GOING PLACES: A THEMATIC UNIT FOR KINDERGARTEN BASED ON A FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE FOR LEARNING LANGUAGE

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GOING PLACES: A THEMATIC UNIT FOR KINDERGARTEN

BASED ON A FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE FOR LEARNING LANGUAGE

By

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A project submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Education

Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland

1998

St. John's Newfoundland

ABSTRACT

It is a constant challenge for kindergarten teachers to create learning experiences and find materials to meet curriculum objectives, in addition to their other daily duties. Therefore, I have developed a thematic unit for kindergarten, which stresses early literacy and integrates all the subject areas.

The unit, *Going Places,* explores the social studies topics of transportation and safety. This curriculum package includes a theoretical framework on the functions or uses of language and discourses on early literacy and how the kindergarten child learns, as well as detailed objectives, lesson plans, resource lists and documented copies of resources, to implement a month-long thematic unit.

Going Places is based on a functional communications perspective for learning language. The theoretical information comes primarily from Allen, Brown and Yatvin's (1986) book, *Learning Language Through Communication: A Functional Perspective.* Much of the theory included here can be credited to Michael Halliday (1969, 1975, 1994) and others such as Frank Smith (1977). The communicative functions emphasized are the informative, affective, imaginative, ritualistic and persuasive functions. The research component outlines the functional perspective and the unit, *Going Places*, is built around this perspective or framework.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people can breathe a sigh of relief as I complete this project.

First, special thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Joan Oldford-Matchim, who has been invaluable with her encouragement and assistance, not to mention her patience. Her words of appraisal and counsel were gratefully received and appreciated.

Thanks as well to June Piercey, a fellow kindergarten teacher, who shared her field study on early literacy with me. I was able to draw upon many of the same sources for my own research.

Thank-you to my former colleague, Joy Foster, for supplying me with whatever resources I asked for from the school and lending an ear when I wanted a sounding board.

Particular thanks to Dwayne and my three boys, Ryan, Dylan and Brandon, for putting up with the dust and cobwebs and probably feeling a little left out at times, but never complaining. Things should settle down soon!

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FOREWORD

Kindergarten teachers in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador have had little curriculum guidance to help them effectively do their jobs. Until this year, the kindergarten curriculum guide that the Department of Education provided for teachers was outdated and insufficient. Education has taken many turns since then with such notions as whole language learning, resource-based learning and cooperative learning. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (1997) has recently provided teachers with a new kindergarten guide, *Early Beginnings!* While this resource is more current and informative, some teachers prefer to have a curriculum guide that integrates all the subject areas into thematic units that they can easily use in their classrooms.

Kindergarten cannot be broken down into subject areas. Children's perception of the world is whole . They are not aware of subjects or subject changes. They will not understand why they must put away the writing that they are enjoying to do mathematics. As Law (1966) pointed out, children come to school whole, with no way to slice them into parts. Why would we try to compartmentalize their curriculum? Therefore, most kindergarten educators choose to teach using thematic units.

While the resource, *Early Experiences* (Eden, 1983) provides mini-themes, they are primarily language arts-based and are not sufficient to cover the whole school year. Therefore, in implementing the curriculum by a unit approach, it is primarily the responsibility of each teacher to develop their own units.

Goodman (1986) advocated using units with children. He proposed that a unit provides a focal point for inquiry, for the uses of language, and for cognitive development. It should involve pupils in planning, and give them choices of authentic, relevant activities within productive studies.

Obviously, it is a constant challenge to create learning experiences and find materials to meet the curriculum objectives for kindergarten children, besides the other daily duties a teacher must face. Therefore, I have developed a thematic unit, which stresses early literacy and integrates all the subject areas. Any kindergarten teacher in this province could use this unit.

The unit, *Going Places,* explores the social studies topics of transportation and safety, an appropriate theme for kindergarten children. This curriculum package includes a theoretical perspective on the functions or uses of language, early literacy, and how the kindergarten child learns, with detailed objectives, lesson plans, resource lists and documented copies of resources, to implement a month-long thematic unit.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Going Places is based on a functional communications perspective for learning language. The theoretical information comes primarily from Allen, Brown and Yatvin's (1986) book, *Learning Language Through Communication: A Functional Perspective.* Much of the theory included here can be credited to Michael Halliday (1969, 1975, 1994) and others such as Frank Smith (1977). The sections below outline this perspective and

the unit, *Going Places*, is built around this basic premise.

Communication

Communication has been around ever since early humankind's attempt to share meaning with others. Whether through a series of grunts, hand signals, or a structured language, human beings have spoken with each other, expressing their feelings, exchanging ideas, giving information or dictating orders. One could say that communication is one of the most important processes known to humankind. As social beings, the ability to communicate allows people to work together and live harmoniously with each other. It also enables them to pass on culture and make technological and scientific advancements that separate humans from the animals. Therefore, it seems appropriate that formal education would stress teaching children how to communicate more effectively with each other.

According to Hennings (1994), the word "communicate" comes from the Latin *commūnicāre*, which means "make common or make known"; *commūnicāre* derives from *commūnis*, which means "common" (p. 87). This suggests that communication is a social process whose ultimate purpose is a common understanding -- a unity within the social group. The school classroom is a social arena in which children will participate for many years. Teachers must foster their students' growth in communicating with each other and prepare them as communicators in the school, the community and society itself.

For the most part in our society, language is the mode of communication, whether

it is verbal, nonverbal or written language. Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) defined language as "the system of signs and symbols that enables us to make sense of our world and interactions with others" (p. 11). Language, then, serves many purposes that motivate its acquisition.

Purposes of Language

Children learn language naturally (Allen *et al.*, 1986; Goodman, 1986). They have a communicative purpose in mind. The purpose for communicating provides the motivation for learning. This purpose might be to give and receive information; to express feelings or empathize with the feelings of others; for the creative and appreciative joy it brings; to understand and participate in society; to influence others and to respond as others seek to influence them (Allen *et al.*, 1986). While achieving their goal, children often employ all the language modes -- reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Children have learned language skills, that teachers so often stress and teach in isolation in school, when they need them to accomplish their communication purposes (Allen *et al.*, 1986). It is the job of teachers to provide the opportunities and experiences which give children the motivation they need.

Halliday (1969) pointed out that "language is, for the child, a rich and adaptable instrument for the realization of his [sic] intentions; there is hardly any limit to what he [sic] can do with it" (p. 27).

Goodman (1986) spoke about language in this way: "Language enables us to share

our experiences, learn from each other, plan together, and greatly enhances our intellect by linking our minds with others of our kind" (p. 11).

Obviously, children begin their language experiences long before they enter the school doors. They learn about spoken and written language by watching and listening to role models who are using language as a tool to accomplish particular and self-evident ends (Smith, 1982). Parents serve as models at home as they read the newspaper and write the grocery list. At school, teachers must meet their students where they are and cultivate their language use and develop literate beings. The children's teachers then become their literacy models.

Hennings (1994) stated that children become more effective language users through natural social interaction in which they create and express meanings and actively use language in all its forms. She went on to say that this occurs in classroom communities in which students interact and collaborate naturally with one another as well as think, write, and read independently. Children make meaning with language as they study science, mathematics, history, and music. These content area subjects become the purpose and motivation for using and learning language.

According to Frank Smith (1977), there are obvious implications of this functional approach to language learning; firstly, language is unlikely to be learned in situations where it has no apparent utility, and secondly, mastery of some uses for language does not entail familiarity with all its uses, and conversely that inability to employ language for some purposes does not necessitate a lack of competence in

language itself (p. 638).

Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) stated that there are five main purposes of language. These are informing, expressing feelings or affect, imagining, ritualizing, and persuading. These purposes of communication are common in everyday life. Since they are used by and are important to children, as well as to adults in a communicative society, they should all be reflected in the school curriculum.

Before outlining the five purposes of Allen *et al.*, it is interesting to note the models of language that were proposed by M.A.K. Halliday in 1969, nearly two decades before:

> *Instrumental model* (the "I want" function): the child becomes aware that language is used as a means of getting things done (p. 28).
>
> *Regulatory model* (the "do as I tell you" function): the use of language to regulate the behaviour of others (p. 29).
>
> *Interactional model* (the "me and him" function): the use of language in the interaction between the self and others (p. 30).
>
> *Personal model* (the "here I come" function): the child's awareness of language as a form of his [sic] own individuality. Through this function, Halliday suggested that children are enabled to offer to someone else that which is unique to themselves, to make public their own individualities; and this in turn reinforces and creates these individualities (p. 31).
>
> *Heuristic model* (the "tell me why" function): language as a means of investigating reality, a way of learning about things (p. 31).
>
> *Imaginative model* (the "let's pretend" function): the child uses language to create his [sic] own environment; not to learn about how things are but to make them as he [sic] feels inclined (p. 32).
>
> *Representational model* (the "I've got something to tell you" function): a

> means of communicating about something, of expressing propositions (p. 33).

It is easy for adults, when attempting to formulate ideas about the nature of language, to be simply unaware of what language means to children. This is not because they no longer use language in the same variety of different functions, but because they often only consciously attend to the representational function. Consequently, the corresponding model is the only one to be externalised. But from a child's point of view, this is an unrealistic picture of language, since it accounts for only a fragment of their total awareness of what language is (Halliday, 1969). Teachers need to be aware of all these language models or purposes so that communication does not result in a constant one-sided monologue of information in the classroom.

It is interesting to note that Halliday also mentioned a "ritual" model of language, but did not include it in his list of functions. He felt that it plays no part in the child's experience at all. He said this model is "the image of language internalised by those for whom language is a means of showing how well one was brought up; it downgrades language to the level of table-manners" (p. 33). However, as proposed by the ritualistic function of language (Allen *et al.*, 1986), it has a greater role than initially suggested by Halliday.

Frank Smith (1977) adopted Halliday's seven models of language and added three of his own to define his "uses" of language. He contended with Halliday that in order to understand language and teach it, teachers must first understand the mind of the language

learner. These lists of language uses or functions attempt to define how children naturally use language. The three extra uses which Smith included are:

> *Divertive*: "Enjoy this." This use includes puns, jokes, riddles.
>
> *Authoritative/contractual*: "How it must be." This includes statutes, laws, regulations, agreements, contracts.
>
> *Perpetuating*: "How it was." This contains records, histories, diaries, notes, scores (p. 640).

Smith (1977) stressed that this list cannot be considered complete, "indeed such a catalog would have to cover all of human psychology" (p. 639). As well, he suggested that the categories are not exhaustive and are probably overlapping.

These categories above by both Halliday and Smith can be compared to those proposed by Allen et al. (1986) which are dealt with in more depth here, since this is the specific framework chosen to be applied to this curriculum unit development. Thus, each of the five communication purposes are outlined in more detail below, including ways in which each can be integrated into the school curriculum.

Communicative Purposes

Informative Communication

Informative communication is at the heart of the entire school curriculum. Through reading, writing, listening, and speaking, children process information across the curriculum. As children learn about science, mathematics, and social studies, they may

also grow in informative communication skills (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Kindergarten children must realize that they can find out things by reading. Much of the real "reading" will be done by the teacher, however, the children should have access to sources of information including books (fiction and nonfiction), children's magazines, reports, announcements, book reviews, textbooks, and encyclopedia entries. In addition, maps, charts, graphs, globes, posters, radio and television programs, films, dictionaries, computer terminals, and informal exchanges are all sources of information they can use (Allen *et al.*, 1986). The section *Learning Materials* (under The Learning Environment) includes a much larger list of possible sources of information.

Listening is difficult for five-year-olds. Their behaviours when listening suggest having short attention spans. When presenting information orally about social studies, science, and other subjects, therefore, teachers should help children to listen effectively and should seek assurance that the information is being understood (Allen *et al.*, 1986). It is the teacher's responsibility to present information in creative and varied methods to captivate their interest. Allen *et al.* (1986) suggested vibrant and interesting ways, including animated physical delivery, expressive vocal behaviour, references to student interests, intriguing questions, and dramatizations. Children do not need to know how to read to actively find out about things. By using their listening skills, kindergarten children can do simple research when given the opportunity and the resources.

Teachers can include three types of informative messages in their curriculum: directions, descriptions, and explanations (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Directions can take such

diverse forms as checklists, travel itineraries, recipes, how-to books, maintenance manuals, and computer-assisted instruction. The ability to compose and comprehend descriptive messages should be fostered across the subject fields. Descriptions need to be accurate, complete and they must have unity. The teacher might ask a kindergarten child to describe his or her pet or house to the rest of the class, then ask the class to draw a picture of what was described. Young children can also compose explanations. The teacher may ask a child to explain why it is important to wear a seat belt when riding in a vehicle. Some expository devices that can be used in explanations include: definitions, examples, statistics, visual materials, comparisons/contrasts, repetitions, descriptions, restatements, and quotations (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

According to Allen *et al.* (1986), among the informative books that interest young children are those dealing with games, animals, hobbies, jokes, riddles, jump rope jingles, nature, people, and places. Thematic units should be planned around information that interests the children. Again, interest will create motivation to learn and motivation to learn will promote language use and the acquisition of literacy skills.

Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) gave some exhortation for teachers who seek to develop the informative communication skills of children: teachers should (1) emphasize the role of reading and listening in classroom learning, (2) encourage students to write and speak about information, (3) recognize the importance of attention in informative communication, and (4) develop the student's appreciation for the importance of organization in informative communication (p. 240). The first three are most relevant in

the kindergarten classroom. Informative communication will undoubtedly play a major role in their school career, possible at the expense of some of the others.

Affective Communication

Simply defined, affective communication means "messages or exchanges that have as their primary purpose the expression of feelings" (Allen *et al.*, 1986, p. 245).

To enhance affective communication, the kindergarten classroom must be a comfortable environment in which children feel safe and free to talk about how they feel. Fundamental to such an environment, is a teacher who believes children have worthwhile and interesting things to say, who listens attentively to what they say, who finds ways to help them say what they want to say, who provides models of language used with power and skill, and who creates opportunities for them to use language for meaningful and varied purposes of their own (Preece, 1992). Teachers must be sensitive to the affective messages they send to children. They need to communicate respect for students and their feelings and genuine enthusiasm for reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Allen *et al.*, 1986). The way that a teacher reacts to children's work, influences how children feel about themselves as learners.

According to Allen *et al.* (1986), to share feelings and emotions with each other, children require two conditions. First, they must trust the person with whom they are communicating. Second, they must be willing to engage in self-disclosure. It is the responsibility of teachers to create this secure, free environment. When children do open

up and let them see their raw emotions, rather than judging their affective messages, teachers should help students to understand and to experience (rather than block) their feelings. Many of these expressed feelings will be negative. Allen *et al.* (1986) also suggested that school may be seen as a laboratory for teaching children to cope with their negative feelings toward others and the negative feelings of others toward them.

