar counting books.

Suggested Activities

1. The author uses the numbers 1 to 8 to emphasize the days from one Sunday to the next Sunday in which the caterpillar eats a corresponding number of foods. Have the students make a list of and discuss some other small creatures and the foods they might eat in a similar time period. For example, a hungry spider might eat one beetle on Sunday, two dragonflies on Monday, three bumblebees on Tuesday, and so on. Have them experiment with surprise endings!

2. Suggest to the children that they expand this idea into the twelve months of the year. Have them discuss and then write about some larger animals, such as polar bears, and what they might eat each month.

3. The students might think of some of their favourite characters and write about what they might eat for a week. For example, these characters might include Winnie the Pooh, Oscar the Grouch, Curious George, or Templeton.

One purpose of activities such as those above is to have children examine closely the pattern in the book, where the "creature" eats a cumulative amount of food

within a specific time frame. The children see that they can vary the context by changing the main character and by changing the foods so that they may reflect the personality or nature of the character doing the eating. For example, Templeton might eat one banana peel on Sunday, two apple cores on Monday, and so on.

Another purpose for these activities is to introduce the students to the use of surprise endings in their writings. Children are delighted by the surprise ending in The Very Hungry Caterpillar and may be encouraged to think of surprise endings for their own compositions.

4. The students might like to write about their favourite foods, describing what they would like to eat for each of the seven days of the week or for each of the twelve months.

The purpose of this activity is to have children write from their own personal view, to write something about themselves. Children find it easy to write about themselves. An activity such as this one is therefore very motivational.

5. The students should make their own counting books with their own illustrations and, following the pattern in The Very Hungry Caterpillar, they can cut holes in the foods illustrated and also cut their pages in the same manner as Carle does in his book.

The purpose of this activity is to explore with children the idea that creative writing can be presented in creative ways. This activity draws attention to the interesting features of the book -- the holes eaten through the foods and the varying sizes of the pages. Making a book with these features can be highly motivating and enriching, and will help the students see that all books do not follow a standard format.

TITLE: 1 is One

AUTHOR: Tasha Tudor

PUBLISHED: New York: Walck, 1956.

ANNOTATION: Rhyming couplets are used to describe each numeral from one to ten. The numerals are presented in both numerical and word form, and are accompanied by pictures which illustrate the content for each numeral.

Introduction

This counting book is presented in order to show the reader that there are many ways of writing such books, and to establish the importance of introducing the students to the many forms and patterns which exist in counting books. There are many different forms of presentation found in the many counting books and these two selections, The Very Hungry Caterpillar and 1 is One, are included here to emphasize this point. Teachers should make children aware of this as they discuss the selections, and they should provide in the classroom many other books on counting in order to expose the students to as many forms or patterns as possible.

Suggested Activities

1. Have the students write a counting book from 0 to 10 which has a particular setting from which to draw the numerals and items. Some settings might include:

- a candy store	- a forest	- animals
- the zoo	- a park	- a farm
- toys	- a desert	- a neighbourhood
- the jungle	- school	- lunch counter

- the circus - a closet - living room
- the seashore - a garden - the ocean

For example, children might write .... "In the Candy Store, I saw 1 stick of red licorice, 2 all-day suckers, 3 giant jelly jubes, and so on. The children can expand on these as much as they want, and use brightly coloured drawings to illustrate their text. Tudor uses rhyming couplets with each numeral. Children can be encouraged to write their text in rhyme also, but it must be remembered that writing rhyme is a difficult task, and should not be forced on students who are not ready for the challenge.

2. Encourage the students to write and illustrate counting books which emphasize skip counting, i.e., counting by 2's, 5's, or 10's.

3. Have the students choose a number to illustrate and write about in their own particular way. Put the pages together to make a class counting book.

4. Recommend that the students make their own counting books using numbers from 11 to 20, by continuing the existing pattern in Tudor's book.

Even though children find it difficult to write poetry, they nevertheless enjoy the flow of language when books are written in rhyme. This book shows them that writing in poetic form can be very enjoyable. Teachers should be very sympathetic and helpful to those students who wish to try to write in rhyme and equally understanding of those who do not wish to do so. This is a good book for introducing children to the idea of writing in rhyme, however, since the text is written in rhyming couplets which are probably the easiest kinds of rhyme to write.

Bibliography

The following is a list of other counting books which can be used as models for imitating other forms and patterns:

Bridgemen, Elizabeth. All the Little Bunnies: A Counting Book. Atheneum, 1977.

Carle, Eric. 1, 2, 3 to the Zoo. World Publishing, 1968.

_____. My Very First Book of Numbers. Crowell, 1974.

Elkin, Benjamin. Six Foolish Fishermen. Children's Press, 1967.

Feelings, Muriel. Moja Means One: Swahili Counting Book. Dial, 1971.

Francoise (Seignobose). Jeanne Marie Counts Her Sheep. Scribner, 1951.

Ginsburg, Mirra. Kitten from One to Ten. Crown, 1980.

Gretz, Susanna. Teddy Bears 1 to 10. Follett, 1969.

Hoban, Russell. Ten What? A Mystery Counting Book. Scribner, 1975.

Hoban, Tana. Count and See. Macmillan, 1972.

Keats, Ezra Jack. Over in the Meadow. Four Winds, 1972.

Leydenfrost, Robert. Ten Little Elephants. Doubleday, 1975.

Mack, Stan. 10 Bears in My Bed. Pantheon, 1974.

Maestro, Giulio. One More and One Less. Crown, 1974.

Merriam, Eve. Project 1-2-3. McGraw, 1971.

Oxenbury, Helen. Numbers of Things. Watts, 1968.

Watson, Nancy Digman. What is One? Knopf, 1954.

Wildsmith, Brian. 1, 2, 3's. Watts, 1965.

Wyse, Anne and Alex. The One to Fifty Book. University of Toronto, 1973.

Zaid, Barry. Chicken Little. Random, (no date).

TITLE: Applebet: An ABC.

AUTHOR: Clyde Watson

PUBLISHED: New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1982.

ANNOTATION: This ABC book uses the alphabet to tell the story of apple-picking time. Each picture illustrates a letter (or letters) of the alphabet, as do the rhyming couplets accompanying it.

Introduction

Alphabet books present another example of concept books which may be utilized as models for writing. As with counting books, there are many different forms and patterns to be found in the alphabet books, and children can draw on these forms in their own writings. Also, the rhyming couplets presented in the book might be explored further with students who wish to accept the challenge of writing in rhyme.

Suggested Activities

1. Have the students choose a special event such as the opening of school, autumn, Thanksgiving, the first snow, Christmas, or the forest in springtime to describe in rhyming couplets (or simply in descriptive sentences) some of the things which are associated with such an event.

2. Encourage the students to make a class book where a certain topic or theme, such as those already mentioned above, is chosen. Each child could be given one or two letters to write about that theme, and then all the letters assembled to make the book. Some other themes might include:

   - Halloween
   - dinosaurs
   - Grandma's house
   - a ski trip

- outer space
- a city
- night
- winter

The purpose of these activities is to look at the pattern used in Watson's book and to change the content so that the children gain experience in writing about a variety of topics within an existing framework.

TITLE: Pooh's Alphabet Book

AUTHOR: A. A. Milne

PUBLISHED: New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1975.

ANNOTATION: Each letter of the alphabet is used to introduce quotations from the Pooh books which contain words that exemplify that letter.

Introduction

There are a great many patterns used in the writing of alphabet books; two of these books are presented here to show two contrasting styles. As with the counting books, these styles can be compared and contrasted with other alphabet books.

Suggested Activities

1. Invite the children to choose a book such as Charlotte's Web (White, 1952) or The Mouse and the Motorcycle (Cleary, 1965) and find quotations which are particularly memorable or which tell of key incidents in the story to go along with each letter in the same way as Milne has done with his book. For example, in looking at The Mouse and the Motorcycle, one could write: A -- An aspirin tablet... The boy has a fever and needs an aspirin.

2. Suggest that the students use their own words to describe characters, objects, or incidents from the book.

3. Propose to the children that they make an alphabet book of characters which they have read about in different books. The children can name the character, write a descriptive passage about that character, and illustrate their writing. Some examples might include:

   A is for Alice in Wonderland
   B is for Beezus
   C is for Charlotte

These activities help children to focus on important points in a story so that they can write descriptive passages about them. It is also an excellent exercise for reinforcing vocabulary introduced in the book, and provides a means by which the vocabulary can be strengthened in context. Writing paragraphs or passages about different characters is an effective way of initiating or reinforcing descriptive writing, as well. Many of the characters in children's books are very memorable and so well-defined that the students have a great deal to draw on when writing about these characters.

4. Have the children write an alphabet book about themselves. To illustrate each letter, have them choose something that is important to them personally, and then write about it. For example, one child might write, "B is for my baseball bat. I hit a home run once."

This activity makes the writing more personal. Children are drawing from a source they know well - themselves- and, since the writing is about them, they are motivated to write.

Bibliography

The following alphabet books can be looked at and discussed in conjunction with the ones presented here:

Anno, Mitsumasa. Anno's Alphabet: An Adventure in Imagination. Crowell, 1975.

Baskin, Leonard. Hosie's Alphabet. Viking, 1972.

Berger, Terry. Ben's ABC Day. Lothrop, 1982.

Brown, Marcia. All Butterflies: an ABC. Scribner, 1974.

Deasy, Michael. City's ABC's. Walker, 1974.