Experiences with stories, poetry, journal writing, and story films and videos help children to become more sensitive to their own and others' feelings (Allen *et al.*, 1986). To promote the growth of affective purposes, teachers must make an effort to include activities promoting affective communication in their classrooms.

Samuels (1992) believed that by building positive attitudes and feelings of confidence in students, almost all of them can become skilled in reading and writing. Self-confidence creates motivation to learn. Teachers should need no other incentive to encourage affective communication.

Imaginative Communication

In play and language, children demonstrate their creative imaginations. Teachers need to cultivate this to encourage language use and growth. According to Allen *et al.* (1986), imaginative communication should be taught so that all children will be able to: (1) derive emotional satisfaction and aesthetic pleasure from works of the imagination; (2) learn and retain subject matter more effectively; (3) improve their verbal and social skills for everyday interaction; (4) gain greater understanding of human behaviour and

greater control over their own behaviour (p. 279).

Literature, the traditional mainstay of the language arts curriculum, is the primary source of imaginative communication in school. Without the stimulation of finely-crafted fiction, many children's imaginations would be shallow and dull; without school to bring great literature into their lives, many would never find it on their own (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Thematic units, therefore, should be based primarily on good children's literature. The library corner should be filled with books that will stimulate children's imaginations. The listening centre will have exciting stories on tape for children to listen to without pictures to look at. Teachers will read, read, read to their students.

A common extension to good literature is creative drama. This activity allows them to express feelings, play out fantasies, and explore their practical need for social interaction. As a regular classroom activity for children of any age, drama contributes to the growth of knowledge, language competence, social behaviour, and personality development, thereby, furthering the basic aims of education (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

According to Allen *et al.* (1986), the curricular/instructional framework suited to imaginative communication has three main components: (1) the availability of materials conducive to imaginary play, (2) time and opportunity for exploration of these materials, and (3) the teacher's approval which is displayed through praise and encouragement of their imaginative interactions.

Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) listed the functions of imaginative communication as personal and utilitarian functions. Within the personal functions,

children can live and experience beauty vicariously, thus learning to better understand human behaviour, and are able to participate more fully in a culture and find a sense of meaning in life. The utilitarian functions include the opportunity for children to rehearse unfamiliar roles and situations as well as explore and plan the future.

Kindergarten children can be involved in various forms of imaginative communication including stories, drama, poetry, mixed media, story cartoons, filmmaking, and puppetry, to name only a few. However, children's play is most effective in the development of the imagining function. Children pretend alone, with peers, or with toys. They use words to symbolize inner fantasies, images, thoughts, and feelings. They begin with solitary imaginative playing of a role such as a mommy or daddy. Then, to see what it is like to be someone in relationship to another person, they get others to join in their role play (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

It is important for teachers to realize how children's development can affect their growth in imaginative communication. Up to five years of age, they show progress in marking their stories with formal openings ("Once upon a time") and closings ("and they lived happily ever after"). Five-year-old children begin to absorb common story characters into their own storytelling, and six-year-olds can explain their expectations about witches, fairies, wolves, lions, and other worrisome creatures. Younger children (up to six) have difficulty distinguishing between what is real (fact) and what is not (fiction) (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Teachers need to take their students on imaginative journeys to faraway lands,

pretending to be other people or creatures. Not only will children use the experience to communicate orally, they have something to write about in their journals. The imagination can be an excellent diving board to literacy.

Ritualistic Communication

Ritualistic communication may be defined as "those messages and communication exchanges that are strongly regulated by audience expectations regarding the range of appropriate behaviours" (Allen *et al.*, 1986, p. 351). Nine common types of ritualistic communication may be identified: everyday speech acts, social amenities, print conventions, stylistic conventions, written amenities and formats, interviews, small group discussions, parliamentary debates, and public ceremonies. By participating in all of these forms, students learn about their major aspects and the social norms regarding the behaviours of participants (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Most of these activities would be suitable for kindergarten children to a certain degree, except parliamentary debates.

Teachers should involve children in such written social amenities as thank-you notes, invitations, acknowledgments, and the conventions of letter writing. And whenever they write messages that are to be read by others, they should be encouraged to consider the physical appearance of the message. Following the editing stage, they should rewrite their messages, being conscious of the social norms established for the particular message form (Allen *et al.*, 1986). It is not too early to introduce this in kindergarten. However, encouraging children to write is much more important than the

conventions.

In the primary grades, everyday speech acts and social amenities are easily integrated into the normal school routine (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Through constant reliance on polite forms of communication, courtesy will be an integral part of the classroom environment and it will help to control discipline at the same time. Students will pepper their conversation with "thank you," excuse me," and "you're welcome," modelling their talk and behaviour after a teacher whom they respect and who respects them (Hennings, 1994). To ensure that children grow in social awareness skills, teachers should discuss social expectations whenever the children are about to encounter a new social context (Allen *et al.*, 1986). This might include the pre-talk before going on field trips or participating in a school assembly.

As children develop language and increasingly experience social interaction, they learn to follow conversational rules. For instance, between three-and-a-half and five years of age, in informal peer conversations, they learn that only one child should speak at a time, that a question should be answered before a new topic is introduced, and that a child who asks a question must wait to talk after the other child answers (Allen *et al.*, 1986). If these conventions are not learned before starting kindergarten, children are informed and reminded of them each time they speak in the classroom.

In their reading development, kindergarten children progress from holding a book upright and reading left-to-right, top-to-bottom, and front-to-back to using different parts of informational books and reference sources, and appreciating poetic and story forms.

They will be introduced to writing conventions ranging from capitalizing, punctuating, and spelling to the different written forms, such as invitations, letters, announcements, stories, verse, and reports (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Since ritualistic communication is so important in establishing and maintaining social relationships, children should have frequent opportunities to develop and practice the relevant social skills.

Persuasive Communication

Persuasive communication involves "the attempt to influence the beliefs or behaviours of others through written or spoken language" (Allen *et al.*, 1986, p. 387). The ultimate goal of this form of communication instruction is to help children influence others in socially acceptable ways and to respond critically to messages that seek to influence them (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Growth in persuasive communication competence is a lifelong process. However, there are many ways that kindergarten children can begin this process. They can compose written persuasive messages: they write notes to friends urging them to come over to play, they write letters to grandparents hinting for gifts, and they write letters to Santa Claus affirming their good behaviour and promising cookies and milk in return for presents (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

There are developmental considerations, however, for this age group. According to Delia and Clark (cited in Allen *et al.*, 1986), children of kindergarten-age fail to

perceive individual listener characteristics that call for message adaptation. Up to age six they tend not to adapt their messages at all. They cannot identify with the perspective of other people. Thus, the Golden Rule is hard to enforce with kindergarten children. As well, they will often speak to adults the same way they speak to their peers, appearing to the adult to be disrespectful.

The failure to adapt to the listener's perspective affects the child's persuading techniques. The child might state an unelaborated request ("Could you keep this puppy?") or state a personal desire or need without elaboration -- including pleas, bargaining, repeated requests ("I want you to keep this puppy. Won't you, please?") (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Teachers must help children learn other effective ways to persuade.

THE COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT

Through studies with preschool children and their language environments at home, Gordon and Jan Wells (1984) described the expected school classroom:

> ... a place where they had opportunities to exercise and increase their linguistic resources by using them in collaboration with the teachers and other children to explore ideas, tackle problems, exercise their imagination, and reflect upon their own and other people's experience to gain greater understanding of themselves and of their relationship with the world around them (p. 193).

Unfortunately, they found that the linguistic environment in the schools they studied provided much less opportunities for language learning through talking (Wells and Wells, 1984).

To enable children to use language productively, teachers need to consider how to improve the communication environment. They need to become aware of the degree to which they dominate the classroom by analysing their own verbal behaviour and monitor their talking time. They should try to keep away from the "centre" of the classroom. Teachers, often unknowingly, isolate themselves from children, elevate their status, and protect their control. Teachers can use child-initiated topics and activities, instead of always dictating instructions. In addition, teachers need to encourage children to direct their comments and responses to each other so that their peers can hear them (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

While the authoritative teacher assumes responsibility for the classroom, speaks as an experienced adult, and retains ultimate decision-making power, he or she also solicits suggestions from children, achieves consensus, and ensures that students understand decisions and reasons behind them (Allen *et al.*, 1986). The children in the kindergarten room need to feel free to communicate. When children try to share their ideas and feelings, teachers must join them in their outward projection and help them to carry their meaning forward (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

To use language productively in both spoken and written discourse children need flexibility of style. This might include an intimate style, a casual style, a consultative style, formal style, and frozen style (Joos cited in Allen *et al.*, 1986). Teachers should use the different styles and encourage their students to use them.

Teachers can combine evaluative comments with personal responses and

recognition of the substantive qualities of children's work (Allen *et al.*, 1986). It is important for the teacher to learn about his or her students and to share affectively with them.

Environment for Language Variations

Classroom teachers will encounter children who vary in their communication behaviour in several ways. Some children reflect language variations; they speak English as a second language or they speak a nonstandard dialect. Other children show signs of communication apprehension. Still others reflect articulation, fluency, and voice disorders, hearing or visual impairments, or language disabilities. Each variation has its developmental origin, but all converge in the classroom. This convergence can blur important distinctions among these special populations. Teachers need to be mindful that language variations among children are essentially matters of school-culture mismatch, whereas communication apprehension is a limiting affective state, and communication disorders represent disruptions in the child's learning to communicate normally in his or her native language (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Understanding the nature of these variations, teachers can better detect them, seek help from specialists and adjust instruction.

These children with language variations need a classroom environment that encourages a great deal of verbal and nonverbal interaction, one-to-one talk with adult speakers of English, feedback based on meaning rather than form, and opportunities to engage in meaningful tasks about concrete topics (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Activities such as

talking about a filmstrip as it is viewed, recounting a class trip to a local landmark, pantomiming an activity, talking through a science experiment, or dramatizing a story help all children develop fluency and confidence, as well as skill in language use.

Since communication is a basic life function, instruction in the language arts is one of the crucial areas of academic learning for these children.

UNIT PLANNING

Based on the belief that children learn language by using it, the unit *Going Places* was designed with the primary purpose of helping children to use language effectively for the major purposes of communicating. Lesson plans were included to incorporate all five of these communication functions.

The organization of this unit is similar to the Core Experience Curriculum outlined by Dorothy Strickland (1989) which is based on the belief that children, like adults, are driven to learn language, not for its own sake, but because of their natural curiosity about the world. The content in the Core Experience Curriculum serves as a unifying interest through which a series of shared events fuse the group into a community of learners not unlike the community of learners in the home (Strickland and Taylor, 1989). The skills and objectives are developed in an integrated, holistic manner through the content themes using the model. Figure 1 is an adaptation of Strickland's model to show how I developed the lessons for *Going Places*. This child-centred curriculum model is based on a set of core experiences that are made available to every child every

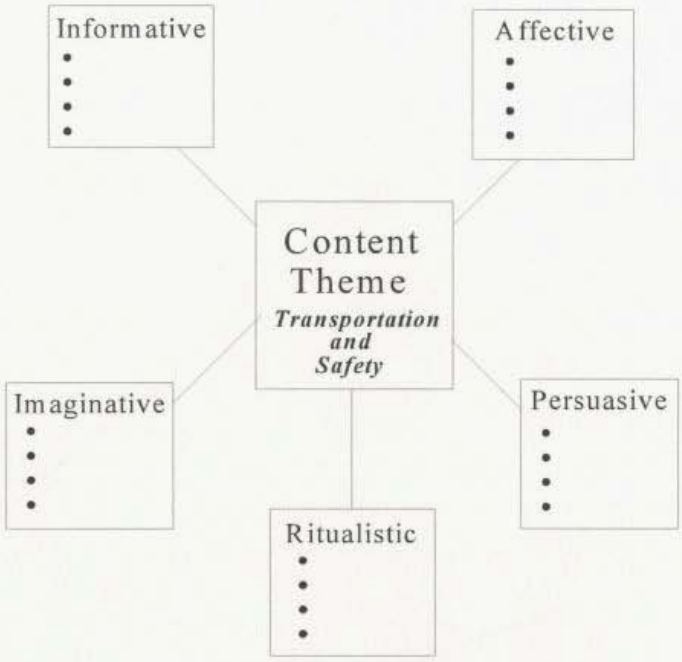

Figure 1. A model for planning the unit around communication purposes. Adapted from Dorothy Strickland's (1989) Core Experience Curriculum. Each box would contain learning activities that foster the growth of the communicative function above it, while relating directly to the content theme, transportation and safety.

day. These experiences include inquiry activities, shared reading and writing, independent reading, independent writing, listening and participating in read aloud sessions, and sharing (Strickland, 1989). These core experiences include all subject areas in the curriculum.

This particular curriculum unit is unique in that it is based on communicative functions. Therefore, in each lesson plan in *Going Places*, a "communications box" will appear beside each activity to indicate which purpose or function of communication the activity serves.

Strickland (1989) contended that organization and management are key concerns for teachers who attempt to put a holistic literacy program in place. The goal is to offer students a comprehensive program in which the learning objectives for listening, speaking, reading, writing, mathematics, the social and physical sciences, creative expression, and thinking can be clearly identified and accounted for. Yet these curricular objectives must be presented to the students in an integrated and meaningful manner, not treated as specific skill objectives or organized around materials designed to teach a particular subject. The objectives for the *Going Places* unit were taken from the *Kindergarten Curriculum Guide* (1985) and *Kindergarten Guide (Draft)* (1994) published by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the new documents, *Primary Language Arts Curriculum Guide (Draft)* (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation [APEF], 1996) and *Early Beginnings! Kindergarten Curriculum Guide* (Newfoundland Department of Education and Training, 1997).

There were other considerations as well as curricular objectives and communication purposes in planning the unit. Watson (1994) advised that teachers must consider what experiences will ensure student choices and which curriculum will ensure that they have a chance to work independently and within a community of learners. Activities must be chosen which are appropriate for the developmental level of kindergarten children. They must be varied and exciting to capture the interest of five-year-olds. These were only a few pre-planning contemplations.

Welton and Mallan (1988) stated that the planning of a unit is an interactive process. Once the instructional intent (the goals) has been identified, the balance of the planning can be dealt with as an interactive system. The objectives will suggest certain teaching activities; the activities will suggest other possible objectives; the objectives (and activities) will be considered in relation to evaluation, and a cycle of planning and teaching will be created. This is primarily the way this unit was developed. They also suggested that objectives themselves do not cause children to think; a teacher's questions posed in the course of a lesson or activity do that.

With the theoretical framework for this unit in place, the following sections attempt to define kindergarten -- the grade level for which this unit was developed. It provides a brief overview of the kindergarten child, appropriate learning activities, the kindergarten classroom, parental involvement, curriculum concerns with an emphasis on early literacy, classroom management and assessment.

THE YOUNG LEARNER

By the time they walk through the schoolhouse door for the first time, children are accomplished learners -- confident, independent, and successful. School is merely a continuation of learning in a more explicit, formal setting (Allen *et al.*, 1986). What makes the kindergarten child unique from other children in the school? Why does the kindergarten curriculum look so different from that of other primary grades? The five-year-old needs instruction that is developmentally appropriate.

Gordon Wells (1983) found that preschoolers learned language actively in the home with no formal curriculum and little that was recognisable as direct teaching. All the children he observed made great progress in learning their native language and simultaneously in learning through language about the world in which they lived. All were noticing features of interest and asking questions about them, meeting problems and trying to find solutions to them, sometimes on their own; sometimes by enlisting adult assistance. Wells also found that for a high proportion of the time, the parents treated the children as equal partners in conversation, encouraging them to take the initiative and helping them to extend the topics they proposed. The implications of Wells' study include the notion that teachers make space and time for children to talk, and listen carefully to what they have to say without immediately imposing an adult point of view, as well as asking questions which foster reflectiveness. This also means that the kindergarten classroom cannot be a strict, quiet, regimented arena where children cannot speak unless spoken to and must sit at their desks all day, working quietly and

independently.

Developmental Characteristics of the Child

Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) suggested that there are four major forces that affect children's communication development. These are biological foundations, social interaction, self-generating activity, and culture. Interaction in the family stimulates their innate capacity to learn language and contributes to individual variation in performance. At the same time, children actively seek to discover language on their own by employing creative strategies. Culture further influences development so that the code, style, and strategies learned provide an ethnic identity that converges with the identities of others in the classroom. Biological foundations and self-generating activity help to account for similarities in development among children, while family interaction patterns and culture contribute to variations in development.

According to Piaget's four stages of mental development, kindergarten children are in the pre-operational stage (2-7 years) (Piaget, 1970, 1973). Developmentally, this would mean that while children cannot perform operations, language is developing. They are egocentric and do not decentre, showing nonreversible thinking and mainly acting on perceptive impulses. They think of present, future, and past, but this is limited to a short duration. The perception of environment for children in this stage is their own houses, yards, and neighbourhoods (Carin and Sund, 1989). These characteristics have implications for teaching kindergarten children.

During the pre-operational stage, children's language learning explodes (Allen *et al.*, 1986). They increasingly use symbols and signs to deal with reality. They think with words. Like other qualities -- size, shape, texture, and colour -- words at first are bound up with objects. Thinking is based on what the child perceives. With maturation and experience, children use words to represent objects, actions, and events (Piaget, 1970, 1973; Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Left to their own devices to play, discover, and explore, children expand their vocabularies at an amazing rate, gain control over the grammatical system, and use language functionally in more complex ways. The direct requests and demands of a previous stage are transformed into simple appeals and primitive arguments. Questioning strategies become more varied. Dramatic play expands enormously. While rapid development of oral communication skills typifies this stage, children between three and six gain early concepts of reading and writing if the opportunity exists. They pretend to read print, and some actually read words in a favourite story or picture book. They draw, scribble, label their artwork, discriminate and name most of the letters of the alphabet, print their names and some alphabet letters, and recognize road signs and labels on commercial products. Toward the end of this stage, the child learns to rely more on logic to solve problems involving concepts of length and number (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Many of these developments hinge on the home environment; the communicative patterns of family members and the value placed on reading and writing in the home. Nonetheless, the kindergarten curriculum is specifically implied in these developments.

Another consideration, already mentioned is that young children have trouble taking into account other people's information needs, feelings, and positions as they talk, so they are often misunderstood. In fact, the preschool child shows little awareness that other perspectives exist, but the six-year-old has some awareness that other people's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings are different from his or her own. Five-year-olds recognize some of the more obvious attributes that they can see (for example, that a person is older or younger, male or female) but not hidden ones (such as motivations) (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Kindergarten children range in their ages, from four to six. Therefore the teacher needs to recognize differences in development and alter expectations accordingly.

From a developmental standpoint, younger children have more difficulty than older ones distinguishing words from the objects they represent, differentiating between a particular object and others in the display, showing awareness of the listener's informational needs, requesting clarification, predicting the effectiveness of messages, and providing additional information when requested. Younger children can understand adequate messages from adults, but their vocabulary, role-taking skills, and knowledge of another person's needs are limited (Piaget, 1970, 1973; Ferreiro and Teberosky, 1982). Teachers must work on these areas but not feel discouraged if it seems there is a mental block to making progress. It might be the case that they are just not ready.

Learning Styles of the Young Learner

Discovering how people learn has never been more relevant than today. The goals of education centre on creating 'lifelong learners.' This suggests that teachers expect their students to continue to learn after they have received their high school diploma, whether they continue on with post-secondary training or not. Their educators want them to take advantage of learning opportunities for the rest of their lives.

Students respond differently to various ways of teaching. Some students learn effectively through silent reading, others do not. Some benefit from direct instruction, others seem to learn more from inquiry methods. A teacher much show a degree of sensitivity to make provisions for a wide range of learning styles (Post, 1988; Ellermeyer, 1988). This would naturally lead to variety in instruction. This unit attempts to provide a wide variety of teaching methods which incorporate the five communication purposes.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES FOR KINDERGARTEN

The "pushed-down curriculum" is what happens when professionals teach kindergarten children as first graders and expect them to act like first graders and when the kindergarten curriculum resembles that of first grade (Morrison, 1995). The kindergarten curriculum should challenge all children to do their best and provide them with social and cognitive skills they need for success, but it should also be appropriate for them.

Patterns of instruction

Inappropriate methods of instruction result in curricula that promote passivity instead of activity, creative expression, and critical thinking. In classrooms where quietness is stressed and much seatwork and workbook pages are pushed, production takes precedence over exploration (Harste and Woodward, 1989). Many teachers, and even students, feel that without a pile of worksheets as proof, they did not do any 'work' today.

The common use of worksheets which keep things quiet and simple may help children master a particular rule quickly. However, this type of instruction does little to help children understand and use communication systems in the complex world outside of school (Harste and Woodward, 1989).

Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) suggested that there are three patterns of instruction that school teachers use. These are the presentational, the exploratory, and the generative patterns. The presentational pattern is a formal lesson structure used for teaching small, fixed pieces and sequences of knowledge, such as the spelling of words or how to use a dictionary. The exploratory pattern, usually less formal and less structured, is an exploration of larger, more abstract pieces of knowledge, such as a topic, a theme, a genre, or a piece of literature, intended to help children internalize meanings and ways of working. The generative pattern is less an act of instruction than a way of encouraging developmental learning, suited primarily to the creation of original products.

If the knowledge is wholly new to children, it probably demands a presentational

approach. If children have already had some exposure to it and are ready to make it their own, then an explorational pattern seems right. If children have integrated it thoroughly with all the other things they know and can do, it is time for original creation through the generative pattern (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

The usual classroom interaction pattern is teacher question/student response/teacher judgment. However, this type of limited interaction need not be the norm. When children interact among themselves in small groups or in a class discussion led by a facilitative teacher, their use of hypothetical language, prior knowledge, and questions increases (Smith-Burke, 1985).

The teacher's primary concern is to increase the child's ability to use language to seek and interpret information, to convey and respond to emotions, to sustain social interaction, to persuade and respond critically to the persuasion of others, and to engage in imaginative activity (Allen *et al.*, 1986). The patterns of instruction should be chosen carefully to best meet these communication goals.

Hennings (1994) agreed that children become more effective language users when their teacher has planned ongoing, cohesive blocks of instruction that enable them to function at their own level and pace, communicate actively with one another, make connections among ideas, and think critically and creatively.

Organization of the Curriculum

As mentioned earlier, young children have short attention spans and need a wide

variety of activities to keep their interest. Variety will encompass a range of different learning styles as well as making learning more appealing. Post (1988) agreed that a monotonous, predictable routine will only reduce motivation and the retention of ideas. On the other hand, interesting and challenging activities give children something to talk about, a chance to guess, argue, make predictions and check them out, and a chance to use their imaginations (Pinnell, 1985), and if teachers are stressing communication and language development, these are the types of responses they want to elicit.

Active learning was recommended by John Dewey almost a century ago (Dewey, 1910), but is still advocated today. Actively learning can imply that students are constantly manipulating things and the teacher takes a back seat to the action of learning. However, according to Carin and Sund (1989), children can be actively involved by listening, speaking, reading, seeing, and thinking, if their minds are acting on what is being learned! This unit attempts to include a wide variety of learning activities which actively involve students.

Integrated Thematic Units

Post (1988) suggested that using a thematic approach allows the teacher to involve students in a type of learning environment that permits flexibility and active student involvement, contains a plethora of manipulative and other learning aids, and considers a much broader spectrum of topical areas. Most kindergarten teachers use thematic units to organize their curriculum.

An integrated theme begins within the child's environment and expands to include elements of reading, arithmetic, science, social studies, and many other topics. The teacher builds the theme around the child's interests and slowly facilitates conceptual development through the challenges offered, the questions posed, and the investigations initiated (Post, 1988).

Whole Language

In the words of Ken Goodman (1986) whole language is "a way of bringing together a view of language, a view of learning, and a view of people, in particular two special groups of people: kids and teachers" (p. 5). It is based on the views that: (1) the child's language is the basis for all reading instruction; (2) language is used primarily for communication; (3) meaning is central to language development; (4) reading, writing, speaking and listening are interrelated; (5) writing is a central component of literacy learning; and (6) literacy learning activities should be authentic and meaningful (Moss and Noden, 1994, p. 343).

According to Goodman (1986), educators have made language hard to learn, primarily by breaking whole (natural) language up into bite-size, yet abstract little pieces. It seemed so logical to think that little children could best learn simple little things that teachers turned 'language' into words, syllables, and isolated sounds. Unfortunately, they also postponed its natural purpose -- the communication of meaning -- and turned it into a set of abstractions, unrelated to the needs and experiences of the children they sought to

help. Whole language teaching strives to keep language whole and involve children in using it functionally and purposefully to meet their own needs.

Church (1994) suggested that the really important question for teachers to ponder concerning curriculum decisions and whole language is not "What am I doing?" but "Why am I doing this?" Teachers need to observe their students and learn from them.

The whole langauge approach also has implications for children with learning disabilities or those in special education programs. According to Scala (1993) studies show that teaching children with learning disabilities in the mainstream using whole language techniques improves their reading abilities, self-esteem, and motivation. Heterogeneous grouping is an important aspect of whole language classrooms. Teachers in the special education department and the regular classroom teachers become collaborators, learning and working together rather than being considered separate and sometimes opposing entities.

According to Goodman (1986), language is easy to learn when: (1) it is real, natural and whole; (2) it is relevant, interesting and it makes sense; (3) it is part of a real event, having social utility; (4) it has purpose for the learner and therefore the learner chooses to use it; and (5) it is accessible to the learner and he or she has power to use it (p. 8).

Resource-Based Learning

One of the more popular instructional strategies used today is resource-based

learning. In 1991, the province of Newfoundland and Labrador published a document which outlined its future path of education and entitled it *Learning to Learn*. This document emphasized the importance of resource-based learning in creating lifelong learners. Its goal was stated explicitly:

> The main goal of resource-based learning is to provide the opportunity for all students to develop independent learning skills in conjunction with the acquisition of a basic body of knowledge which will enable them to become lifelong learners (*Learning to Learn*, 1991).

It further stated that the need for lifelong learning is shifting the emphasis from a dependence on the 'what ' of learning to the 'how' of learning -- today's students must "learn how to learn" (*Learning to Learn*, 1991). The idea is to integrate all the skills needed for learning to learn into meaningful units or themes. Learning strategies and information skills will be learned in context. Many schools have adopted resource-based learning as their prime means of educating.

While this strategy does not deviate much from whole-language learning, the emphasis is on the inclusion of information-processing skills. Through cooperative program planning and teaching by the classroom teacher and the learning resources teacher, the important informational skills that students will need all their lives are integrated into meaningful activities. The Toronto Board of Education (1996) has stated that these skills should be taught functionally, in the context of a topic of study, rather than as a separate exercise.

Resource-based learning yields positive results when there is cooperation in unit

planning and implementation between all the teachers involved. This might include the special education teacher as well as the regular classroom teacher and the learning resources teacher. Carol Ann Haycock (1988) proposed that the results of the cooperative program planning process are "resource-based learning programs and experiences for students which (1) maximize the use of all school resources to the best possible effect for the student population; (2) ensure the integration of information skills instruction and application, developmentally, across the curriculum; and (3) guarantee successful learning experiences for all students" (p. 33).

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a grouping process which is structured such that children of different ability levels are working together toward a goal. Each member of the group is assigned a role or a job and are required to participate. Johnson and Johnson (1990) contended that in order for cooperative learning to be effective, there must be positive interdependence, face-to-face (promotive) interaction, individual accountability, social skills, and group processing. Edwards and Stout (1990) suggested that you can use cooperative learning whenever an assignment requires discussion and higher-order thinking skills. It provides a perfect setting for small-group brainstorming, art activities, storytelling, and peer editing.

Learning Centres

Learning centres can be used in various ways. Some teachers like to use learning centres as their primary method of instruction, while others may use them for one time-slot a day, or others only once a month. Learning centres are effective because they promote cooperative learning as well as an opportunity to foster independence. Allen *et al.* (1986) pointed out that they can be used for individual instruction and encouraging children to work independently or in small groups. They enhance student interaction and can lead to productive uses of language. Children in learning centres will communicate together for the purposes of solving problems or helping one another.

When using learning centres, teachers need to: (1) make the task to be completed clear, (2) ensure that the necessary materials are in the centre, (3) give the children a means to report their progress on tasks, and (4) vary the tasks, projects, and themes in the centres (Allen *et al.*, 1986, p. 180).

Before using the centres for the first time, the children need to know the rules. This will prevent many management problems later. The learning centre rules should cover factors such as how many children may occupy a centre at a time; when a centre may be used and under what conditions (free choice or required projects); under what circumstances the teacher may be interrupted when occupied in a conference with another student; what students can do independently when they complete an assignment before others do; and when and where students may converse without disturbing others (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Appropriate Learning Activities

Teachers need to discover how to open language possibilities, how to make their classrooms more like real language environments. According to Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986), teachers can: (1) bring the outside in, (2) take children out, (3) allow more natural interaction, and (4) infuse life, drama, and excitement into ordinary school activities. Inside the classroom, interaction can be increased by reorganizing the room physically, by allowing more talk and movement in regular learning activities, and by planning special activities that focus on interaction (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Children bring varied background language experiences with them into the kindergarten classroom. Some have had a wide range of experiences while others bring a limited amount. It is the teacher's responsibility to provide as many direct learning experiences as possible (Ellermeyer, 1988).