Farber, Norman. As I Was Crossing Boston Common. Dutton, 1975.

Feelings, Muriel. Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book. Dial, 1974.

Gag, Wanda. ABC Bunny. Coward, 1933.

Garten, Jan. The Alphabet Tale. Random, 1964.

Gretz, Susanna. Teddy Bears abc. Follett, 1975.

Gwynne, Fred. Ick's ABC. Windmill, 1971.

Matthiesen, Thomas. ABC: An Alphabet Book. Platt, 1966.

Musgrove, Margaret. Ashanti to Zulu. Dial, 1976.

Newberry, Clare T.. Kitten's ABC. Harper, 1964.

Oxenbury, Helen. Helen Oxenbury's ABC of things. Delcaorte, 1971.

Rey, H.A. Curious George Learns the Alphabet. Houghton, 1963.

Rojankovsky, Feodor. Animals in the Zoo. Knopf, 1962.

Schmiderer, Dorothy. The Alphabeast Book: An Abecedarium. Holt, 1971.

Tudor, Tasha. A is for Annabelle. Walck, 1954.

Walters, Marguerite. The City-Country ABC: My Alphabet Ride in the City, and My Alphabet Ride in the Country. Doubleday, 1966.

TITLE: Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present

AUTHOR: Charlotte Zolotow

PUBLISHED: New York: Harper & Row, 1962 (1977).

ANNOTATION: The little girl in the story is looking for a very special birthday present for her mother and enlists the help of Mr. Rabbit in finding it.

Introduction

There is a pattern in this story which can be followed. The little girl uses colours to describe what her mother likes, and she and Mr. Rabbit try to think of things that colour which might make a nice present. Her mother likes red, for example, so they proceed to think of things that are red. At first, four or five things are suggested but are not suitable; then finally something just right is found. This same pattern is followed for yellow, green, and blue until the birthday present is complete.

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss with the children the ending of the story where all of the items chosen of different colours results in a basket of fruit. Question the children about other "groups" which might be explored to make up a present suitable for mother, for example, a bouquet of flowers or a tray of vegetables. Have the children use the pattern in the book to write about their present. If the children decide to use flowers, it would be beneficial to look at the names of flowers which are certain colours. A child might write that her mother likes orange; she does not need or want a pumpkin, a carrot, a goldfish, or marmalade; she

would like to have a marigold, however. This pattern could be repeated until the result is a bouquet of flowers.

The purpose of this activity is to look at the pattern used by Zolotow and to apply it in their own writing. The ending to this story is a very good one in that it draws all of Mr. Rabbit's suggestions into a whole to make the basket of fruit. Using other groups of objects which can be brought together at the end of the story will help the students write good endings.

2. Invite the children to fill a Christmas stocking for father (or brother or sister). Instead of using colours as the adjectives, suggest that they use descriptive words such as 'long', 'shiny', 'soft', or 'furry'. The same pattern discussed above may be used here, as well.

This activity will help the children adapt the pattern in the book to include a person other than mother, and to think about adjectives other than colours as the criteria necessary to define the present. Children's writing vocabularies may be enhanced in this activity because it requires many descriptive words.

TITLE: One Fine Day

AUTHOR: Nonny Hogrogian

PUBLISHED: New York: Collier/Macmillan Publishing Co., Ltd., 1971.

ANNOTATION: This is an Armenian folk tale about a fox whose tail is chopped off and who seeks a list of things from others, such as a cow, the grass, a stream, in order to get his tail back again.

Introduction

This story is an example of a repetitive, cumulative tale. A succession of events occurs, of which the end result is that everyone helps everyone else get something he wants. An old woman chops off a fox's tail because he drinks all the milk in her pail. She will return his tail only if he returns the milk; the cow he meets will give him the milk if the fox will give him some grass; the field of grass wants some water, the stream of water wants a jug, the maiden with the jug wants a blue bead, and so on. After reading this and discussing the pattern of events, children may use the same pattern to write their own stories.

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss with the children the repetition in the story and how one encounter leads to another. Have the children dramatize the story by using the objects sought in the story. This may be done using real objects and classmates, or it may be done by using flannel board figures and cutouts.

2. Using the same manipulative exercise mentioned in the first activity, have the children substitute the animals and the things sought. For example, the children might begin with a donkey who loses his tail because he eats the farmer's hay; the farmer will give him back his tail if the donkey returns the hay. The donkey asks the field of hay who wants a scarecrow; the scarecrow wants some clothes; the old woman with the clothes wants some berries, and so on.

   The purpose of these activities is to help the children see clearly the pattern used in the text so that they can modify it in their own writing. Using manipulative objects may help students establish the sequence in a concrete way.

3. Bosma (1987) suggests that children be guided in sentence building by adding adjectives to the sentences in the original text. She states:

> A second grader at Stepping Stones Montessori School in Grand Rapids, Michigan, made these changes:
>
> A chestnut-colored fox came upon a kind, wonderful miller and asked him, "Oh please, kind miller, give me a little grain to give the chuckling, big, fat hen to get a hard-boiled white egg." (p. 43)

Bosma believes that the adding of descriptors in writing texts will enhance the writing and make it more interesting. It will also give children a chance to explore ways of making their writings more exact in detail.

Encourage the children to look again at the text of Hogrogian's story and add descriptors to make it more interesting. If the students write their own versions, they may be encouraged to write descriptors in their own stories, as well.

Bibliography

The following books also contain cumulative patterns:

Baum, Arline and Joseph. One Bright Monday Morning. Random, 1962.

Burningham, John. Mr. Grumpy's Outing. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.

Carle, Eric. The Very Busy Spider. Crowell, 1984.

Flack, Marjorie. Ask Mr. Bear. Macmillan, 1932.

Fransconi, Antonio. The House that Jack Built. Harcourt, 1958.

Gag, Wanda. Millions of Cats. Coward, 1928.

Galdone, Paul. Henny Penny. Seabury, 1968.

_____. The Old Woman and Her Pig. McGraw-Hill, 1960.

_____. The Three Little Pigs. Seabury, 1970.

_____. The Three Wishes. McGraw-Hill, 1961.

Grimm Brothers. "The Bremen Town Musicians" in Grimm's Fairy Tales. Follett, 1968.

Kent, Jack. The Fat Cat: A Danish Folktale. Parents', 1971.

Nic Leodhas, Sorche, pseud. (Leclaire Alger). All in the Morning Early. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963.

Sawyer, Ruth. Johnny Cake, Ho! Viking, 1953.

Sendak, Maurice. One Was Johnny: A Counting Book in Nutshell Library. Harper, 1962.

Tolstoy, Alexei. The Great Enormous Turnip. Heinemann, 1968.

(Traditional). The Gingerbread Man. Goldren Press, 1979.

Westcott, Nadine. I Know An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly. Little, Brown, 1980.

TITLE: Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

AUTHOR: Judith Viorst

PUBLISHED: Canada: McClelland & Stewart, Ltd., 1972.

ANNOTATION: Alexander knew it was going to be a bad day from the moment he woke up! Good things happen to everyone around him but only bad things happen to him. Anthony found a Corvette Sting Ray car kit in his cereal box that morning. Nick found a Junior Undercover Agent code ring in his cereal box. But Alexander found nothing but cereal in his box! His whole day is a succession of unpleasant events.

Introduction

Because everyone has bad days, children will be able to identify with Alexander. Teachers should examine with the students the plot of the story. It describes a series of incidents which happen to Alexander during the day, incidents which cause him to think about how terrible the day really is. The author uses a pattern here to describe what is happening to Alexander. She first of all tells about good things that are happening to some of Alexander's family members or friends and then she tells about the bad thing which is happening to Alexander. Putting the two together is a very effective way of highlighting just how horrible Alexander's day is. This technique could be discussed with the students.

Suggested Activities

1. Have the students think and write about a particularly bad day which they may have had, and describe the incidents which happened, following the form of Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day.

   The purpose of this activity is to have children explore their own feelings and draw on their own experiences in their writings.

2. Suggest to the students that they write about a day when the tables were turned, when good things happened to them and bad things happened to everyone else (mother, Grandma, best friends, sisters). Don't forget to discuss a new title!

   In this activity, children use the same framework but reverse the roles. When the children change the title, they must explore synonyms for a "good" day.

3. There is a great deal of repetition in the language used in the story. Alexander constantly says that it is a "terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day", that he is going to move to Australia, and that he hates things, like lima beans, kissing on TV, wearing his railroad pajamas. After discussing how important the repetition is to establishing the mood of the book, recommend to the students as they write that they, too, use repetition in their stories.

Bibliography

The following books can also be explored by the students as they investigate ideas to write about concerning the content of the model story:

Ardizzone, E. The Wrong Side of the Bed. Doubleday, 1970.

Charlip, Remy. What Good Luck! What Bad Luck! Scholastic, 1969.

Lexau, Joan. I Should Have Stayed in Bed. Harper, 1965.

Payne, Nina. "Crosspatch" in All the Day Long. Atheneum, 1973.

Viorst, Judith. Alexander Who Used to be Rich. Last Sunday. Atheneum, 1980.

TITLE: Evan's Corner

AUTHOR: Elizabeth Starr Hill

PUBLISHED: New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967.

ANNOTATION: As a member of a large family, Evan wishes, more than anything else in the world, to have someplace he can call his own. He chooses a corner of the room in his family's apartment for his own special place. But when he thinks his place has everything he wants and needs, he discovers something is still missing. His mother helps him find what it is.