The following strategies can be used within the framework of a whole language, resource-based, integrated thematic unit which uses cooperative learning and learning centres. The list is by no means exhaustive.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming occurs as children focus on a topic and contribute to the free flow of ideas. This concept will be revisited in more detail in the *Writing* section of *Early Literacy*.

Conferences

Conferences involve the child and the teacher working on a one-to-one basis. They might discuss a drawing, an experience, or a piece of writing (*Kindergarten Guide. Draft*, 1994). While the teacher conferences with one child, the other students are working on other activities. Conferencing will be discussed in more detail in the *Assessment* section.

Discussions

Discussions can be held with kindergarten children in a large group or in small groups. Children can be encouraged to comment and question without judgement on a particular topic. The teacher can clarify understanding by paraphrasing difficult terms, stimulating the exchange of ideas. Discussions can help children make better sense of the world and make them think about things in new ways. They can also promote positive group interaction (*Kindergarten Guide. Draft*, 1994).

Dramatic Play

According to Welton and Mallan (1988), in dramatic play the teacher creates an environment which the class explores. The teacher observes their play and takes note of misconceptions or misunderstandings reflected in the play. The class then discusses the mistakes and forms research groups. Research takes place and the results are reported. Even kindergarten children can do research by using resource people such as their

parents, older students or other adults. Those who can read will be able to do some simple research with guidance.

Dramatic play provides young children with a way to discover themselves, learn how to deal with new and unusual experiences, and learn how to solve problems. It prepares children by helping them rehearse life using language in lifelike settings (Glazer, 1989).

Roskos (1988) pointed out how children participate in story-making while they play. They use story as a narrative form on a number of levels to bring meaning to their play. The story serves as a way of getting the play and the players organized -- the "once upon a time" or "let's pretend" signal. It provides the narrative framework for structuring, coordinating, and sustaining the play talk with the action -- the who, what, when, where and why of the enterprise. The story serves as a vehicle for bringing personal and shared meaning to the play event; it allows the children to interlace their personal experiences with the unfolding collective tale (p. 563).

Pantomime is also an important dramatic activity in kindergarten. First, through pantomime, children can loosen any inhibitions about expressing themselves nonverbally. Second, they gain control over their nonverbal expressions, which are as significant in face-to-face communication and in creative drama as they are in pantomime. Third, they begin to realize the importance of body language in communication and become aware of the nonverbal messages that others send (Hennings, 1994).

Mayfield (1992*a*) suggested that teachers facilitate children's play by: (1)

providing children with a variety of appropriate play materials, sufficient materials, and seeing that these materials change frequently, (2) arranging space for them to play, (3) providing time for play, and (4) actually playing with the children. With development, pretend play becomes less dependent on physical props, gestures, and actions, and relies increasingly on ideas, imagination, and language. In turn, as it becomes increasingly dependent on language to create possible worlds and to express and communicate meanings, play comes closer to the experiences of storytelling, writing, and reading (McLane and McNamee, 1990).

Play creates a risk-free context in which children do not have to worry about 'getting it right' or about 'messing up.' This freedom may lead children to discover or invent new possibilities, new ways of doing things and new ways of thinking about ideas, which may, in turn, lead them to new questions, problems, and solutions. Approaching writing and reading with such an experimental, 'as if' attitude may help children realize that written language is something they can manipulate in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes (McLane and McNamee, 1990).

Play appears to have at least two potential links to the development of literacy: (1) as a symbolic activity, pretend play allows children to develop and refine their capacities to use symbols, to represent experience, and to construct imaginary worlds, capacities they will draw on when they begin to write and read; (2) as an orientation or approach to experience, play can make the various roles and activities of people who read and write more meaningful and hence, more accessible to young children (McLane and McNamee,

1990).

Journal Writing and Letter Writing

Kindergarten children should have personal journals in which they can write about their thoughts, feelings and reflections on various topics and experiences. Topics can be requested by the teacher, and at other times can be the children's choice.

Letter writing is another activity that they can be involved in. This is an excellent motivator for early writers. Letters can be completed as a whole class on chart paper or written independently to send to a classmate, friend or family member.

More will be said about journal writing and letter writing in the *Early Literacy* section.

Performances or Presentations

As children grow through the egocentric stage, their communications should increasingly display sensitivity to audience. Although school communication settings differ from natural settings, children may nonetheless communicate with a variety of audiences at school: the classroom teacher, peers, older and younger children, school personnel, relatives, people in the community, and strangers (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

It is important for children to have the experience of performing for these different audiences. This might involve having a 'Parent Day' in which students read poetry or dramatize a favorite story. They might perform a choral reading or a puppet play at a

school assembly or for another class. These experiences will not only give them a sense of audience, but will increase their self-confidence.

Special Guests and Field Trips

One of the major purposes of education is to help children expand the range of topics about which they may communicate. Teachers must provide the children with new experiences and encourage them to read, write, listen, and speak about their experiences, using new vocabulary that they have learned.

School occasions include a class visit to the library or instructional materials centre, a classroom visit by guests, an open-school night, a school play, a trip to the zoo, a small group discussion, and a group television-viewing experience (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Each of these occasions may call for special communication behaviours by the participants. While the public tends to frown on activities such as field trips that appear to the outsider to be 'off-task,' Harste and Woodward (1989) suggested that teachers provide visitors and planned excursions to widen young children's view of the world (Harste and Woodward, 1989) and contribute to topics for communication.

Questioning

Questioning is an important technique in a classroom that promotes language use and growth. Within their teaching strategies, educators need to expand their questioning repertoire using divergent questions which permit a wider range of responses than

convergent questions (Allen *et al.*, 1986). To broaden their knowledge of question type, it is helpful for teachers to be aware of the cognitive-affective classification system based on complementary taxonomies of educational objectives, developed by Bloom, Krathwohl, and other scholars (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Questions in the cognitive domain focus on recall or recognition of knowledge and the development of intellectual abilities and skills for using knowledge. This system classifies questions on six major levels of increasing difficulty: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Questions in the affective domain focus on emotional responses such as interests, appreciations, attitudes, values and adjustments. This system, in abbreviated form, classifies questions on five levels: attending, responding, valuing, organization, and characterization (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Classification systems can be helpful reminders that questions need to be asked to stimulate higher-order thinking and to relate material from the outside world to the child's own feelings and thoughts. But learning is not linear, so questions need not follow an orderly progression from one level to the next (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Questioning stimulates students' listening and reading comprehension, and critical evaluation; prompts and advances oral discourse; and nourishes the writing process. All students can benefit from carefully conceived and well-timed questions posed by the teacher, from questioning on their own, and from sensitive responses by others (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

The questioning circle proposed by Christenbury and Kelly (cited in Allen *et al.*, 1986), consists of structuring questions around the subject matter being taught (matter), the children's experiences and feelings related to the subject (personal reality), and pertinent concepts and experiences of other people and cultures (external reality). At first, questions can focus on one of these elements at a time. Gradually questions can help children to relate the elements to each other.

Generally, when using questioning, teachers should plan questions but remain flexible. They should direct questions to all students, allowing time to respond. They need to monitor general evaluative replies and try to stretch students' thinking. Teachers should draw students into discussions where students can pose their own questions to one another and to the teacher (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The kindergarten classroom needs to be homelike, attractive and welcoming. School is the first experience of being away from home for many kindergarten children. A classroom environment that says to them, "This space is designed for you and this is a space where you can live and learn comfortably" reduces their stress and anxiety and thus facilitates learning (Mayfield, 1992*a*).

McKenzie (1985) advised that, when creating the classroom context, there needs to be more understanding of the nature of the interaction, an understanding of the changing role of the participants, the crucial part the teacher plays in allowing the learners play their part more fully. The key here is communication; using language in all curriculum areas. How can teachers

arrange the learning environment to facilitate this goal?

Students will feel more ownership of their classroom if the teacher actually allows them to help create the classroom environment. Goodman (1986) concurred, stating that no one is too young to participate in the creation of a literate environment; to dictate a story, label, put together the displays and bulletin boards, or simply experience how the literate environment is created.

One thing teachers need to remember in planning the physical environment is that it should naturally involve children in pretend and real writing (Richgels, 1987) as well as in reading and interacting orally. The classroom ought to be a true literate environment, promoting early literacy.

Huck, Hepler and Hickman (1987) suggested, however, that the most important aspect of the classroom environment is the teacher. It is the teacher who creates the climate of the classroom and arranges the learning environment according to his or her philosophy of learning. The Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (1996) stated that learning flourishes when the classroom climate is one which provides support, structure, encouragement and challenge, and where children are treated with warmth, sensitivity and respect. In arranging the environment purposefully, teachers acknowledge the physical setting as an active and pervasive influence on their own activities and attitudes, as well as those of the children in their classrooms (Morrow, 1989).

Seating Arrangement

A good physical environment will simulate a community setting that supports interaction and communication (Templeton, 1995). When considering a seating arrangement, teachers can

select an arrangement that fits the type of interaction they want to facilitate (Allen *et al.*, 1986). If the teacher wants to encourage communication between the students when they are at their seats, round tables might be used or small square desks might be arranged in squares or pods.

Templeton (1995) suggested that, when arranging the classroom, high-traffic areas should be free of congestion, the teacher should be able to see all students easily, frequently-used materials and supplies should be readily accessible, and students should be able to see all presentations and displays without difficulty (p. 137).

Grouping

Grouping has been defined as "a flexible kind of classroom organization for adjusting the curriculum to the needs and abilities of class members" (Wrightstone, as cited in Mayfield, 1992*b*). In a functional language-based program, groups are an important feature, generating purposes for using language and offering a proving ground on which those purposes can be worked out (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

With classrooms holding between 25 and 30 children, language interaction with the teacher is very limited. Teachers tend to address the whole class as a group when talking. An alternative to this is using grouping. Used effectively, grouping can grant many more opportunities for extended adult-child interaction of the kind experienced at home, involving more intellectual uses of language (Wells and Wells, 1984).

Wells (1983) suggested that, if teachers really wish to develop children's linguistic abilities, to help them to express their ideas coherently and fluently, and to listen carefully and critically to the contributions of others, they should do so in one-to-one, or, at most, in small-

group situations. Here, a greater reciprocity of interaction is possible, and children can try out their ideas in a tentative manner, free from pressures felt by both child and teacher in the large-group situation.

Kindergartners are not too young to benefit from grouping. They have been observed role-playing in office, bank, and store situations, "reading" stories aloud to each other, working on a series of illustrations for a story, doing library research with an adult guide, dictating a group poem, and playing language games. Most of these activities although introduced by the teacher, were carried out in unsupervised groups (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

For grouping to run smoothly, children must know what is required of them and have the skills to follow through on their responsibilities. The teacher must be sure that the students have had enough guided practice in completing reading and writing activities independently or in pairs before organizing groups (Templeton, 1995). Allen *et al.* (1986) gave the following guidelines: groups should be kept small; group sessions need to be brief; the teacher must monitor group memberships; appropriate spatial arrangements must be made (p. 192).

Mayfield (1992*b*) suggested that teachers need to consider a variety of factors in grouping children, such as individual children's needs, their developmental levels, social skills, communicative skills, experience with working with other children, the nature of the task, the number of children, and the availability of resources.

Learning Centres

Whether the teacher decides to use learning centres as an instructional technique or not, the kindergarten room can include centres. Learning centres serve as open invitations for

children to use language and other sign systems in their play (Harste and Woodward, 1989).

Morrow (1989) gave the following suggestions for their organization. Centre materials, including those for bulletin boards, can be stored on tables, on shelves, or in boxes. Areas must be accessible and labelled. Early in a school year, a centre need hold only a small number of items, with new materials added gradually as the year progresses. Before new items are placed in centres, their purpose, use, and placement should be introduced by the teacher.

Literacy Centre:

The literacy centre can occupy about one-third of the wall space on one side of a room, thus dramatizing to the children that the use of reading, writing, and oral language is a valued and important part of the classroom (Morrow, 1989). The literacy centre can actually be broken up into several areas: the reading area, writing area and listening area.

Reading Area:

It has been found that well-designed classroom library corners significantly increased the number of children who chose to participate in literary activities during free choice times (Morrow, 1989). Rawson and Goetz (cited in Schickedanz, 1986) suggested that a small, cozy book centre attracts children more than a larger centre.

The reading area can contain a wide variety of items. Props such as hand puppets, life-size puppets, and puppet-like figures used on a flannel board often provide points of departure for young children to use oral language in response to stories (Glazer, 1989). Life-size story puppets are easily constructed with cardboard and magic markers. Story objects and characters can be drawn life-size and then cut out and covered with clear contact paper for durability. When

the puppets are representing people, a hole can be cut in the facial area so children can put their faces through the hole and instantly become a character (Glazer, 1989).

Stuffed animals also belong in a library corner, especially if they are related to available books. Children enjoy reading to stuffed animals or simply holding them as they look at books (Morrow, 1989).

Books and materials selected for the library corner should appeal to a variety of interests and represent a range in grade levels, ideally with multiple copies of more popular books. Several types of children's literature should be represented at each reading level, including picture concept books, fairy tales, nursery rhymes, picture storybooks, realistic literature, easy to read books, fables, folktales, informational books, biographies, newspapers, magazines, and poetry (Morrow, 1989).

When selecting books for the classroom library, Cullinan (1989) also suggested that the teacher choose those that he or she likes. The teacher's enthusiasm in sharing books with a child will influence the child's response. As well, a reader needs to read in a manner such that the language in the books sounds the way natural language sounds. In addition, when choosing books for the centre, teachers need to remember that children are "language sponges" who soak up words around them. Therefore, we want the language in their books to be worthy of emulation (Cullinan, 1989).

Martinez and Teale (1988) found that while children spend a lot of time browsing through unfamiliar books in the library corner, they are more likely to engage in emergent reading when looking at predictable books and books that the teacher has previously read to them. As well, they are usually more attracted to big books rather than average sized books. A library corner

can include numerous books with predictable structures, both big books and the more conventionally-sized ones and the teacher can place any books read aloud in the corner for the children to read independently. As well, teachers can perform repeated readings of stories as a regular, planned part of the read aloud program.

In addition to predictable books, other types of children's literature can also be included. A broad range of stories, informational books, and poetry are all necessary for the children's continuing growth in reading and writing (Martinez and Teale, 1988).

Well-designed library corners can provide two kinds of bookshelves. The first, houses the bulk of the collection, and its books are shelved with spines facing outward. The second type is open-faced to display book covers, an important technique for calling attention and providing easy access to special books (Morrow, 1989). The latter is especially useful when doing thematic units. Books that relate to the theme can be kept on the display shelves.

Children can be involved in planning, designing, and managing a library corner. They can help develop rules for its use, keep it neat, and select a name for it, such as "Book Nook" (Morrow, 1989).

Writing Area:

The writing centre is a key for building a community of writers in the early childhood classroom. It makes writing a visible part of the curriculum and serves as a place where children can write for a wide variety of reasons (Teale and Sulzby, 1989). The centre should contain a variety of writing instruments and materials: chalkboard; magnetic letters; unlined, lined, and story paper; typewriter; computer; marker; crayons; pens; and pencils.

The writing centre can become a multimedia construction area by placing the art centre

next to the writing area. Children can then create their covers and bind their own books using the art supplies. They can also participate in designing their own "publishing" and "exhibition" areas (Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989).

Blank books prepared by the teacher, especially ones keyed to special occasions, invite children to fill in written messages and stories. A regular inventory of pictures, posters, magazines, and newspapers can stimulate and provide decoration and illustration for children's writing (Morrow, 1989). The centre might also include a list of frequently used words as well as new words learned during the theme to help with their writing. Other references might include personal address books and picture dictionaries.

A bulletin board in the writing area can be used for posting messages among members of the class and with the teacher (Morrow, 1989). Each child might also have their own mailboxes for sending and receiving messages.

An alphabet chart in easy view helps children identify and shape letters they may need while writing. Tactile plastic, magnetic, wooden, and felt letters are useful language arts manipulatives that help children develop motor dexterity for the act of writing and aid them in letter recognition and formation (Morrow, 1989).

Listening Area:

The listening area should have cassette players with headphones for listening to taped stories, songs, or tapes made by the students. Heald-Taylor (1987) recommended inviting older students to record favourite stories and encouraging them to use sound effects, background music, and dramatic voices. Cassettes along with the book can be placed in the listening centre for students to enjoy again and again. Books can relate to the theme being studied and should be

changed frequently.

Play Centre:

The play area should contain specific types of materials to foster role playing as nurses or doctors, fire fighters, law enforcement officers, dentists and patients, fast food operators, beauticians and barbers, gas station attendants, business people, lawyers, psychologists, teachers, mothers, fathers, siblings, or supermarket employees and more. Costumes representing characters in stories also encourage role playing (Glazer, 1989).

Dolls, doll furniture, dress-up clothing, toy appliances or "out of use" real ones, utensils, dishes, cartons, paper bags, magazines and books, note paper or pads, pencils, a camera, a bulletin board, a broom, a vacuum cleaner, tables and chairs, and an ironing board are just some of the important items that encourage children to play the roles of everyday life. Time must be provided for children to play freely until they have completed "acting out" their roles (Glazer, 1989).

Computer Centre:

Computers can be used to reinforce skills, to explore narratives, to link content curriculum in print and film through videodisc or "multimedia" technology, and as word processors (Templeton, 1995). Students are highly motivated to use the computer because it is fun. There are many excellent programs available for young children on a wide range of topics in all subject areas.

The computer area ought to be out of the main traffic of the classroom but in a space

large enough to allow two or three children to work together. It is also important to place the computers in a relatively dust-free area.

Science and Math Centres:

The science centre ought to have experiments that children can do on their own with simple instructions for them to follow. All the activities should be hands-on. The centre can have a rotating exhibit – animals, plants, rocks, leaves, art prints, fossils, photographs, and books that change with the themes. Children can bring these items from home to put on display.

The math centre should also include manipulatives to encourage experimenting with mathematical concepts. Items can include puzzles, counters, scales and weights, measuring devices, interlocking cubes, cuisennaire rods, shape games, sets and numeral games, bottle caps, dried beans, popsicle sticks, flannel board numerals and sets, clothes-pins, buttons, shells, magnetic numerals, wooden numerals, fraction fruits or other wooden solids, jar lids, containers of varied sizes for volume measurement, geometric forms as well as number books.

Art Centre

The types of materials included in the art centre may vary with the themes being studied. Some basic supplies might be newspaper, newsprint, fingerpaint paper, manila paper, vellum, construction paper, tagboard, a large roll of mural paper, scrap paper of all kinds, crayons, pencils, coloured chalk, tempera paints, ink or watercolour markers, fingerpaint, paste, glue, tape, clay, and all types of scrap materials (cloth, yarn, plastic, boxes, lids, spools, buttons, wrapping paper, styrofoam).

Water and/or Sand Centre

The water centre may be a pan of water or a commercial water container. Things to be kept in this centre might include boats and other water toys, various items that sink and some that float, and containers of different sizes to experiment with and compare volume.

The sand centre can have shovels, buckets, different size containers, toy cars and trucks, sifting instruments, and a watering can.

Group Meeting Centre

A kindergarten classroom also needs an open area where the whole group can meet for stories, opening and closing activities, music, movement, drama and other whole group activities.

Learning Materials

The kindergarten classroom does not usually have the stacks of textbooks that many other grade levels have. Allen *et al.* (1986) provided the following list of materials that can be used to supplement textbooks in the classroom:

library books
posters
menus
programs
signs
service manuals
children's writings
operating instructions
political cartoons
joke books
comic books and strips
pamphlets
TV schedules
advertisements
contracts
questionnaires
application blanks
warranties
graffiti
recipes
magazines
junk mail
timetables
product labels
proclamations
personal messages
ballots
radio and TV shows
newspapers
greeting cards (p. 109)

Resources and equipment need to be organized in the classroom to maximize students' independence, so that teacher involvement in the supply of materials and apparatus is kept to a minimum (Wells and Wells, 1984).

The section on *Early Literacy* will revisit the subject of learning materials.

Bulletin Boards and Displays

Along with the physical arrangement of the classroom, attractively-decorated bulletin boards and displays make the kindergarten room more welcoming for anyone who enters its doors. Children's work should be displayed so that visiting parents can see their progress. As well, the exposure contributes to the positive feeling children feel in seeing their work on public display. Interactive bulletin boards are also enjoyable for children; when the board is like a giant puzzle that they can manipulate. Children can help in designing and putting up bulletin boards in the classroom.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are children's first teachers. To benefit children's learning, school involvement should include more than just parent-teacher meetings. It should include opportunities for parents to participate in classroom activities. When parents feel a part of the school, they are more apt to extend their participation to more meaningful literacy events at home.

Parents in the School

The organization of classroom volunteers allow maximum opportunity for sustained

interaction between adults and children. Wells and Wells (1984) stated that all children will learn most effectively when there are frequent opportunities for collaborative talk with teachers and with fellow pupils. Focussing attention on one student in a class of 25 can sometimes cause management problems. With parent volunteers, however, the teacher has a helping hand with classroom control and can talk individually with students.

A good volunteer program does not happen automatically. A teacher must recruit parents and plan for a variety of possible tasks to accommodate parental interests, abilities, and time commitments. An orientation session or workshop for parent volunteers will help increase the effectiveness of parent volunteers (Mayfield and Ollila, 1992). Some things that parents might be asked to do include getting involved in reading with students, sharing in content area learning, making blank books, typing manuscripts, helping children make films and compose music, and going on class excursions (Harste and Woodward, 1989).

These special people appreciate being thanked after each session and periodically receiving a little "extra special" recognition from the teacher, the children, and the school (Mayfield and Ollila, 1992).

Parental Involvement From the Home

Not everyone can or is able to participate in the same way. For example, it is very difficult for working parents to find time during their workday to participate in classroom activities; on the other hand, they are usually willing to complete activities with their children at home in the evenings (Mayfield and Ollila, 1992).

Teachers need to be aware of what is, what is not, and what can be learned in the home.

They must recognize that the influence of the school is limited and that they must learn to harness the power and influence of the home for language learning (Johnson, 1992). Helping parents understand how children become readers and writers is one of the teacher's and the school administrator's most important missions (Enz, 1995).

When teachers are successful in explaining the common patterns in the form of children's oral and written language production, they can make parents their allies in supporting children's natural striving to become literate. Teachers can help parents realize they are teaching reading and writing when they read and write for their own purposes, when they read to their children, when they encourage children's free exploration of print, when they write to children, and when they write children's words for them. These informed parents will be able to teach children to read as well as they taught them to talk (Fields, 1988). Parent handbooks about reading or writing can be recommended to parents such as Oldford-Matchim's *Help your Child Become a Reader: A Guide for Reading Conversations, Activities and Games* (1994).

Some teachers hold a special parent meeting at the beginning of the year, separate from the school's back-to-school night, so that attention is undivided, and explain their programs at length in a relaxed, give-and-take format (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Another good idea is to hold parent workshops. Unlike parent-teacher conferences or open houses, parent workshops are designed to provide in-depth information to parents about the school's curriculum and their children's learning through first-hand experience and to provide practical suggestions that parents may use at home with their children (Enz, 1995). In these workshops, parents should learn through highly engaging, hands-on activities. Workshops should be informative and allow for questions and answers, but most importantly, parent

workshops should be fun.

One efficient vehicle for communication is the weekly classroom newsletter. The newsletter should describe the children's learning activities and inform parents about emergent literacy concepts. These communications are always well received if they are reader-friendly, brief, and delivered with a warm, respectful, and caring tone (Enz, 1995).

Enz (1995) also suggested that teachers include a "Dear Teacher" question-and-answer column based on the familiar "Dear Abby" which answers concerns that parents might have about their child's education. He also recommends a "Did You Know?" section which directly addresses issues such as developmental stages in emergent literacy and provides the parents with important information. A sample of this suggested weekly newsletter is included in the Appendix (p. 131). Mayfield and Ollila (1992) proposed that the class newsletter can also include suggestions for literacy activities that parents can do at home with their children.

A parent bulletin board and parent library shelf are also useful for providing parents with information about literacy and other topics. The bulletin board can be conveniently located where parents drop off or pick up their children (Mayfield and Ollila, 1992). This could be a spot where parents share ideas with each other. For example, John and Christine Barnitz (1996) shared how they have designed thematic parties in collaboration with their children, as well as how they took advantage of other opportunities for using literature in the family such as holidays and various community organizations such as Cub Scouts or Girl Guides. Teachers and parents, sharing literacy

strategies and events with one another, can support children's acquisition of language and literacy.

As a result of communication with the home, such as those mentioned above, most parents are so familiar with the classroom, the children, and the quality of the work going on, that report card and formal conferences become supplements to this more thorough communication (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

In the *Going Places* unit, I have suggested that teachers have a 'Parent Day' at the end of the theme. This day would be marked on their monthly calendar so that parents know ahead of time and can sometimes arrange things at work or home in order to attend. A couple of days before the special day, the students will design and deliver personal invitations to their parents. On Parent Day, the children will perform songs, poetry, or a play, display their work throughout the unit, play games and literally 'show off' for their loved ones.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1963) described the mind of a five-year-old as a volcano with two vents, destructiveness and creativeness. She suggested that when teachers widen the creative channel, they atrophy the destructive one. It is extremely important, then, that teachers learn to manage a classroom with 25 children, encouraging the emergence of their creative sides!

Templeton (1995) reminded us that planning ahead and thinking through

instruction ensures better organization and management, as well as fewer discipline problems. Teachers should establish guidelines for acceptable patterns of interaction early on (for example, we do not talk while someone else "has the floor"). Students should help formulate these classroom communication rules. Teachers also need to establish procedures for classroom operation (for example, at the sound of the drum, all must attend to the teacher; place completed papers in the "in" basket; do not sharpen pencils during class discussion). Teachers must make sure that students know the tasks they are to do at times when they are conferring with an individual or small group. The teacher should be aware of children's special needs before problems arise, and plan activities based on a clear understanding of students' attention span. Teachers should maintain eye contact during discussions, move about the classroom, and bring as many students into the discussion as possible. Educators should never use a language activity or the withdrawal of it as punishment (Hennings, 1994).

EARLY LITERACY

Traditionally, educators have thought of literacy as the process of learning to read and write. For example, Frank Smith (1982) defined literacy as the ability to make full sense and productive use of the opportunities of written language in the particular culture in which one lives.

The more closely one looks, the more difficult it is to pinpoint a time when literacy learning begins. Certainly it begins long before the child enters kindergarten or

pre-kindergarten (Teale and Sulzby, 1989). At school, teachers are merely extending the language-learning experience. They do not start with a 'blank slate.'

Parents and other literate persons play a key role in facilitating early literacy learning by demonstrating literacy. They do this when they write a shopping list, use a bus schedule, write a letter, help a school child with homework, or read the newspaper. As children observe these demonstrations, they can discern the purposes and some of the actions involved in reading and writing (Teale and Sulzby, 1989). Harste and Woodward (1989) suggested that teachers should invite parents, administrators, professional writers, and others into the classroom on a regular basis so the children can see the strategies of successful written language use and learning demonstrated.

Since children do not first learn to read and then learn to write (Chomsky, 1971), educators need to speak of literacy development, not of reading readiness or of prereading (Teale and Sulzby, 1989). Scribbling, reversed letters, invented spellings, creative punctuation, and reading and writing miscues are indications of growth toward control of the language processes. Children are universally able to sort out language as they use it to meet their functional needs. If their language use in school is authentic, then they will not find it hard to get control of the language forms they need (Goodman, 1986).

Children are like active sponges; they learn a great deal about the nature and purpose of printed language by observing, by asking questions, and by acting on written language (Teale and Sulzby, 1986; Templeton, 1995). Smith (1982) believed that literacy develops because the child sees what reading and writing can do, and because it is

relevant to the child's own creative and constructive purposes.

According to Goodman (1986), to promote literacy a teacher should (1) support developing awareness of print and its functions; (2) support the transition into productive reading; (3) build strategies, not specifics: meaning-seeking, predicting, inferencing, sampling, confirming, self-correcting in reading; inventing spellings and experimenting with forms to serve their functions in writing; (4) cultivate the alphabetic principle, not specific phonics; (5) develop risk-taking (pp. 46-47). Goodman also contended that in a beginning literacy program, the teacher should be a monitor, cheerleader, co-reader, and facilitator.

A Literacy Environment

When the skills of written language are embedded in the very culture of the learning environment, reading and writing develop in much the same manner as oral language. In these settings, the skills are taught and attended to in the way that children learn best (Strickland and Cullinan, 1990), that is, integrated into meaningful activities.

Language development is really the same in and out of school. Whatever makes language easy to learn outside of school will also make it easier to learn in school (Goodman, 1986). Children learn best in low risk environments where exploration is accepted and current efforts are socially supported and understood (Harste and Woodward, 1989). They are most likely to develop foundations for learning to read and write if they participate in "a community of writers and readers" (McLane and McNamee,

1990). Therefore, a literacy environment is of extreme importance to a child's acquisition of language and communication skills.

In a literacy rich classroom, reading and writing skills are incorporated into every aspect of children's daily experiences. Some educators frown on practices such as assigned worksheets, alphabet letters to be focussed on each week, counting out loud to 100 every day, or specific practice in writing one's name (Schickedanz, 1989; McKenzie, 1985). Schickedanz (1989) contended that while children can survive in predominantly skills-oriented classrooms and can learn a lot about literacy, it would be better if they could learn to read and to write while they actually read and write in a meaningful context.