Introduction

This beautifully written book can help children write about their own experiences. Some children already have a very special place of their own where they like to go (a tree-house, behind the woodshed, or in the basement). After discussing such places, the children may write stories about their special places, those they already have or those they might like to have.

Suggested Activities

1. Encourage the students to talk about any special places they might like to visit. Guide them to talk about such things as what this place looks like, what makes it such a special place, whether they like to go there alone or with a special friend, and the kinds of things they like to do in these special places.

2. Invite the students (especially those who may not already have a special place of their own) to think of a 'pretend' place they might visit. Discuss with them the points mentioned in the activity above, asking them what this place MIGHT look like, and so on.

These activities are designed to help the students explore their feelings so that they, like Evan, will learn the value of both being alone and of sharing with and helping a friend. These activities may also help the students explore methods or ways of describing a physical area (the special place).

3. After the children have discussed this topic, read the story aloud, pointing out to the students why Evan wants a special place and how he goes about making his corner his own very special area. Then invite the children to write stories about their special places, either real or pretend. The questions mentioned in the first activity will help to generate ideas to include in their own stories. Suggest to the students that they, too, write about some of the things they have done (or would like to do) to make their place special the way Evan does with the painted picture, the flower, the turtle and so on.

   This activity is designed to help each student develop a plot or story line for each of their stories. Evan follows a sequential pattern in finding, making, or buying things for his special corner, and the children could be encouraged to follow this sequential pattern as they write about the things they have (or would like to have) in their places.

4. Recommend to the children that they pick a corner of the classroom and make it a special place for writing. Call it the Writing Corner or Writing Centre. Suggest that each student bring something special to put in it, in order to make the corner a little more personal for everyone.

   This activity would give the students a very special place to go to and write when they feel they would like to write. This place would be highly motivational since something of personal interest to each child would be there.

Bibliography

The following selections can be read to the students in order to present them with ideas about special places:

De Bruyn, M. Six Special Places. Whitman, 1975.

Sage, M. The Tree and Me. Walck, 1970.

TITLE: I'm Not Oscar's Friend Any More

AUTHOR: Marjorie Weinman Sharmat

PUBLISHED: New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1975.

ANNOTATION: Oscar and his friend have quarrelled. This friend tells Oscar why they aren't friends anymore and, in doing so, realizes that there are a lot of things he is going to miss doing with Oscar now that they are 'ex-friends'. He finally decides that it would be a good idea to let Oscar reconcile with him, since Oscar can't do anything without him anyway! Meanwhile, Oscar is oblivious to his friend's thoughts.

Introduction

Even best friends quarrel sometimes and this provides the motivation for exploring the feelings presented in this book. Through discussion, students can explore the concept of friendship and can examine the fact that friends sometimes see things differently. The children can be encouraged to relate these feelings to their own experiences. The main purpose in using this book is to encourage students to explore the way the author presents the problem of quarrelling between friends and to examine how such a problem is resolved so that the children can be motivated to write about similar incidents which may have happened to them.

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss with the students the concept of friendship. Guide them to see that it is sometimes natural for friends to quarrel. This discussion should serve to encourage the students to talk about times when they may have quarrelled with a friend.

2. Read the story aloud to the class and discuss some of the interesting features of the story, for example, the list of things the boys shared when they were friends, the fact that the quarrel is discussed from only one point of view (the friend's), and that the quarrel is resolved in the end.

3. Have the students think about a time when they quarrelled with a friend. Have them write about what caused the quarrel, and tell who, in their opinion, was right.

4. Suggest that the students think (and then write) about how they felt when they were not talking to their friends.

5. Encourage the students to think about how their friends are feeling. Have them write about the quarrel from their friend's point of view.

6. Propose to the students that they write about the many things they enjoyed doing with their friends. Have them then examine how things were different when they were angry with each other.

7. Have the students suggest ways which might prevent a quarrel. Have them choose one of the ways to write about.

8. Ask the students to think about their feelings after the quarrel is resolved. Encourage them to write about their feelings now.

The purpose of these activities is to examine closely the content of the book in order to help children gain insight into the common problem of quarrelling. In completing these activities, the children will learn more about their own feelings, as well as the feelings of their friends.

Bibliography

The following books also look at the topic of quarrelling friends. These books can be read by the students and placed in the Writing Centre to be used as references for the children as they write.

Beim, L. and J. Two is a Team. Harcourt, 1973.

Blume, J. The pain and The Great One. Bradbury Press, 1974.

Udry, Janice May. Let's Be Enemies. Harper & Row, 1961.

Zolotow, C. The Hating Book. Harper, 1969.

_____. The Quarreling Book. Harper, 1963.

_____. The Unfriendly Book. Harper, 1975.

TITLE: Martin's Father

AUTHOR: Margaret Eichler

PUBLISHED: Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Lollipop Power, Inc., 1983.

ANNOTATION: Martin has the best father in the world. This story tells of some of the things they do together -- the laundry, cook meals, play hide-and-seek, have fun at bathtime and bedtime.

Introduction

Children in the primary grades spend a lot of time talking and learning about themselves and their families. Teachers can use this book and the ones that follow in the bibliography in order to develop writing skills within the framework of the theme of 'Families'. The pattern used by the author consists of listing some of the activities which a little boy does with his father. This pattern can be used by students as they explore similar topics and ideas.

Suggested Activities

1. Begin with a discussion about fathers and the kinds of activities which the students participate in with their fathers. Then read the book to the students and discuss the activities Martin and his father engage in together.

   The purpose of this activity is to have the children look at some of their own experiences with their fathers. The discussion will help them think about ideas for writings. Reading the book to them and then discussing its contents will help establish a method of organizing their ideas for writing, thus giving them a format to use when they write.

2. Suggest to the children that they use a similar format or pattern to write about other members of their families, such as their mother, grandparents, brother, or sister:

3. Propose to the students that they think of some activities which they do not participate in with their father but would very much like to. Have the children write about these activities, using the same pattern as discussed.

Bibliography

The following books also talk about fathers and may be used as an extension of the topic 'Families':

Caines, Jeanette. Daddy. Harper, 1977.

Cleary, Beverly. Ramona and Her Father. Morrow, 1977.

Freedman, Russell. Animal Fathers. Holiday, 1976.

Lexau, Joan M. Me Day. Dial, 1971.

Sonneborn, Ruth A. Friday Night is Papa Night. Viking, 1970.

Viereck, Phillip. Let Me Tell You About My Dad. John Day Company, 1977.

Zolotow, Charlotte. A Father Like That. Harper, 1971.

_____. If You Listen. Harper, 1980.

TITLE: Sadie and the Snowman

AUTHOR: Allen Morgan

PUBLISHED: New York: Scholastic Inc., 1985.

ANNOTATION: Sadie builds a snowman and uses different foods to make his eyes, nose and mouth. But the animals in the forest -- the raccoon, the squirrel, and the birds -- keep eating the food, and the snowman keeps melting. Sadie soon discovers a way in which she can keep the snowman until next year.

Introduction

There is a distinctive pattern here which children may follow in writing about building a snowman. The author uses a lot of repetition in his writing; for example, "Hew was a really good snowman and he lasted for a long time", and "... and she rolled them and rolled them until they were done." There is also repetition in that the same animals keep eating the food used for the facial features. Everytime Sadie rebuilds the snowman, the birds eat the eyes, the squirrel eats the noses, and the raccoon steals the smiles. Because there is so much repetition, the story is very predictable and the children enjoy knowing what is coming next.

Suggested Activities

1. Children in Newfoundland are very familiar with building snowmen, and this book can be used as a model for them to write about how a snowman is built. In order to introduce the book, take the students

outside during the winter, and have them build a snowman. Then let them discuss what steps they followed to build it. Finally, let them write what they did, following a step by step procedure.

The main purpose of this activity is to help the children explore writing in a sequence. The children can write what they did first, next, and so on in order to develop the very simple plot. Just as Morgan uses the same plot over and over again each time Sadie rebuilds her snowman, so can the children.

2. Have the children write and describe how they would decorate their snowman's face. Sadie uses "cookies for the eyes, an apple for the nose, and a great big banana for the smile" the first time she builds her snowman and then uses something different each time she rebuilds him. Certain animals take the food she uses and this could be developed in the children's writings. Encourage them to be imaginative and ask them what animals might come and eat the food from their snowman.

3. Suggest to the children that they describe other ways in which they might decorate their snowman. This activity could begin with a brainstorming session where the children discuss the many things that might be used for his hat, arms, scarves, buttons, or other clothing.

Activities such as these may help the children develop skills in descriptive writing. The children can also learn how to write a story in which the same actions are repeated over and over again with a minor difference each time. This will help the children explore and experiment with plot development.

4. Invite the children to pretend that they are one of the animals taking the food off the snowman. Have them tell why they are taking the food and how they feel doing it.

This activity will extend the children's writing into that of exploring the point of view of another character in the story.

Bibliography

The following books contain a lot of repetition in actions and can be utilized with the activities listed above:

Domanski, Janina. The Little Red Hen. Macmillan, 1973.

Galdone, Paul. The Three Bears. Seabury, 1972.

_____. The Three Little Pigs. Seabury, 1970.

Grimm Brothers. "Bremen Town Musicians" in Grimms Fairy Tales. Follett, 1968.

_____. "The Fisherman and His Wife" in Tales from Grimm. Coward-McCann, 1936.

Norwegian Folktale. The Three Billy-Goats Gruff. Scholastic, 1984.