Goodman (1986) agreed that when the purpose of instruction is to teach language for its own sake, or to make children discuss language like linguists, then the learner is distracted from what he or she is trying to say or understand through language. Priorities are out of balance and out of keeping with the nature of young children as literacy learners when kindergarten and readiness books concentrate on letter sound matching, letter discrimination, and letter names and give only scant attention to activities that involve children with stories (Teale and Sulzby, 1989). Instead, a priority for the early childhood curriculum should be ensuring that all children become capable and willing participants in the literate society of the classroom, home, and community (Teale and Sulzby, 1989).

The focus should always be on the child's "learning," rather than the "teaching"

(Teale and Sulzby, 1989). Trusting children's choices and their own decision-making is imperative. When it is time to write, the topic can be self-generated or the teacher can give the children a choice from a list of suggestions. Teachers can invite them to read books of their own choosing and encourage responding to books in their own way. To cultivate this independence, a teacher might start with a menu of options from which the children can choose. Later they will design their own projects (Enz, 1996). The element of choice gives the child a purpose for language learning. Schieffelin and Cochran-Smith (1982) pointed out that literacy must be functional, relevant, and meaningful for individuals and the society in which they live for an individual to become literate. It must be able to meet the needs of individuals for their own social purposes and goals .

Boloz and Muri (1994) described some of the literacy activities that are being implemented in Ganado Primary School in Arizona. Students are involved in a school-wide postal service, including carrying mail with their blue mailbags. A 'publications lab' publishes student-authored books. A school newspaper club prints a monthly edition, which includes student pieces, editorials, photographs, and news reports. Student complaint and apology forms are available around the school for students to record their problems and reflections. The staff uses 'Once Upon a Time' breakfast meetings to build social relationships and to share professional and children's books. They involve parents through a series of 'Rainbow Connection' and 'Active Parenting' workshops. Parents write letters to their children and mail them through the school's postal system. This is an example of a school, not just an individual classroom, that promotes literacy.

Crossing Boundaries Between Language Modes

A school curriculum for language arts should attempt to keep language learning just as natural, dynamic, and productive as it is in the early years of childhood. In order to do this, teachers must be willing (1) to combine language modes (listening, speaking, reading, writing) so that at least two out of four are practiced together; (2) to loosen subject matter boundaries so that language activities are as much a part of science and mathematics as they are of language arts and; (3) to be as flexible about the use of time as their school schedule allows (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Teachers need to make the most of connections, shared knowledge, and needs by combining language modes in their lessons and continually expecting students to obtain and express information in more than one way. Whenever a writing lesson is planned, reading or speaking or listening, or all three, should be linked to it (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

An example of this language mode integration is the language-experience approach as outlined by Richgels (1987). In this approach, the teacher: (1) talks about a shared experience or a common interest, (2) writes down the students' dictated summary of the discussion, (3) points out letter/sound correspondences that students have been studying as they occur in the dictated story, and (4) encourages students to try reading parts of the story (accepting at first, substitutions that preserve the meaning of the story).

A truly integrated language arts program does not consign a language form to a single period of concentration at a particular grade level. Instead, it continually

reintroduces and develops forms as they serve children's purposes and complement their skills. When knowledge of a special message form is needed, the teacher may simply provide that knowledge or children may be encouraged to find information about that form themselves (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Teachers should also resist the impulse to teach grammar directly and to provide drills in spelling, handwriting, pronunciation, punctuation, and sentence combining. They should abandon separate curricular time slots for reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Conventions need to be taught in the context of children's activities for their specific purposes. In return, educators will discover that children really can learn all of the necessary language skills by engaging in purposeful communication (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Depree and Iversen (1994) included two additional language modes: viewing and presenting. Viewing would be accessing information from sources other than print such as maps, pictures, videos, whereas presenting means expressing information in visual form other than print including art, craft, charts. The Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (1996) also included these modes in its *Primary Language Arts Curriculum Guide*, although it used the term "representing" instead of presenting. They defined representing as conveying meaning through the visual arts, drama, dance, movement, media production, technological and other forms.

By focusing on communication purposes rather than communication modes, this unit provides for an authentic integration of the arts of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing and representing (Allen *et al.*, 1986). For the purposes of this

FOREWORD, however, they are treated separately to facilitate an organization of ideas and only the main four are addressed.

Speaking

Oral communication skills are perhaps the most important in society, not only because they are tied so directly to abilities in other language areas, but also because oral communication remains the dominant means of human interaction (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

When children enter school they have already developed complex language structures. Children learn about spoken and written language by attaching themselves as apprentices to people who are using language as a tool to accomplish particular and self-evident ends (Smith, 1982). At home this might be a parent or older sibling. At school the model becomes the teacher and their peers. Some linguists believe that most of the syntactic system has been learned by five years of age. Syntactic rule exceptions, such as irregular forms, may not be mastered until age nine, ten, or more, though some children learn them as early as five (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Through listening and uttering, the child assimilates and sequences conventional signs that stand for meaning. So the child acquires language. By the beginning of the pre-operational stage, listening and uttering have become oral communication -- listening to speech and speaking. As children increasingly rely on these processes, facility and confidence with spoken language grows (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Knowledge of spoken language exceeds knowledge of print well into the school

years; yet in many ways both systems unfold simultaneously, with cognitive development steering the course (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Early formal instruction can reflect the importance of spoken language in learning to read and write when teachers deliberately observe factors in their students such as speech fluency, clarity, and complexity; auditory comprehension; vocabulary; and auditory discrimination (Allen *et al.*, 1986) and document their development, basing their instruction on the results. When classrooms are organized so that oral language is the integrating thread within the curriculum, reading and writing blend as children enjoy endless opportunities to use language to reflect on their experiences (Hennings, 1994).

Some examples of student activities that promote speaking include conversing, discussing, interviewing, addressing a group, reading aloud, pantomiming, role playing, dramatizing, audio recording, video recording, and film-making (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

There are no easy solutions for helping children to express themselves clearly, but teachers can begin by modelling clear speaking and writing and by getting children to listen to themselves and share their writing with others. Some sounds are not mastered by some children until around seven years of age. Knowing these patterns, teachers can monitor the words that are introduced to children in the early stages of reading. A child's failure to read a word correctly aloud may be an articulation difficulty rather than a reading error. Children may understand the meaning of the word even though they cannot say it correctly (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Young children's oral language grows when environments encourage risk taking,

someone listens, and there is a need to exchange language (Glazer, 1989). Goodman (1986) promoted the belief that all children have language and the ability to learn language, and teachers must reject negative, elitist, racist views of linguistic purity that would limit children to arbitrary "proper" language. Instead, teachers need to view their role as helping children expand on the marvellous language they already use.

Hennings (1994) suggested that there are two types of speech that are important for students to foster. These are inner speech and socialized speech. To cultivate the growth of inner speech, she suggested that teachers can supply "let's pretend" telephones and microphones in a special area of the classroom. Children can go to the 'Talking-to-self Centre' to explain something into a telephone or microphone. The teacher can do group talking out loud as part of reading, writing, and problem solving. Ask children to say what they are thinking during these activities. He or she can also encourage talking to the self "whisper-style" when a job gets tough. Another idea is to divide the children into "talking-out-idea pairs". Children can then tell their classmates a story they have invented before writing it down.

To encourage socialized speech, Hennings (1994) stated that teachers can have their students share completed work, such as compositions and drawings, with listeners saying what they liked. They can also share objects from home on a topic being studied (Show and Tell). Listeners can comment on things being shared. The teacher can prompt children to repeat story material in sequence. They might do this by taking turns telling parts of a story they know; each child telling a bit starting where the previous child

stopped. Teachers can also invite students to share their thoughts by whispering in two-person groups. For example, after a talk or story time, each child can whisper a favourite part to an echo-mate. Then each child shares the whispered message with the total group, while the echo-mate listens to check that the idea is communicated correctly.

While the teacher's intervention is necessary to expand children's language, peer language is also a rich social context in which to try out new language uses and receive feedback. Observation of children affirms that children do encourage, instruct, and help each other effectively (Pinnell, 1985). Templeton (1995) further suggested that the more children know about one another as members of a family community, the more easily they will bond together as a learning community.

Roser, Flood, and Lapp (1989) proposed that teachers need to talk informally with the children in their class; to listen to their ideas, their perspectives, and their humour. They further suggested that educators might teach children more effectively if they knew them better as individuals.

Experiencing and talking together lead to writing and reading. Without the preliminary talk that should accompany direct experiences in schools, children may lack the vocabulary and related conceptual understandings that they need to read with comprehension and compose with clarity (Hennings, 1994).

As mentioned in previous sections, children's writing and speaking should be directed to multiple audiences, not simply to an audience of one, the teacher. Kindergarten children should have many opportunities to 'perform' for others by inviting

people in or presenting outside the classroom.

One common method of speaking to a group is Show and Tell. This is one activity where children do not usually mind being in front of a group. To avoid having the sessions degenerate into 'bring-and-brag' events, many teachers encourage children to talk about something they have made or done or found interesting rather than presenting a personal possession. Children might also select an object from home that is unique or special in some way and place it in a bag. The child may then offer the audience several clues as to what the object is and encourage them to guess (Preece, 1992). Alison Preece (1992) created a list of the pragmatics of language use (Appendix, p. 132), which would be an excellent resource to teachers when defining communication objectives.

Listening

Listening is more than hearing. It involves attending to messages, attaching meanings to messages, evaluating and responding to messages (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

People listen for a variety of communication purposes and the functional reasons for listening provide insights into how students can be taught to listen more effectively (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Children generate meaning as they listen to stories, poems, and material from the content areas of the curriculum and take part in natural listening/speaking activities that include both conversational and presentational situations. Listening activities prepare children for both reading and writing and model underlying thinking processes (Hennings, 1994).

Listening to and responding to books is viewed as a vital resource for building background knowledge, fostering language development, linking reading to writing, developing a sense of story, and building positive attitudes about books and print (Strickland and Taylor, 1989).

In classrooms listening should be an active process, with students reacting rather than passively receiving. Active listening goes beyond reception or even retention of ideas. It requires listeners to generate thoughts and express them in some way. Active listening is demonstrated both verbally and nonverbally (Hennings, 1994).

Storytelling is an example of an activity where children will listen actively. The absence of illustrations allows each listener to imagine the story in his or her own way, using the cues of tone, rhythm, pacing, and expressiveness provided by the narrator (Preece, 1992). Storytelling provides for intimate contact and rapport with the children with no book separating the teacher from the audience. According to Huck, Hepler and Hickman (1987), a story worth telling has a quick beginning, action, a definite climax, natural dialogue, and a satisfying conclusion. Stories with only three or four speaking characters are best.

Reading

Learning to read is a natural process (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Children learn to love books and stories, and then they learn to recognize, pronounce, and assign meaning to words.

The following reading issues were presented by Frank Smith in 1976 and showed his understanding of how children learn to read:

> • Children probably begin to read from the moment they become aware of print in any meaningful way.
> • The roots of reading are discernable whenever children strive to make sense of print, before they are able to recognize many of the actual words.
> • Not only are the formal mechanics of reading unnecessary in these initial stages, they may well be a hindrance.
> • Words do not need to be in sentences to be meaningful; they must be in a meaningful context.
> • There is no cause to fear that a child's learning ability will be smothered by too much adult assistance. If children have nothing to learn because they understand the lesson, they will be bored and want to move on to something else (pp. 299, 322).

Many children come to school from literate homes where they were read to on a regular basis. Research results indicate that children who are read to develop more mature language patterns, learn to read with greater ease, and have a better understanding of literature (Allen *et al.*, 1986). They have heard what fluent, animated oral reading sounds like, thus providing a pattern to imitate. It gives them a sense of story, and propels them into the library to read the books they have heard.

Other children, however, may come from homes and/or communities where there has been more limited opportunities to read. Ironically, these children who have the greatest need for special help in reading in the first years of schooling are often given reading experiences that are least like those in the real world. They are often drilled in letter names and sounds -- abstractions of written language -- that are extremely remote

from stories and books, the kinds of experiences their more successful peers have received in the home (King, 1985).

Activities which focus upon letter-sound correspondences often ignore children's need for conceptual understanding of the meaningfulness of print. However, Adams (1990) reported that research indicates that the most critical factor beneath fluent reading is the ability to recognize letters, spelling patterns, and whole words, effortlessly, automatically, and visually. Moreover, the goal of all reading instruction -- comprehension -- depends critically on this ability. McCormick and Mason (1986) suggested that a hierarchical explanation of early reading development can encourage teachers to distinguish between those children conceptually prepared to begin with letter-sound correspondences and those needing a program in which meaningfulness of print is emphasized before moving on to letter-sound correspondences. Adams (1990) challenged educators to ask themselves what it is that beginning readers need to learn, and how they might learn it most efficiently, effectively, and usefully.

The common characteristics of psycholinguistic methods are an emphasis on reading for meaning, use of "whole-language" strategies rather than letter/sound decoding, and applying children's prior knowledge in reading new material. In a psycholinguistic program children are expected to learn to read by reading, buoyed through the rough spots by a love of books and a belief in themselves as readers. Words are at least partly memorized at first, but as children repeat one after anot her, they acquire both a sight vocabulary and strategies for attacking unfamiliar words. Eventually,

they are able to move into books that have not been read to them first (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Werner and Strother (1987) warned that too much pressure to read and perform at a very early age can sometimes lead children to be cautious and afraid to make mistakes. Teachers need to nurture the child's love of reading and allow the natural process of learning to read occur. When mistakes do occur, their reading miscues are celebrated if they contribute to making sense and show developing strategies (Goodman, 1986).

Halliday (1975) stated that if children have difficulty learning to read, it is probably because beginning instruction often has had little to do with what they have learned about the uses of oral language. It is the teacher's job to make the act of reading purposeful for them.

Using Children's Literature

Children have a broad concept of the meaningfulness of language, in addition to their immense tolerance of inexplicable tasks; but they are not accustomed to being faced with language which, in their own functional terms, has no meaning at all (Halliday, 1969). Basal readers, although "tempting, beautifully organized, and easily managed," do not invite the interest of all children and have largely failed to instill a love of reading in children (Allen *et al.*, 1986). It is better to highlight wide, interesting experiences, provide related reading, and then combine instruction in reading skills with the free selection of children's literature.

Stocking the reading corner with good literature is one of the best opportunities

for literacy development. Templeton (1995) reminded us that it is the nature of children to question, to seek, and to wonder. This thirst for knowledge can only be quenched with real books -- authentic fiction and nonfiction. If these types of books are available to children in their classroom, the books themselves will provide the motivation for them to want to learn to read. Templeton also pointed out that real books tie the curriculum together; students may be getting a lesson in science, social studies and family living from one informational book in the reading corner.

Literature provides more than facts. It provides drama, problem-solving, and precise language. Best of all, it is written by authors who know children and write with different voices than those usually found in textbooks. Children's literature covers virtually the entire span of human experience and knowledge (Graves, 1983).

Bruner (1982) claimed that, what initially attracts children to reading and into mastering all the mechanics of it, is the opportunity that text provides for penetrating possible worlds, worlds beyond the mediocre of here and now. Good literature will allow this mind travel.

Templeton (1995) warned that when choosing books for thematic units, however, teachers should screen them for appropriateness, quality, and both social and factual accuracy. See the Appendix for a list of resources for information about books (pp. 133-34). These sources give descriptions of the books, as well as information about age levels, and can help a teacher locate appropriate titles and make connections with related books and themes.

While children's literature serves as the central stimulus in teaching children to read, a wide array of other writings may also be read by children such as: their own messages, the messages of other children, magazines, maps, printed directions, textbooks, newspapers, letters, posters, bus schedules, cereal boxes, recipes, and greeting cards (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Repeated Readings

Reading a book over and over again provides a child with exposure to more complex, more elaborate and more decontextualized language than almost any other kind of interaction. According to Snow and Ninio (1986), the ability to understand and to produce decontextualized language may be the most difficult and most crucial prerequisite to literacy.

As well, the more a child has heard a story, the greater is the probability that the child's retelling of the story will be accurate (Schickedanz, 1986). Repeated readings will also encourage in-depth exploration of books, and promote children's independent, emergent reading of those books (Teale and Sulzby, 1989).

Storytime

Teale and Sulzby (1989) gave the following guidelines for reading aloud at storytime. The teacher should preview the book; establish a context, briefly introduce the book; read with expression; engage the children in discussion about what is being read;

talk about the characters, make predictions, draw inferences, discuss themes, link the books to real life experiences, and examine the author's use of language and illustrations.

When choosing books to read aloud, teachers should look for classics old and new, books that are hard to get into, undiscovered gems, and books by prolific authors. The purpose is to bring children literary experiences they might not otherwise have (Allen *et al.*, 1986). The teacher should also actively and consciously choose books that represent a more balanced view of sex roles or discuss those that are more stereotypical (Smith, Greenlaw and Scott, 1987).

When reading aloud to children, there are many things teachers can do before, during and after the reading to make it a more meaningful experience. Examples of these activities for reading storybooks, informational texts and picture phrase books are included in the Appendix (pp. 135-138). Responding to literature is viewed as a means of reformulating or re-experiencing the story using a new modality. It is used as a means of strengthening children's understanding and appreciation of stories and helping them to internalize the structure of stories (Strickland, 1989). The teacher who reads to the children every day, talks about books and characters in books as if they were good friends, and knows poems and stories to tell is serving the class as an adult model of a person who enjoys books (Huck, Hepler and Hickman, 1987).

Big Books

When teachers use big books, they should follow the routines of talking about the

relevant concepts in the book; calling attention to the title, author, and illustrator; and asking children to predict what they think the story may be about. Then they can read the story aloud, tracking the print with their hand or a pointer. After reading aloud, teachers should guide discussion about key ideas in the text, asking children to recall important points and to find the corresponding part in the text. They can guide the group in rereading, use cloze activities to involve children in meaningful prediction of words, and focus children's attention on distinctive features and patterns in the text. Teachers can ask children to look for repeated words, word beginnings, consonant clusters, punctuation marks, and distinctive features of the text (Cullinan, 1989).

Big books should be read with all the enthusiasm and expression that the teacher can muster. As they are read and reread, teachers should encourage the active, unison participation of the children (Doake, 1985).

Extension Activities

A variety of response, or extension, activities can complement and enhance the effects of group storybook readings such as art and drama. This might include flannel board characters or puppets or roleplaying using simple props and costumes. Some books contain experiments the children can do after reading. Others lend themselves to cooking or tasting parties. After an informational book, children can draw and write 'learning logs' telling what they learned from the reading (Teale and Sulzby, 1989).

Emergent storybook readings are independent reenactments of books by the

children. These readings seem to facilitate growth in reading because they give children opportunities to practice what they learned in interactive storybook readings, and they allow children to explore new dimensions of books and reading (Teale and Sulzby, 1989).

Other Reading Opportunities in the Classroom

"The Morning Message" is a daily message that the teacher writes on the chalkboard before the children enter the classroom. The students are highly motivated to read what activities will take place that day and use their reading strategies to cooperatively read the message (Allen *et al.*, 1986; Teale and Sulzby, 1989).

The kindergarten room should be filled with environmental print: signs, labels, charts. Students can help in the labelling process. Directions, classroom jobs, daily schedules or attendance records can be recorded on charts and displayed for the children to read.

Experience charts are used in all subject areas to write collectively about experiences which the class has had. Morrow (1989) suggested that teachers include illustrations next to words whenever possible to help children not yet able to read.

1. Reading Games

Recently, researchers have discovered that interacting with children in reading games contributes to their learning to read (Oldford-Matchim, 1994). Children are better able to recognize words and letters when they encounter them frequently. The frequency

of seeing letters and words in the context of a game is usually enjoyable; children do not experience repetitions as drudgery when playing games. Providing them with games that are challenging, as well as building their confidence and skill with easier games, are two valuable ways to support their reading (Oldford-Matchim, 1994).

2. Silent Reading

Students should be given time for sustained silent reading. Reading books of their own choosing helps readers develop fluency (Huck, Hepler and Hickman, 1987). Although most kindergarten children cannot "read", it is just as important for them to sit with a book, look at the pictures and create stories to go with them. It is also important for the teacher to be a reading model during silent reading times. This reinforces the idea that reading is valuable and important (Perez, 1986; Kaisen, 1987). Teachers are serving as good models when they talk about what they have been reading, explain how what they are reading has influenced their lives, share delight in particular phrases and words, and use some of the ideas read in their teaching.

Equally important, children should be given time to talk about books that they have found exciting. Therefore, students should be allowed to look at a book in pairs and talk quietly during 'silent' reading (Kaisen, 1987). Children like to share what they are seeing in their books with friends. They should also have several books selected so that the time is not spent on waiting and selecting. Kaisen suggested, as well, that children should be able to bring familiar books from home for silent reading time.

Easy-to-read books are especially helpful to children entering school who are less well prepared for reading. The most obvious effect is that they like the stories and can readily behave like readers with books that they can read or recite and which belong to them (McCormick and Mason, 1986).

While it was suggested that basal readers were not the best resources to use for reading, pre-primers or basal readers are often popular choices for silent reading period (Kaisen, 1987). Preprimers do provide independence and enjoyment for young students because they gain confidence in their reading ability when they are able to recognize all the words and when they sound like adult readers (developing fluency).

Kaisen (1987) suggested that silent reading should be held at the same time each day, so that the children will expect it as part of their regular routine. Also, for kindergarten children, it should begin as a very short period of time (5 minutes) and gradually increase to 10 or 15 minutes.

3. Paired/Buddy Reading

Children's classmates can be another audience for their reading. In paired or buddy reading, teachers can pair children within the classroom or with a class of a different grade level. The latter is beneficial for both groups of children when older students select and practice a book to read to younger buddies and listen to them read (APEF, 1996).

4. Home Reading

Most teachers encourage a home reading program as well as the reading done in school. Teachers can send books home or encourage parents and children to visit their local library. They usually keep a reading log with the help of the parent, in which they record the books they read (APEF, 1996).

According to Joan Oldford-Matchim (1994), reading might be learned as easily as speaking or other behaviours when teachers: (1) value and enjoy reading, (2) expect children to learn to read, (3) provide lots of opportunities for them to participate in it, and (4) respond positively to them during reading activities.

Writing

Writing is a particularly efficacious means of accomplishing that which the child's brain is perpetually striving to do in any case -- namely, to create worlds (Smith, 1982).

Goodman (1986) stated that written language greatly expands human memory by making it possible to store far more knowledge than the brain is capable of storing. Written language links us with people in faraway places and distant times.

How do children learn written language? The same way they learn oral language, by using it in authentic literacy events that meet their needs (Goodman, 1986).

The traditional view is that learning to read must precede learning to write. Rather, it seems that many children may begin to write before they engage in reading

(Chomsky, 1971; Allen *et al.*, 1986; Goodman, 1986). Children generally follow this pattern, at least until the school intervenes.

Children should write from the very first day of kindergarten (Graves, 1983; Milz, 1985). Introducing writing on the first day establishes it as part of the daily activities of life in the classroom and also helps to alleviate initial reluctance to write (Martinez and Teale, 1987). From the first day the teacher should encourage the students to view themselves as writers (Martinez and Teale, 1987). Research indicates that most children entering first grade (about ninety percent) believe they can write, while only fifteen percent believe they can read (Graves, 1983). Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis (1989) stated that all kindergarteners reared in a literate culture can and will write. Children observe others writing, try it out themselves, practice, experiment, take chances, and gradually learn conventional rules (Mavrogenes, 1986).

Teachers must accept the forms of writing and reading children use and be simple and straightforward with the request to write. Teachers can ask them to "Write a story" or "Write a letter to your friend" and assure them that it does not have to be like grown up writing. They need to be given freedom to do it their own way and then asked to read what they have written (Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989). When they do start using some spelling, beginners are encouraged to take risks. When they write, they spell words as best they can, inventing if necessary, but using the words they need when they need them rather than sticking with those they are sure they can spell (Goodman, 1986).

As the school year began, Milz (1985) would write a personal note to each child

and place them in their mailboxes. This note not only served to introduce the children to their teacher, but to their mailboxes, to writing, and to reading from the very first day of school.

When children need help getting started writing, the teacher can model some of the ways other kindergarteners write or show writing samples produced by other children their age (Martinez and Teale, 1987).

Writing Development

Children go through stages of writing development (Allen *et al.*, 1986; Schickedanz, 1986; McLane and McNamee, 1990; Ollila, 1992; Hennings, 1994). They start with pre-letter making, or line-making to represent their thoughts. They move on then to random letter-making. They know that words are made from letters, but do not know why particular ones are used. In the early phonemic stage, children start using the consonants that they hear in the words. They now understand the relationship between letters and sounds. The next stage is letter name, or advanced phonemic writing. They have control over both consonants and vowels and divide their story into discrete word units.

During kindergarten the most typical forms of writing used in connected discourse (such as stories or letters) continue to be scribbling, drawing, and non-phonetic letter strings, with fewer children using phonetic (or invented) spelling, and conventional orthography (dictionary spelling) (Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989).

It is important to encourage all stages of invented spelling and all forms of writing at all times. Teachers should not wait until all the sound/letter correspondences have been taught or even introduced (Richgels, 1987). Children should be encouraged to get their thoughts down on paper in any way they want, such as drawing, invented spelling, or pictures. The children's ideas/messages are more important than the manner in which it is recorded because idea making is what writing is all about (Hennings, 1994).

Children should always be asked to read what they have written no matter what form of writing they have used (Martinez and Teale, 1987). By inviting them to read their own stories, teachers are inviting them to remember their compositions and to treat written compositions as stable -- fixed in time and space by the act of writing (Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989).

By sharing their writing proudly and concentrating on meaning rather than on spelling, mechanics, and neatness, children come to see the relationship between print and reading, and the concept of audience is made concrete (Mavrogenes, 1986). When they read their own stories, however, they may not read conventionally from their writing, even if it is readable (Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989).

When they start to spell inventively, and even shortly before -- as if in anticipation of the limits of their own ability to represent language in print -- children reduce their stories to simple, repetitive sentence patterns, such as "This is..." and "I see..." These formulas can be kept easily in mind while the children labours to sound out spellings and recall correct letter shapes (Bissex, 1985). Marie Clay (1975) suggested that this is a

stage of concept development.

Transcriptions by the teacher preserve the vitality and zany charm of children's oral stories, and may help children develop basic reading concepts and skills, but keep the power of writing in the hands of the teacher. While the written language mentioned above is less interesting than oral language, children do it themselves (Bissex, 1985).

Writing for a Purpose

Children learn to write by writing (Clay, 1975; Bissex, 1985; Richgels, 1987; Teale and Sulzby, 1989; Hennings, 1994). Therefore, the early childhood curriculum should encourage children to write often and to write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences.

Writing seems to be most purposeful when it is seen by teacher and children as an essential part of life in the classroom. Then writing arises from and relates to current, ongoing interests as children talk, read, and write about what they are doing, making, observing, or imagining (McKenzie, 1985). When children have the opportunity to write freely and for purposes that are meaningful to them, they go about the process in a systematic way and use whatever they know to convey meaning (King, 1985). They are not writing solely to please the teacher but to a range of people in the world within and beyond the classroom (Milz, 1985).

According to Clay (1975), the emphasis in an early writing program should be on self-directed activity rather than on passive guidance or on verbal direction from the

teacher. When children write on topics of their own choosing, they usually draw on personal experiences. Martinez and Teale (1987) have found that these topics tend to result in longer and better formed stories.

The Writing Process

Children need to participate in a host of literacy events -- oral encounters with print -- so that they have an opportunity to observe the characteristics of print and use them in their writing (Hennings, 1994). For example, extensive, novel and involving pre-writing experiences encourage children to use more sophisticated writing strategies (Martinez and Teale, 1987).

Prior to writing, talking can draw out children's images and ideas on a subject, but discussion must not be extended to the point where ideas are inhibited or the writing becomes anticlimactic. After completing their writing, children can be guided to share their compositions in small groups. Many forms of written communication can be enhanced when children discuss what they plan to write and, later, how it might be revised (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Young children can use pictorializing to rehearse before writing about events of which they were a part. They can draw a series of pictures to tell their readers what happened and then translate their drawings into sentences. Children can use a similar pictorial series to rehearse before story-making. Reports and stories based on a picture series tend to be more organized than those based on memory, for the pictures help young

writers keep the sequence of events in mind (Hennings, 1994). Through pictorializing, young writers learn to organize their thoughts.

While children write, teachers can best serve as trusted readers, reactors, and technical assistants, meeting children's needs without taking the initiative out of the students' hands (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Rather than giving separate lessons in spelling, punctuation, and handwriting, teachers should work on establishing strong, clear, and relevant connections between the act of writing and the mechanical skills that enhance it (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Richgels (1987) suggested using "purpose talk" to teach sound/letter correspondences. The sounds and roles of letters are taught in context when they are meaningful to the children's writing. They need to be told that this information will be used in their own writing. Goodman (1982) contended that their spelling becomes more and more conventionalized, regardless of instruction. Knowledge of the conventions of writing will often occur incidentally without children being aware of what is happening, vicariously when watching what someone else does, and collaboratively because someone else helps them express what they want to say in writing (Depree and Iversen, 1994).