Stobbs, William. Jack and the Beanstalk. Delacorte, 1969.

TITLE: Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?

AUTHOR: Bill Martin, Jr.

PUBLISHED: New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1983.

ANNOTATION: A brown bear, a red bird, a yellow duck and several other animals make up this very predictable book which children love to respond to. The author uses a question-answer pattern in rhyming form as the context of this book:

> Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?
> I see a red bird looking at me.
> Red bird, red bird, what do you see?
> I see a ....

Introduction

This is a very simply written and illustrated book, and it can be used effectively as a model for creative written expression. The pattern, as shown above in the annotation, is an adjective-noun pattern where the adjectives are colour words and the nouns are animals. Children can model this text simply by substituting different adjectives and nouns.

Suggested Activities

1. After reading and discussion the book with the children, an oral activity could be done where the catchy rhyme is used by the students. Have the children use different animals. For example, "Gray elephant, gray elephant, what do you see?"

   The purpose of this activity is to draw on the oral language of the children in order to establish the pattern used in the book.

2. Suggest that the children use this pattern to write about different themes. During Halloween, for example, the children might write "Black witch, black witch, what do you see?" and they could include "orange pumpkin", "white ghost", "yellow moon", "black cat", and so on.

   The purpose of this activity is to extend the existing pattern into other themes and contexts, by substituting the persons, animals, or objects seen.

3. In place of colour words, have the students write using other descriptive words. For example, "Frightened mouse, frightened mouse, what do you see? I see a furry cat glaring at me!" Other words could be explored to take the place of the word 'looking' in the original text, such as 'glaring'.

   The purpose of this activity is to give children an opportunity to increase their writing vocabularies and to use other kinds of describing words in place of colour words.

4. Encourage the children to make their own books to accompany the texts they have written. The illustrations could be very simple ones as are those in Martin's book. The children's books could then be used in the Kindergarten classroom as reading material.

   This book is an easy one to model, both in its text and its illustrations. Children are highly motivated to write when they see their writing in finished form and when they see that they too can write a book which can be enjoyed by other children.

TITLE: Frog Goes to Dinner

AUTHOR: Mercer Mayer

PUBLISHED: New York: The Dial Press, 1974.

ANNOTATION: A curious frog wants to go out to dinner so he hides in a young boy's pocket. When the family gets to the restaurant, however, there are too many things to explore for him to remain hidden. Frog creates so much havoc in the restaurant that the family is asked to leave.

Introduction

Cullinan (1981) states:

> The characteristics of wordless books... make them uniquely suited for use with children who are developing a sense of story. (p. 80)

This wordless picture book will provide an excellent means of stimulating language development. Even though there is no written text, this type of picture book can be used for a variety of writing activities which would enhance the child's development of story line or plot, setting, characterization, story beginning, conclusion, and vocabulary. The illustrations are very explicit and detailed so that actions and sequence are clearly seen.

Suggested Activities

1. Have the students write the story in their own words.

   An activity such as this will help students develop a sense of story line or plot, and the excellent illustrations will help them formulate the story, incident by incident. The pictures clearly help the students determine what happens first, second, next,

and so on, and can help them see how a story is built with a beginning (an initiating event), a middle (several cause and effect episodes), and a conclusion.

2. Recommend that the students write about further adventures frog may have had in the restaurant had he not gotten caught when he did.

   Many children's books contain plots which have many episodes. An activity such as this helps the students to explore such a plot and to expand stories they write themselves so that several episodes are included.

3. Have the students write about the mood of the family members as they are getting ready to go out, and then compare it with their mood when they arrive home.

   This writing activity will reveal much about the nature of the characters in the story. Children will explore the cause and effect relationships between the incidents and the feelings of the characters.

4. Have the children prepare and present orally a conversation which might be carried on in a particular scene; for example, the conversation of the family on their way home in the car.

   The use and importance of conversation, the development of vocabulary, and the establishment of mood can be explored and developed through this activity where children play the part of the characters and present what these characters might be saying.

5. Invite the children to write about what they thought was the funniest part of the story.

   Children are highly motivated by humourous situations and in writing about a humourous situation in this book, they can explore the idea of how to create humour with words as well as with illustrations.

6. Propose to the children that they write descriptions of the restaurant, the waiter, or the trip home in the car.

   This activity will help the students explore descriptive writing in which a particular person, place, or situation can be described.

7. Suggest that the students write about another place where Frog goes with the boy and tell about his adventures there. Some suggested titles (places) might include:

Frog Goes to the Department Store
Frog Goes to the Seashore
Frog Goes to the Circus
Frog Goes to School

Parallel plot construction is used in this activity where the student takes one story and its happenings and writes another similar story with different incidents.

Bibliography

The following is a list of other wordless picture books which could be used in similar ways:

Anno, Mitsumasa. Anno's Journey. World, 1978.

Brinckloe, Julie. Spider Web. Doubleday, 1974.

Burningham, John. Come Away From the Water, Shirley. Crowell, 1977.

_____. Time to Get Out of the Bath, Shirley. Crowell, 1978.

Carle, Eric. Do You Want to Be My Friend? Crowell, 1971.

Carroll, Ruth. What Whiskers Did. Walck, 1965.

Carroll, Ruth and Latrobe. The Christmas Kitten. Walck, 1970.

DeGroat, Diane. Alligator's Toothache. Crown, 1977.

de Paola, Tomie. Pancakes for Breakfast. Harcourt, 1978.

Goodall, John S. Shrewbettina's Birthday. Harcourt, 1971.

_____. The Picnic Surprise. Atheneum, 1977.

Hutchins, Pat. Rosie's Walk. Macmillan, 1968.

Mari, Iela and Enzo. The Apple and the Moth. Pantheon, 1970.

Mayer, Mercer. A Boy, A Dog and A Frog. Dial, 1967.

_____. Frog, Where Are You? Dial, 1969.

_____. Hiccup. Dial, 1976.

_____. One Frog Too Many. Dial, 1975.

Ringi, Kjell. The Magic Stick. Harper and Row, 1968.

Spier, Peter. Noah's Ark. Doubleday, 1977.

Turkle, Brinton. Deep in the Forest. Dutton, 1976.

Ueno, Noriko. Elephant Buttons. Harper and Row, 1973.

TITLE: The Witch Next Door

AUTHOR: Norman Bridwell

PUBLISHED: New York: Scholastic, 1986.

ANNOTATION: The children know there is a witch living next door. There are many things that she does which indicates that she is a witch; her furniture walks into her house, she paints her house black, and she sleeps hanging upside down from her ceiling light.

Introduction

This book contains a story of many incidents which show the reader that the children in the book know, not only that they have a witch living next door, but that she is a good and kind witch. The topic of "witches" always fascinates children and this book (as well as the books in the bibliography) might be used during Halloween. Children can explore through these books the idea that there are good and bad witches. The book is written so that it lists certain characteristics about the witch next door, and children may follow this same format in several ways.

Suggested Activities

1. Have the children discuss some of the helpful things the witch does in her neighbourhood. Write about how these things might be different if she were a bad witch. For example, the good witch changes the little boy's lollipop into a bigger one. A bad witch might change the lollipop into one with a horrible, nasty taste!

2. Recommend to the students that they write about some other nice things a good witch might do.

3. Review with the students, after the book has been read, some of the things the witch does to indicate her good nature. Then discuss with the students, and as a follow-up activity have them write about, some things going on next door which might indicate that the witch living there is an evil one.

   The purpose of these activities is to encourage the children to use the information in the book and to utilize its form for their own stories, and to vary the model supplied by the story for their own purposes.

4. Have the children write about some of the good witches they have heard or read about (Glinda in The Wizard of Oz, Dorrie in Dorrie and the Witch's Imp, Madame Mim in Donald Duck and the Witch Next Door) and some of the bad witches they might be familiar with (the witches in Hansel and Gretel and in Snow White, the Wicked Witch of the West in The Wizard of Oz, Mag in Sarah's Unicorn).

   The children can use their vicarious experiences from other books to draw on as they write. Having read or heard about all these different witches will provide them with a great many ideas for writing stories about witches.

5. Encourage the children to contribute to the making of a word tree or a word wall on which they can place words which can be associated with witches. A word tree is a small birch tree placed in a container of sand and onto whose branches hang descriptive words; a word wall is a wall onto which the descriptive words are displayed. Words, phrases, and memorable sentences or passages from well-liked stories or poems can be written by the children to display on the tree or the wall. A good idea is to place these words, phrases, and sentences on witch-shaped patterns.

   This activity will enhance the vocabulary of the students and will provide many words for them to choose from as they write.

6. Using the same pattern as in Bridwell's book, have the children substitute another person for the witch. A new title might be "The Magician Next Door" or "The Inventor Next Door". The children can list the things which indicated that this person must be a magician or an inventor.

The purpose of this activity is to have the children write their own stories using the format employed by Bridwell.

Bibliography

These books about witches can be used to spark children's imaginations and help give them a good background from which to draw as they write:

Adams, Adrienne. A Halloween Happening. Scribner, 1981.

Cole, William, Ed. Poems of Magic and Spells. World, 1960.

Coombs, Patricia. Dorrie and the Witch's Imp. Lothrop, 1975.

Coville, Bruce. Sarah's Unicorn. Lippincott, 1979.

Disney, Walt. Donald Duck and the Witch Next Door. A Golden Book.

Hughes, Ted. Meet My Folks. Little, 1968.

Kroll, Steven. The Candy Witch. Holiday, 1979.

Low, Alice. The Witch Who Was Afraid of Witches. Pantheon, 1978.

Mahy, Margaret. The Boy With Two Shadows. Watts, 1971.

Massey, Jeanne. The Littlest Witch. Knopf, 1959.

McCord, David. Away and Ago. Little, 1968.

McNeill, Janet. The Magic Lollipop. Children's, 1976.

Moore, Lilian. See My Lovely Poison Ivy. Atheneum, 1975.

Peet, Bill. Big Bad Bruce. Houghton, 1970.

Wallace, Daisy, ed. Witch Poems. Holiday, 1976.

TITLE: How the Chipmunk Got Its Stripes

AUTHOR: Nancy Cleaver

PUBLISHED: Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1973.

ANNOTATION: This Algonkian legend told by Nancy Cleaver tells of a time when the animals hated people and there were no chipmunks. One day a small red squirrel made friends with a boy. In order to save the boy from a terrible sickness, the squirrel faces all the animals in the forest in order to find a cure. When the angry bear claws the squirrel's back, Manitou tells her that the marks are ones of courage which she and all her descendants will carry with pride forever, and that from then on she and her descendants will be called chipmunks. Manitou tells her the cure for the boys sickness and from that time on, the chipmunks learn to live close to man.

Introduction

This is an excellent book which can be used to help children explore and understand how purquoi stories are written. After reading the story, the teacher should guide the students to see some of the characteristics of purquoi stories:

a. The animal does not have its significant feature in the very beginning

b. Something happens (through foolishness, courage, or necessity) to give the animal the distinguishing mark or feature

c. These stories are exaggerated and sometimes humourous. They are not real, but simply created for entertainment.

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss with the students some of the outstanding characteristics of certain animals and encourage the students to make up an oral report on one of them. Then have the children choose an animal to write about. Some suggested topics might include the following:

   How the Kangaroo Got Her Pouch
   Why the Bear Has a Short Tail
   Why the Lion Has a Mane
   How the Giraffe Got a Long Neck
   How the Armadillo Got His Armor
   Why the Rabbit Has Long Ears

2. Encourage the children to look not only at animals for the source of their stories, but also at other things in nature to explain their presence. Some topics, for example, which might be considered are:

   Why Dandelions are Yellow
   Why the Sky is Blue
   Why the Sea is Salty
   Why Thunder and Lightning Go Together

The purpose of these activities is to help children gain a better understanding of the features of a purquoi story, and to have the children, after much exposure to these features, write their own stories incorporating the significant features into their writings.

Bibliography

The following titles should be explored in class in order to help the children gain a greater understanding of the form of a purquoi story:

Aardema, Vera. Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears. Dial, 1975.

Belting, Natalie. The Long-tailed Bear. Bobbs-Merrill, 1961.

Kipling, Rudyard. Just So Stories. Doubleday, 1952.

Lester, Julius. The Knee-High Man and Other Tales. Dial, 1972.

Raskin, J. and E. Indian Tales. Random House, 1969.

Scheer, George. Cherokee Animal Tales. Holiday, 1968.

Toye, William. How Summer Came to Canada. Walck, 1969.

_____. The Loon's Necklace. Oxford, 1977.

TITLE: The Three Billy-Goats Gruff

AUTHOR: (A Norwegian Folktale)

PUBLISHED: New York: Scholastic Inc., 1984.

ANNOTATION: This folktale tells of three billy-goats who want to get to the pasture on the other side of the river. In order to get there, they must cross a bridge under which lives a mean troll who likes to eat billy-goats.

Introduction

Bosma (1987) cites this book as one that can be used by teachers to help children write examples of folk literature. She states that by looking at the components of a repetitive story such as this one, pupils can make up new components and use them to develop their own stories. Bosma emphasizes the fact that "group story writing helps the reluctant writer" (p. 41), and the activities described below are ones which, she suggests, should be done with the class as a whole.

Suggested Activities

(See Bosma, B., 1987, pp. 41-42)

1. Discuss with the children the components of the story, such as the number of billy-goats, where they want to go, their problem, and how they finally get where they wanted to go. Fill out a chart, like the one used in number 2 below, with the children's responses.

2. Plan the main components of the new story in comparison to the story read. Ask the children for ideas for different animals, places to go, how to get there, and the danger along the way.

The chart might look like this:

Folktale	Our Story
3 billy/goats	3 teddy bears
to the meadow	to the berry patch
across the bridge	through the forest
trip, trap	thud, thump
Who's going over my bridge?	Who's going across my path?

3. Next, brainstorm with the children for a descriptive word chart. Look at some of the key words which were used to describe the characters in the folktale; then select some words to describe the characters in the new story. The following example describes this activity:

Folktale	Our Story
Billy goats	Teddy Bears
youngest	littlest
tiniest	middle-sized
second	great big
bigger	first
third	second
biggest	third
Troll	Giant
ugly	wicked
mean	enormous

4. Begin group composing, with the process chart (in activity 2) and the word chart (in activity 3) taped beside a fresh sheet of chart paper. When a consensus is reached about the content, write the content ideas on the chart paper. This may take longer than one period. If the lesson continues to a second period, review the process and word charts to provide the continuity that is needed to create the end product.

The purpose of these activities is to have the children look at the components which make up this folktale (The Three Billy-Goats Gruff) and to use similar components in writing their own folktales. The process and word charts described are meant to help the students organize their thoughts and make the writing easier and more productive.

Bibliography

The following folktales can be used in the manner described above:

De Regniers, Beatrice Schenk. Red Riding Hood. Atheneum, 1972.

Elkin, Benjamin. Six Foolish Fishermen. Children's Press, 1957.

Grimm Brothers. The Shoemaker and the Elves. Scribner, 1960.

Matsutani, Miyoko. The Witch's Magic Cloth. English version by Alvin Tresselt. Parents', 1969.

Rees, Ennis. Brer Rabbit and His Tricks. Young Scott Books, 1967.

Tolstoy, Alexei. The Great Big Enormous Turnip. F. Watts, 1969.

TITLE: Jack and the Beanstalk

AUTHOR: (Old English Fairy Tale)

PUBLISHED: In The Random House Book of Fairy Tales. Adapted by Amy Ehrlich. New York: Random House, 1985.

ANNOTATION: Jack and his mother are very poor. When Jack trades the family cow for some magic beans instead of some money to buy food, his mother becomes very angry and throws the beans out the window. A giant beanstalk grows far up into the sky, and upon climbing this beanstalk, Jack finds the home of a giant who has a magic hen and a magic harp. Taking these things enable Jack and his mother to live happily (and richly!) ever after.

Introduction

Fairy tales are stories of pretend which include elements of enchantment and magic. According to Bosma (1987), while fairy tales share characteristics, not every fairy tale contains all the distinctive characteristics. She lists the following characteristics, saying that fairy tales

> show how people behave in a world of magic
> often have brave heroes who rescue a helpless maiden
> contain some characters who are either all good or all bad
> often begin with "Once upon a time" and end with "happily ever after", or a similar convention
> often include a task, which, if completed, brings a reward
> often include a magic object to protect or help rescue someone (p. 5).

When discussing this genre with pupils, teachers should explore these characteristics and apply them to the fairy tales being examined.

Suggested Activities

1. Jack and the Beanstalk may be utilized in creative writing in the same manner as discussed in The Three Billy-Goats Gruff. Process and word charts may be set up, as suggested by Bosma. Have the children change significant components such as the following in order to produce their own fairy tales:

   a. change the characters
   b. instead of beans, get some other kind of seed or a magic object
   c. instead of finding a magic hen and a magic harp, other magic objects can be found or another solution can be decided upon to make the characters rich and happy.

   The purpose of this activity is to explore the writing of a fairy tale using the charts suggested by Bosma as a framework or guide. Using the basic plot of this story, the children are able to build their own stories by substituting different characters and different objects for those in the story.

2. Suppose Jack buried the beanstalk with the giant. Encourage the children to imagine that the beanstalk grew again, and have them write about an adventure that tells of what Jack saw this time when he climbed up into the sky on the new beanstalk.

3. Have the children discuss and write about what might have happened if the giant had gotten down the beanstalk before Jack was able to chop it down.

   Activities such as these are designed to motivate children to write stories based on the content of a model story. The information given in the model story, in this case Jack and the Beanstalk, provides a basis for writing new stories, such as "What if....." stories -- "What if the beanstalk grew again?" or "What if the giant escaped?"

Bibliography

The following books can be used by students as resources in writing fairy tales:

Coombs, Patricia. The Magic Pot. Lothrop, 1977.

David, Alfred and Mary Elizabeth, ed. The Twelve Dancing Princesses and Other Fairy Tales. New American Library, 1964.

Galdone, Paul. Cinderella. McGraw-Hill, 1978.

Grimm Brothers. The Frog Prince. McGraw-Hill, 1975.

_____. Hansel and Gretel. Delacorte, 1971.

_____. Rumpelstiltskin. Walck, 1970.

_____. The Sleeping Beauty. Retold by Warwick Hutton. Atheneum, 1979.

TITLE: Paul Bunyan Swings His Axe

AUTHOR: Dell J. McCormick

PUBLISHED: New York: Scholastic, 1968.

ANNOTATION: This book is a collection of some of the feats of the giant woodsman, Paul Bunyan, who is the mighty and legendary hero of the North Woods. Paul and his legendary blue ox, Babe, are reported to have been responsible for the making of many of the lakes and rivers we know of in North America.

Introduction

Children love to hear and write about stories which have a lot of exaggeration, and Paul Bunyan is one of the most popular and well known exaggerated characters written about in literature. The tall tales in this volume can be explored and examined in depth in the classroom. The teacher and the students can discuss some of the characteristics which make up tall tales. The most prominent characteristics of these tall tales is exaggeration, seen in this passage:

> ... as a baby he (Paul) was so large that his mother and father had to have fourteen cows to supply milk for his porridge. Every morning when they looked at him he had grown two feet taller. They built a huge cradle for Paul and floated it in the ocean off the coast of Maine. The ocean waves would rock him to sleep. One day he started bouncing up and down in his cradle and started a seventy-foot tidal wave that washed away towns and villages. (p. 6)

In many of Paul Bunyan's stories, readers will find that some geographical features are attributed to Paul's work. The following passages illustrate this:

> Even today lumberjacks who work in the woods find small lakes and point them out, saying: "Those are the footprints of Paul Bunyan that have been filled with water." (p. 6)
>
> So Paul was finally paid in full for digging the St. Lawrence River. The thousand shovelfuls of dirt are still there. They are called the Thousand Islands. (p. 44)
>
> Paul took a pickaxe he had with him and drove the point of it into the ground. Water spouted in a great stream a hundred feet high! ...They call it Old Faithful Geyser, and you will find it still there in Yellowstone Park. (p. 63)

Teachers and students can discuss this feature of the legends of Paul Bunyan, and the students can use it to make up tall tales of their own.

Suggested Activities

1. After reading and discussing some of the feats of Paul Bunyan, suggest to the children that they add to these feats by writing some others which Paul may have accomplished.

2. Have the children write about some things Paul and Babe might be able to do to help their community. For example, they might write about an ingenious method which Paul has invented for removing snow from the roadways, or a way Paul can make ski slopes down the side of a mountain near their community, or how Paul and Babe devised a method for clearing the ice out of the bay in the winter so that ships could come in to the community.

3. Encourage the children to look around their community, and to discuss any special geographical features they may see. Encourage them to use their imaginations in writing about how Paul and Babe may have caused these features to be there.

4. Propose to the students that they make up some other characters who resemble Paul in his size and his feats. Such characters might include:

Uncle George, the legendary fisherman of the Grand Banks
Old Macneil, the greatest farmer who ever lived

The purpose of these activities is to present a framework in which children, through discussion and writing, may experiment with and explore the feature of exaggeration, and in doing so, become more familiar with the composing of tall tales.

Bibliography

The following titles also present well-known characters from other tall tales and may help the children further explore the feature of exaggeration:

Bowman, James C. Pecos Bill. Whitman, 1937.

de Paola, Tomie. Fin M'Coul, The Giant of Knockmany Hill. Holiday, 1981.

Lent, Blair. John Tabor's Ride. Atlantic, 1966.

McCloskey, Robert. Burt Dow, Deep Water Man. Viking, 1963.

Rounds, Glen. Ol' Paul, the Mighty Logger. Holiday, 1949.

Shapiro, Irwin. Heroes in American Folklore. Messner, 1962.

Shephard, Esther. Paul Bunyan. Harcourt, 1941.

Stamm, Claus. Three Strong Women, A Tall Tale from Japan. Viking, 1962.

Stoutenburg, Adrien. American Tall Tales. Viking, 1966.

TITLE: Hailstones and Halibut Bones

AUTHOR: Mary O'Neill

PUBLISHED: Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961.

ANNOTATION: This book of poems describes the many colours we know. The author presents each colour in terms of sensory images, describing what sounds, smells, tastes, feelings, and visual images each colour represents and reminds her of.

Introduction

The main purpose of introducing this selection is to look at content and form, to emphasize the way the author uses sensory awareness to describe colours, and to encourage children to model their writings on the same form. The fact that this selection is written in poetry adds a great deal to the rhythm and flow of the language, but students should not be forced to write their compositions in rhymed poetry. Some children find it very difficult to write poetry that has to rhyme and quite often, if they are forced to do so, write in a very artificial way, just to make it rhyme. Other children, however, may welcome the challenge of making things rhyme and may do so without hesitation. The main thing to remember is that while teachers should introduce students to rhyme, they should also let the students have the freedom to choose the way in which they want to write their compositions. The

emphasis of this selection should be on the content and the method of utilizing the senses to describe the concept.

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss one of the colours with the class. After the discussion, the appropriate poem from O'Neill's book should be read, and the fact that she uses all her senses to describe that colour should be emphasized by the teacher. Discuss which parts describe which senses.

2. Discuss with the class another colour, and during this discussion, make a class composition from the ideas presented by the children. Read O'Neill's poem about the same colour.

3. Have the children choose any colour they like and write about it in a similar way.

   The purpose of these activities is to have the children think and write about colours in a unique way. Initially, if asked to describe what red, for example, reminds them of, the children are very likely to answer with a list of 'objects' which are red, such as apples, tomatoes, and hearts. They may not think of red as being hot, sore, loud, or screaming. These activities will help children write about something familiar (colours) in a new way, and will also supply them with a pattern to use in their writings. The pattern consists of a question (the title) and answers based on the senses.

   The involvement of the students in making a class composition in which the teacher acts as scribe will help many children see how to compose such a work. Learning to write can be very effective when the students are able to model the teacher, as well. The students are able to see that what they say can be written down, and what is written down can be read by others. Writing a class composition will also help the students become more familiar with the way in which the pattern is made since the teacher can draw attention to it as s/he writes the sample poem or story.

4. Have the children think of other things to write about in the same way. The following topics might be posted in the Writing Centre or on the bulletin board

for children to use if they cannot think of their own topics:

What is Hot?	What is Soft?
What is Scary?	What is Wet?
What is Happy?	What is Fast?
What is Dirty?	What is Slippery?
What is Lucky?	What is Dark?
What is Christmas?	What is Love?

The purpose of this activity is to take what the children have learned in writing about colours and extend it to writing about other concepts, using the same idea of utilizing sensory awareness and images in their compositions.

Bibliography

The following books and poems also deal with colours and can be used as resources with Hailstones and Halibut Bones:

Friskey, M. What is the Color of the Wide, Wide World? Children's Press, 1973.

McCord, David. "Yellow" in The Random House Book of Poetry for Children, ed., J. Prelutsky. Random House, 1983.

McGovern, Ann. Black is Beautiful. Scholastic, 1969.

Provensen, A. and M. Roses Are Red, Are Violets Blue? Random House, 1973.

Reit, S. Adventures with Color. Golden Press, 1970.

Rossetti, Christina. "What is Pink?" in The Random House Book of Poetry for Children, ed., J. Prelutsky. Random House, 1983.

Stinson, Kathy. Red is Best. Toronto: Annick Press, 1982.

The following book illustrates the idea that the same pattern used by O'Neill in her book about colours can be used with other topics. It should be noted that while O'Neill has written her book in poetic form, Zolotow has written in prose.

Zolotow, Charlotte. Summer Is.... New York: Crowell, 1983.

TITLE: Some Things Go Together

AUTHOR: Charlotte Zolotow

PUBLISHED: New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969.

ANNOTATION: Rhyming couplets are used to describe things that go together naturally such as gardens with flowers, clocks with hours, leaves with tree, and you with me.

Introduction

This very simply written book can help introduce children to rhyming couplets and provide them with a model for writing couplets. During a discussion of how things (or people) go together, the children can see that some things that go together can be expressed in rhyme as illustrated in the book. In an oral activity, someone can suggest an example of two things which go together such as dog and bark. The rest of the class can then try to think of some things that can go together and can rhyme with the suggested example; in this case, teeth with shark, flowers with park, monsters with dark might be used to rhyme with the example dog and bark. This whole class activity is an essential one that will help the children draw on oral language skills in understanding the pattern used in the poem.

Suggested Activities

1. The children can work with partners to see how many rhyming pairs they can add to Zolotow's list.

   This activity is a good one for introducing or reinforcing rhyming couplets in poetry and for exploring exactly what makes up a rhyming couplet. There are a lot of things which go together naturally and they can be written in such a way as to make them rhyme; for example, time with clock and foot with sock, peaches with cream and sleep with dream, hammer with nail and shovel with pail.

   One easy way of finding pairs that rhyme is to think of two rhyming words first such as "ham" and "jam". Then think of things which go with them, for example, eggs with ham and toast with jam.

   The children will also notice in this book that the phrase "and you with me" (or "me with you") is repeated in several instances. If they wish to follow this pattern, then they should be encouraged to think of rhymes which will go with these phrases. Some examples are honey with bee, and you with me; fish with sea and you with me; dog with flea and you with me. Again, what makes this easy is finding words that will rhyme with "me" (or "you") and then thinking of things that go with what word. The children will have a lot of fun playing with language in this activity.

2. Encourage the children to make their own illustrations for their rhyming couplets and display them separately or in a class book to be read and enjoyed by others.

TITLE: The Random House Book of Poetry for Children

EDITOR: Jack Prelutsky

PUBLISHED: New York: Random House, Inc., 1983.

POEM: The Months

January brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lake again.

March brings breezes loud and shrill,
Stirs the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots and gillyflowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit,
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Fresh October brings the pheasant,
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast,
Then the leaves are whirling fast.

Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.
(Sara Coleridge)

Introduction

This volume of poetry contains several selections written in rhyming couplets. Couplets are the easiest

kind of poetry to write and should probably be the first kind introduced to students for modelling. Many picture books such as 1 is One (Tudor) and Some Things Go Together (Zolotow) have already been discussed in this handbook as examples or writings using rhyming couplets. Children should be exposed also to simple poems which are written this way.

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss with the students the fact that rhyming couplets are two sentences whose ending words rhyme. Brainstorm with them to see how many they can remember having heard. Teachers should familiarize themselves with some of the Mother Goose poems written in couplets so that they can be presented to the students as examples. Some of these might include the following:

   Rain, rain, go away
   Come again another day.

   Jack be nimble, Jack be quick
   Jack jump over the candlestick.

   Star light, Star bright,
   First star I see tonight.

   The purpose of this activity is to draw on some of the poems written in rhyming couplets which the children may already know in order to emphasize the structure and rhythm of this kind of poetry.

2. Encourage the students to make up rhyming couplets of their own. Teachers can begin this activity by having all the children contribute to the making of several two-lined poems (couplets) or in the making of a larger class composition. Some children may need ideas to get them started. The following topics might help them:

Spring	Homework
My Best Friend	The Sky
Animals	Rain
Hockey	My Favourite Toy
Christmas	Snow

The purpose of this activity is to introduce the children to writing poems which are written so that each verse is a rhyming couplet. Writing couplets should be one of the first steps in helping children to feel more at ease with writing in rhyme.

TITLE: "Poetry Extravaganza"

AUTHOR; L.M. Marion

PUBLISHED: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 202 021, September, 1980.

POEMS:

Skin comprised of varied greenish hues.
A thump with the thumb
will tell you it is ripe.
W A T E R M E L O N
Place in a cooler; slice when icy cold.
Red, juicy, delicious, sweet, and messy.

Slightly used, sometimes overworked
Feeds the mouth three times a day
Sometimes has writer's cramps.
Used daily to dress and undress, to drive the car,
to walk through the pages of the telephone directory,
to dial the telephone,
to wave goodbye.
A handy gadget with multiple uses.
H A N D

Introduction

These are examples of concrete poems. A concrete poem is one in which the poem is written on a drawing or outline shaped like the object being described, or it can be written so that its shape represents the shape of the

object. This type of poetry is highly visual, since the shape in which it is written is a very important part of the poem. Concrete poems are usually written in free verse, and teachers, therefore, must help the children see what is meant by "free verse" before any writing can be done. In presenting this type of poetry, the children themselves may notice that these examples do not rhyme; if not, the teacher must draw their attention to it.

Suggested Activities

1. Have the children think of any object which is of interest to them. Have them then draw the outline or shape of that object. Next, have them fill in words, phrases, or sentences to describe that object. Somewhere in the poem, the object's name must be written, as shown in the examples.

2. It is a good idea here, as always, to make a class composition before the children begin their own individual writings. In this way, the children can model the writing of the teacher, and can get a better idea of how to go about their own writings. Draw, on a large piece of chart paper, a large outline of a familiar object. Descriptive responses from the children should be written on this shape and the location of the title word decided upon. Questions and statements from the teacher can guide the children to see how this form of poetry emerges.

3. In the event that some children may have difficulty in drawing outlines large enough to contain a poem, the teacher might find it beneficial to have a box of outlines in the Writing Centre from which the children can choose a shape they would like to write about.

The purpose of these activities is to examine a type of poem in which a visual element plays an important role in the construction of that poem. This is a very good type of poem to use with young children because, in many cases, the outline will elicit images they can see or experiences they can relate to as they write.

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Merriam, Eve. Out Loud. Atheneum, 1973.

Pilon, A. Barbara. Concrete is Not Always Hard. Xerox Education Publications, 1972.

TITLE: "Poetry Extravaganza"

AUTHOR: L.M. Marion

PUBLISHED: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 202 021, September, 1980.

POEM: Morning-glories in bloom
Around the garden fence,
Rows of corn standing stately tall
Vines of grapes ripening in the August sun
In the garden weeds are growing
Nothing is better than summertime.

Introduction

This type of poem is known as an acrostic poem (and is sometimes called an ABC poem). It is written around the letters of a word or name. The letters of the word or name are printed down the left side of the page, and each letter represents the first letter of the first word in the sentence or phrase to be written. This kind of poem can be either a free-verse or a rhyming poem.

Suggested Activities

1. Read the example aloud to the class and discuss the characteristics of this type of poem with the children. Choose the name of a literary character the children are familiar with, such as Charlotte (in Charlotte's Web) or Sadie (in Sadie and the Snowman), and make a class poem based on certain incidents in the story of that character and using the form of this poem as a model. Encourage the children to suggest what should be written for each letter in the name.

The purpose of this activity is to explore another kind of poem which has a specific structure. Composing a class poem will draw attention to the features of this poem.

2. Have the children compose an acrostic poem using their own names. Some children may want to use both their first name and their surname. The content for the poem could center around things they like to do, things they hate to do, their family or school life, or what they look like.

3. Encourage the children to write poems using other people's names such as a sister's name or their father's name. They might also write descriptive sentences to go with the names of holidays, such as Christmas or Easter, or to go with special places, such as Deer Lake or Gander (they can use the name of their own community and describe it).

4. Suggest to the children that they choose the names of objects to write about in this form. Hennings (1978) gives the following example:

Balloons

Blow up and tie up
A big balloon.
Let it fly free.
Let it dance.
Open up the string!
Out comes the air and
Now the balloon
Spins in crazy, arching zooms.

Suggest to the class that they make a list of some words they might use as topics, such as pencil, airplane, sidewalk, garden, forest, snowstorm. Post them in the Writing Centre.

In these activities, the children are encouraged to write about familiar topics -- themselves, family members, holidays, places, objects -- which they know well. It is important for children to have knowledge of what they are writing about so that ideas flow more freely.

5. Encourage the children to illustrate their writings. One way to do this in a unique and eye-catching way is to have the children draw the letters of the word or name in a special way. Also, if a child chooses a word like "pencil" to write about, encourage him/her to write the poem on paper that is cut in the shape of a pencil.

   This activity encourages children to think not only about the writing of the poem, but of the presentation, as well. It is very motivating to read poems which are illustrated in unique ways.

TITLE: Jelly Belly

AUTHOR: Dennis Lee

PUBLISHED: Toronto: Macmillan, 1983.

POEM: There Was An Old Lady

There was an old lady
Whose kitchen was bare,
So she called for the cat
Saying, "Time for some air!"

She sent him to buy her
A packet of cheese.
But the cat hurried back
With a basket of bees.

She sent him to buy her
A gallon of juice.
But the cat reappeared
With a galloping goose.

She sent him to buy her
A dinner of beef.
But the cat scampered home
With an Indian chief.

She sent him to buy her
A bowl of ice cream.
But the cat skated in
With a whole hockey team.

She sent him to buy her
A bit of spaghetti.
But the cat strutted up
With a bride and confetti.

She sent him to buy her
A cup of fine tea.
But the cat waddled back
With a dinosaur's knee.

The fridge soon was bulging,
And so was the shelf.
So she sent for a hot dog
And ate it herself.

Introduction

Dennis Lee's book is filled with many humourous poems such as the one cited. Teachers might use this book as a resource for exposing students to humourous poetry and for providing poems whose framework or structure can be imitated by the students as they attempt to write their own humourous verses.

Suggested Activities

1. Read the poem aloud to the children. Write it on chart paper so the children can read or follow along. Discuss the similarity in content between this poem and the Mother Goose rhyme "Old Mother Hubbard". Discuss the repetition found in lines 1 and the beginning of lines 3 in the verses of Lee's poem.

   The main purpose of this activity is to draw attention to the repetition of the first line. Children may use this line in writing their own verses or they may write their own first line for each verse.

2. Discuss with the students the different verbs used to describe how the cat came back ("hurried", "scampered", "skated", "strutted", "waddled"). Have the children contribute to the making of a word chart which contains other words which could be substituted and subsequently used in the children's own poems.

   The purpose of this activity is to broaden the children's vocabulary by providing a list of words which they might use in their writing.

3. Encourage the class to dictate other verses which might be added to the poem, before the final verse, in order to continue the story being told. The teacher should write the responses as the children dictate their ideas.

   In this activity, the teacher guides the pupils into using the structure presented in Lee's poem and demonstrates the composing process and the writing of the extra verses.

4. Suggest that the students work by themselves or in pairs to produce their own poems based on the form or structure of "There Was An Old Lady". A pre-writing activity for this could be having each child or pair of children make a list of other foods the old lady might send the cat for, such as a plate of french fries, a bottle of pop, a tuna on rye, or some wieners and beans. Make up funny rhyming endings describing what the animal came back with.

   The children can use the knowledge they have learned about the form of this particular poem to write their own poems. Also, there is a high degree of motivation in writing poems that are humourous, and children will enjoy such writing.

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The following are other books which contain humourous poems and which may be used by teachers to expose children to other patterns for humourous poems:

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TITLE: Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young

AUTHOR: Jack Prelutsky, ed.

PUBLISHED: New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986.

POEM: There Was A Small Pig Who Wept Tears

There was a small pig who wept tears
When his mother said, "I'll wash your ears."
As she poured on the soap,
He cried, "Oh, how I hope
This won't happen again for ten years!"
(Arnold Lobel)

Introduction

Just as children delight in reading and hearing the humourous poems of Dennis Lee in Jelly Belly, so too they enjoy the nonsense and humour of limericks. Limericks have a distinctive rhythm and pattern which children enjoy, and the sheer silliness of this type of poetry makes it very appealing to young children. Limericks can most effectively be written if the writer is aware of the rhythm of this poem. The teacher, therefore, must rely heavily on the use of oral language activities, and should read several such poems aloud to the class in order to emphasize that rhythm.

Suggested Activities

1. Read to the children a selection of limericks. Discuss with them some of the characteristics of this type of poem such as the rhyming pattern (lines 1,2,5 rhyme and lines 3 and 4 rhyme), the characteristic beginning phrase ("There once was..." or "There

was..."."), and the rhythm of each sentence (lines 1,2,5 are longer than lines 3 and 4).

The purpose of this activity is to make children aware of the characteristics of limericks and to introduce them to the distinctive way in which limericks are read or recited, so that their rhythm is accentuated.

2. Present to the class the beginning two lines of a limerick and have them make suggestions for finishing it. The children could then work in groups where they are given the beginning lines of other limericks and finish these poems.

Some children may find it very difficult to write a complete limerick at first because of the strict structure which is characteristic of the limerick. This activity, therefore, is a valuable one in that it gives the children the opportunity to finish some limerick, and allows them time to become more familiar with this type of poem.

3. Encourage the children to write their own limericks, to play with language and the pattern for a while in order to gain more confidence with this form. If they wish, allow them to work with a partner in composing limericks.

4. Suggest that the children illustrate their poems and make a class book.

Bibliography

Some of these books contain only limericks, while others present only a few examples of this type of poem.

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Smith, William Jay. Laughing Time. Little, Brown, 1953.

TITLE: Evaluating and Improving Written Expression

AUTHOR: Janice K. Hall

PUBLISHED: Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1981.

POEM: THUNDER

rumbles,
tumbles,
rolls,
bangs,
booms,
bumps,
bounces,
cracks,
snaps,
crackles,
echoes.
LOUD NOISE!!!

Introduction

This is an example of a "sound" poem. There are several distinguishing features which can be modelled by children who write such a poem. The poem consists of a list of words which describe the title and which are written down the page, one word beneath the other. The final line of the poem describes the kind of noise made by the subject of the poem.

Suggested Activities

1. Read the poem aloud to the class and discuss with them the features of this particular poem, emphasizing why it is called a "sound" poem.

2. Make a word or an idea chart with the children. On the chart, write two headings: one for things which make noises or sounds, and the other for words which

describe that sound. Write down the ideas which the children might offer for these headings. The chart might look like this:

These make a noise	The kind of noise
breeze	gentle sound
brook	babbling noise
ocean waves	crashing noise
siren	screeching noise

3. Have the children choose a topic from a word or idea chart (or make up another topic of their own). Then have them list as many words as they can which describe what the object does to make that sound. For example,

Ocean Waves

rumble,
roar,
dash,
splash,
scurry,
rush,
wash,
push.
CRASHING NOISE!!!

These activities help to expand the children's vocabulary. There should be in the classroom a copy (or several copies) of a thesaurus written at a child's level. Or the teacher could use this poem as a springboard for a special project--that of encouraging the students to make their own personal or class thesaurus.

TITLE: When Something Funny Happens

AUTHOR: Charlotte S. Huck, William A. Jenkins, and Wilma J. Pyle, compilers.

PUBLISHED: Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1971.

POEM: Shore

A shore is the place
To play in the sand.
A shore is the place
For digging a well.
A shore is the place
To watch for a ship.
A shore is the place
For finding a shell.
A shore is the place
To lie in the sun
A shore is the place
As they roll and run.
A shore is the place
Where gulls fly free --
A shore is the place
Place to be.
(Leland B. Jacobs)

Introduction

This poem has an element of repetition which children can model and it is written about something which children can readily relate to.

Suggested Activities

1. After this poem has been read to the children, an ensuing discussion can help to point out to them the repetitive nature of the poem by focussing on the line "A shore is the place". It should also be noted that the poem is really a list of all the wonderful activities that can be carried out at this particular place.

2. Have the children discuss another place that might be fun to visit. Brainstorm with them to find out which activities would go along with the place they suggest. Encourage them to write a poem about that place or to choose another one they might like and write about it. For those who may need help in thinking of a place, some suggestions such as these can be listed in the Writing Centre:

a barn	a circus
a forest	a boat
undersea	my room
a city	the South Pole
a treehouse	a flower garden

These activities are experienced-based in that they draw on the experiences of the children. They are designed to have the children think about the places they have visited and to look at those places with the intention of making them aware of the reasons why they are good places to visit.

When the children start their writing, they should pay attention to the way the poem is written, with every second line indented. Even though this poem rhymes, it is a good poem to change to free verse, and children who might have difficulty with rhyme can still write using this pattern.

TITLE: Poetry Place Anthology

PUBLISHED: New York: Instructor Publications, Inc., 1983.

POEM: The Circus

The circus is:
big,
bright,
brilliant,
breathtaking'
beautiful,
bobbing,
bouncy,
bustling,
blue,
bliss,
beaming,
booming,
blooming,
blazing,
bubbling,
buzzing,
BURSTING!

(Mary Anne Magnan)

Introduction

This poem, like "Thunder" (Hall), can be used to develop the children's vocabulary. It is written in a unique way, and in discussing this poem with the students, the teacher can emphasize its features -- the indentation pattern, the fact that all the words are adjectives describing "circus", that only one word is written on each line, and that all the words begin with the letter "b".

Suggested Activities

1. Discuss this poem with the children and emphasize the idea that poems can be written in unique ways and

shapes. Point out also the features which are mentioned in the Introduction.

2. Have the children discuss other words which might be used to describe the circus, and which begin with another letter of the alphabet such as "c" or "w".

3. Encourage the children to look at other things which might be described in a similar way such as the ocean, "dark, deep, dangerous, deadly" and so on.

These activities simply introduce the students to a different way of writing a poem, and give them ideas about varying the content while using the same form or pattern in the illustrated poem.

TITLE: Poetry Place Anthology

PUBLISHED: New York: Instructor Publications, Inc., 1983.

POEM: Trees

Trees are for birds.
Trees are for children.
Trees are to make tree houses in.
Trees are to swing swings on.
Trees are for the wind to blow through.
Trees are to hide behind in "Hide and Seek".
Trees are to have tea parties under.
Trees are for kites to get caught in.
Trees are to make cool shade in summer.
Trees are to make no shade in winter.
Trees are for apples to grow on, and pears;
Trees are to chop down and call, "TIMBER-R-R!"
Trees make mothers say,
"What a lovely picture to paint!"
Trees make fathers say,
"What a lot of leaves to rake this fall!"
(Shirley Bauer)

Introduction

This is a beautiful poem for children to model. The teacher can examine with the children some of the special features present in this poem; it is written in free verse; there is repetition of words at the beginning of each sentence; and the author looks at things in a unique and effective way. For example, in discussing the many uses for trees, she observes that "trees are for the wind to blow through" and "for kites to get caught in". This is certainly a different way of looking at trees.

Suggested Activities

1. Before reading this poem to the children, ask them to think of some of the uses for trees. At the end of the discussion, read the poem and discuss how the author has described some of the uses for trees, pointing out some of the features used in this poem.

2. Suggest to the children that they write a poem using the same pattern in "Trees" but focusing on a different title. Some other titles to suggest might include the following:

Rocks	Worms
Flowers	Dogs
Shovels	Water
Apples	Baskets
Horses	Smiles

The children might like to write their poems on paper which is cut out in the shape of the object discussed, and they may also wish to illustrate their work with pictures of the object.

The above suggested titles are ones which may be used to help students who have difficulty thinking of ideas or topics to write about. In all writing activities, children should be given the freedom to choose their own topics and should not have to pick from those suggested.

TITLE: Poetry Place Anthology

PUBLISHED: New York: Instructor Publications, Inc., 1983.

POEM: Good-by and Hello!

Good-by, ice skates.
Good-by, sled.
Good-by, winter.
Spring's ahead!

Good-by, leggings.
Good-by, snow.
Good-by, winter.
Spring, hello!

Hello, crocus.
Hello, kite.
Good-by, winter.
Spring's in sight!

Hello, jump rope.
Hello, swing.
Good-by, winter!
Hello, spring!

(Barbara Anthony)

Introduction

Children should be encouraged to play around with words in order to imitate the pattern in this poem. A distinctive feature of this poem is the very short sentences. Children should try to maintain this feature as they compose their own poems.

Suggested Activities

1. Draw the children's attention to the content of this poem. Children living in Newfoundland can readily relate to the ideas presented there. Draw attention also to the author's way of saying good-by to the winter in listing things associated with winter and

of saying hello to the spring in the same way. Encourage the children to make a list of some other things the children might be able to think of that they say good-by to when winter goes and say hello to when spring comes. The children can then make up their own poems about these two seasons.

2. Suggest to the children that they change the seasons, and say good-by to summer and hello to fall, for example. Once again, have them list the things they say good-by to at the end of summer and the things they welcome in the fall. They can then refer to this list as they write their poem.

3. Have the children choose other times when they say good-by and hello to certain things. One example might be saying good-by to school and hello to summer vacation (or vice versa).

The purpose of these activities is to have children use an existing form or pattern and vary the content to fit that pattern.

Bibliography

Many poems are gathered together in anthologies and the patterns and forms presented in these volumes are many and varied. For this reason, the bibliography was omitted after several poetry selections and a comprehensive one placed here. Teachers are encouraged to examine volumes of poetry in order to find poems which would be effective models for children to use in writing poetry.

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