The Writing Environment

The classroom should provide comfortable places, books and other forms of print, time to write, and a continual emphasis on possibilities for writing. When children are ready to write, teachers can offer more specific preparation in the form of opportunities for talking, planning, locating resources, and examining what other writers have done

with similar tasks (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

During the period of actual composing, teachers should ensure quiet, comfort, ample materials, and reference sources. They should not exert pressure for speed or premature correctness, but instead accept the inevitability of false starts, gaps, and imperfections. When the time comes for revising and editing, teachers should act as consultants, not imposing their own ideas but helping children express their individual thoughts freely and clearly. After written pieces are completed, teachers can react from an editor's or a collaborator's point of view, but should refrain from criticizing or judging aspects that can no longer be remedied (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

The Writing Centre

Martinez and Teale (1987) strongly advocated having an adult facilitator at the writing centre. This adult could be the teacher, a parent, or a community volunteer. The adult can invite children to discuss their chosen topic before beginning to write. They serve as an aid while the children write and an audience when they have completed. As well, the adult provides valuable feedback on both the content and form of their writing and serves as the recorder, recording the child's writing as they read it, if it is not understandable.

As well, a teacher can encourage the children at the writing centre to interact, discussing and reading each other's writing (Martinez and Teale, 1987).

Writing on Display

Some teachers encourage children to keep writing folders, others "publish" some pieces, and others display writing on bulletin boards or clothes lines (Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989). Children enjoy seeing their work on public display.

When teachers display the children's work, they can encourage the children to read each other's writing (Martinez and Teale, 1987). The act of displaying their writing encourages children to write stories and see themselves as authors. Teachers need to treat children as authors and invite them to publish their work in bound books (Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989). For when children publish, teachers can work with more of their skills. Such surface conventions as spelling, punctuation, grammar, and handwriting receive high attention when going to final draft (Graves, 1983).

Publishing their writing also serves to communicate children's writing development to their parents. The hardcover book is tangible evidence that the child is progressing, is putting information on the line for other audiences (Graves, 1983).

Editing

Even primary children can edit and revise their first drafts. When children -- all children in a class -- know that a piece they have drafted will be published in some form, they are more likely to polish it carefully. Now they have an audience. Now they are authors (Hennings, 1994).

Encourage children to ask themselves questions such as "Is my drawing or writing

just the way I want it to be? Do I need to change anything or do anything else? Am I satisfied with my work?" Children will develop the habit of looking back and reflecting on what they have done and make decisions about revisions or adjustments that are needed (Strickland, 1989).

Since some writing is not meant for other people, written expression in the classroom should not automatically be shared through public communication. Teachers need to let writers choose, at times, to keep their writing private, cryptic, and temporary (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Other Writing Opportunities

1. Journal Writing

Kindergarten children should have personal journals. They should be able to write whatever they want in the journal, at times prompted by classroom experiences, at other times unprompted, just because they feel like it. The teacher responds to the student by writing back in the journal, creating a written dialogue with the child (Hennings, 1994). Mavrogenes (1986) suggested that the children write their names and copy the date from the chalkboard on each journal entry. She also encouraged quiet talk among the children while writing.

2. Author of the Week

At the beginning of each week, one child can be selected to be an "author of the week." The author selects 3 to 6 writings from his or her writing folder which are

displayed on a special bulletin board. During the week, the author reads his/her stories to the group (Martinez and Teale, 1987).

Children pick up a heavy percentage of topic ideas form each other. When they share their writing with each other, one child's idea will often trigger an idea in other children (Graves, 1983).

3. Pen Pals

A teacher can promote writing by establishing a postal system in the classroom or by organizing a pen pals program (Teale and Sulzby, 1989; Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis, 1989). In half-day kindergarten classes, the morning children can have pen pals in the afternoon class. In matching pairs, the teacher should consider the writing strategies each student is using (Martinez and Teale, 1987). A scribbler might be paired with someone using invented spellings. Pen pals might also come from other schools, other countries, a senior's home, or another class in the school. If they have e-mail access, they might have 'keypals' instead.

For students who have written in journals, letter writing is a natural next step. The social arena of classroom and community provides innumerable opportunities for conversationally-styled but meaningful letters. Friendly notes can be written to classmates who are at home sick, speakers who have visited the class, or parents who have supplied refreshments (Hennings, 1994).

4. Brainstorming

In brainstorming, each participant contributes whatever words or ideas come to

mind in reaction to a particular object or event. Whether relevant or not, all contributions are accepted and recorded on a chart so that they are available for reflection and composing (Hennings, 1994). This sharing of ideas encourages children to take risks and feel free to express their opinions. It demonstrates to the students that their knowledge and language abilities are valued and accepted (*Kindergarten Guide. Draft*, 1994). Children are encouraged to read the ideas on the chart after the brainstorming session. The teacher can write the child's name next to the idea that he or she contributed to give them a sense of ownership.

A major outgrowth of brainstorming is vocabulary development. As participants suggest words and search references for additional words, they meet new or relatively unfamiliar expressions (Hennings, 1994).

5. Art

When children draw, they often tell stories about their pictures, dictate stories for adults to write, and write their own captions, stories, and names on their artwork (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

6. Reading Extension

Writing is a natural follow-up to reading and can take place before and during reading as well as after (Hennings, 1994). Good literature will often spark ideas for children to write about.

7. Experience Charts

After every experience that the class participates in, the teacher should get them to

help write an experience chart. They will compose, in sequence, what they did and maybe how they enjoyed (or did not enjoy) the experience. Hennings (1994) suggested that this information can be entered into the classroom computer and publication copies can be printed for the children.

The teacher can also write his or her own stories, making them personally meaningful to the students, and highlighting letters the students use in their inventive spelling (Richgels, 1987). Richgels even suggested that teachers write using predictable invented spellings to provide for experimental reading. Then they would tell their students that, while these words are not spelled like they would be in a book, they should be able to read them.

8. Science Learning Logs

Kindergarten children can keep science learning logs; folders in which they keep science writings or recordings (Hennings, 1994). They can write about findings that were discovered in the science centre or an experiment that was done as a whole group. Printouts like those mentioned can be kept here, too.

Fine Motor Coordination

Their teachers also provide a variety of meaningful activities that increase children's ability to control the fine muscles of the hand and to differentiate among shapes to aid their writing abilities. These include drawing with brush and paint, drawing on large sheets of paper with husky crayons, working with modelling clay, sometimes

moulding the material into letter-like shapes, manipulating interlocking puzzle blocks, plugging coloured sticks into the holes of a board to form designs (Hennings, 1994).

Writing Evaluation

To develop a helpful attitude toward children's writing behaviour, teachers may find it useful to consider it in much the same way they consider children's behaviour with art or blocks. Teachers typically accept the ways children draw and build. They understand children's need to explore and experiment. A similar attitude of acceptance is appropriate with their writing, too, although teachers tend to find it more difficult to overlook errors. It is especially hard to resist telling children how to do something. But children's writing requires the same kind of uncritical support and teachers must give it generously (Schickedanz, 1986). Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1963) stated that a teacher should never criticize the content of a child's writing, but should only show natural interest in what the child is expressing.

Recording a child's writing is crucial. Kept in a writing folder, records of the child's writing shows the oral and written language development through the course of the school year (Martinez and Teale, 1987).

The following are types of observation that can be used for writing assessment according to Graves (1983):

- *Folder observation*: To go over the writing in the child's folder.
- *Distant observation*: To observe the behaviour of the child from across the room while writing.

> • *Close-in observation*: To observe how the child goes about composing.
> • *Participant observation*: To ask questions of the child in such a way that the child teaches you about information and his composing process (p. 286).

Writing gives teachers a vehicle for learning from children when they ask questions of the writer, listen carefully for the child's perspective, and respect the child as a unique "knower," constructing his or her own understanding (Fallon and Allen, 1994).

OTHER CURRICULUM CONCERNS

Goodman (1986) contended that speaking, listening, writing, and reading are all happening in context of the exploration of the world of things, events, ideas, and experiences. The content curriculum draws on the interests and experiences children have outside of school, and thus incorporates the full range of oral and written language functions. Even back in 1966, Dewey stated that literacy becomes purposeful and takes on additional importance when it is integrated with other subjects rather than separately as a content area unto itself (cited in Morrow, 1989).

Historically, schools have not favoured this kind of integration: knowledge has been divided into separate subject matter disciplines; each language mode is taught in isolation from the others; skills are introduced and practised one at a time; textbooks are considered the only proper materials for classroom use. In the beginning, such practices were probably based more on notions of what was easiest for the teacher than on concern

for how children learn, but they are defended now on the basis of their congruence with systematic learning theory (Allen *et al.*, 1986). Even today in Newfoundland, teachers are asked to submit a time schedule to the Department of Education stating how many minutes per day are spent on each subject area, and these time allotments should agree with the specified time commitments outlined in the *Program of Studies* (Government of NF and Labrador, 1996).

The main reason for crossing boundaries between school subjects is to teach the skills needed for each of them in an authentic context. But there are other reasons, too: to ensure variety in children's experiences and versatility in their abilities; to make them feel at home with the mixes in materials and approaches that characterize communication in the outside world; and to give them broad enough knowledge to make career changes, participate in community affairs, and enjoy a range of cultural and recreational activities in their personal lives (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

"Integrating curriculum" is not only about putting together parts of a school program. It is about interacting with other human beings and understanding their ways of thinking. It is about using reading and writing as a reason and instrument for coming together, for understanding each other, for getting along with each other (Shanahan, Robinson and Schneider, 1993).

This integration is facilitated by a flexible use of time (Allen *et al.*, 1986), making it difficult to count the minutes spent on separate subjects during the day.

Lapp and Flood (1994) stated many reasons for curriculum integration. For

instance, students see relationships among ideas and concepts as they plan and experience a theme-based inquiry as well as relationships between in- and out-of-school topics. Communication processes become authentic as students engage in thematically-based learning activities. Students are encouraged to share ideas. As they listen to one another, their personal bases of ideas are expanded. Respect and cooperation among peers are expanded as well through interaction. Students become more responsible for and engaged in their own learning, while the teacher assumes the role of facilitator rather than information dispenser. They develop a sense of community as they cooperatively design projects and create classroom displays. Many grouping patterns will naturally emerge among students. Through curriculum integration, assessment is continuous and related to learning endeavours.

According to Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986), a problem with curriculum guides is that they contain "too much," in terms of objectives, skills, and topics, with little sense of what is important or how to put it all together. They present a vague and idealized picture of the student emerging from the program "able to use language effectively" and "enjoying good literature," and they also present a profusion of minor skills that seem only marginally related to the desired end product. Many of teachers' important questions are not even addressed.

The teacher's task is to analyse a general philosophical goal to discover the particular abilities that comprise it, reduce those abilities further to school skills, and then express those skills in terms of classroom activities suitable for each grade level and

student (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Planning is synthesis. Teachers bring together their knowledge of the subject matter, learning, their students, and the outside world into patterns of work that make sense for the classroom. A plan is the controlling design of instruction that materializes goals and objectives in materials, activities, and the use of time (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

An emphasis on real processes implies adjusting the curriculum by allowing some practices that have traditionally been forbidden in school: talking while working, getting and giving help, imitating and borrowing ideas from books, leaving correction of spelling and punctuation for the final copy. In a functional program, all of these are permissible, not only because that is the way things are done in the outside world but also because such processes are effective ways of learning (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Diversifying the curriculum does not mean lowering the ultimate expectations, however. Poetry, drama, imaginative writing, and academic processes can be learned and appreciated by all children (Allen *et al.*, 1986). In the discussion below, the different subject areas are dealt with separately, but they should be integrated within the units taught.

Math/Science/Technology

Mathematics

Post (1988) contended that a variety of learning strategies can be utilized in mathematics instruction. These include both structured and indirect learning strategies.

The structured strategies include lecture or teacher presentation, class discussion, and demonstration. In each of these, the teacher is directly in charge of the instructional process and the students are challenged to acquire information and skills. Indirect instructional strategies, on the other hand, include inquiry, reflective thinking, creative expression and values analysis. In these, the teacher plays the role of facilitator of learning, the process of learning is emphasized, and the students are actively engaged in learning.

The variables that determine whether mathematics instruction succeeds or fails include a teacher's knowledge of the subject matter, a teacher's ability to communicate ideas to students, the match between students' abilities and the level of difficulty of that which is taught, student motivation and desire to learn, and the extent to which the teacher makes meaningful applications of the material taught (Post, 1988).

To exemplify the effectiveness of integration, Fallon and Allen (1994) maintained that writing and drawing provide spontaneous, contextualised application of mathematical concepts and conventions, which show children's independent mathematical understanding in a different way from mathematical activities.

Science

According to Carin and Sund (1989), science education is concerned with developing scientifically/technologically literate citizens who understand how science, technology, and society influence one another and who are able to use this knowledge in

their everyday decision-making.

Guided discovery teaching is recommended for science instruction. This means that the teacher provides the problems, materials and equipment, but encourages the students to work out the procedures for solving the problems themselves. Carin and Sund (1989) suggested the following format for guided discovery lessons:

- What are the problems?
- What is the grade level and science area to be investigated?
- What do I want children to discover?
- What will I need?
- What will we discuss before doing the activity?
- What will the children do?
- What must I know? Where do I find it?
- How will children use (or apply) what they discover (p. 104)?

Science is a participation activity, and if its social aspects are to be fully realized, students must have guided activities involving interaction with each other (Carin and Sund, 1989).

Connecting science to literacy, Shanahan, Robinson and Schneider (1993) reminded us that science reading is not just about applying general study skills to science texts. Instead, it should be about communicating like scientists and understanding how they use reading and writing to think, work, and interact.

Technology

Presently we are being challenged to thoughtfully guide students' learning within informational environments that are richer and more complex than traditional print

media, presenting richer and more complex learning opportunities for both teachers and students (Leu, 1996). Many teachers have a real fear of technology, especially when some five-year-olds can enter their classrooms knowing more about the computer than they do.

The World Wide Web (WWW), e-mail, digitized works of children's literature, Myst, electronic chat rooms, MOOs, MUDs, and home pages are all just the beginning of a radical departure from traditional reading and writing experiences. How we respond to these important changes will determine students' ability to succeed in the world that awaits them (Leu, 1996). If teachers choose to ignore these technological progressions because of their own ignorance, their students are the ones who will enter society disadvantaged.

Learning is frequently constructed through social interactions in these contexts, perhaps even more naturally and frequently than in traditional print environments (Leu, 1996). Children love computers and they love to share their excitement with friends. When they accomplish a piece of writing with the word processor or find a 'cool' site on the Internet, they are very quick to communicate their finds.

For literacy learning, computers can be used by the children as an option during free-choice activity times, as instructional games for practice or reinforcement of skills, as a means of connecting pictures and words, and as a way of constructing and revising text, either through their own efforts using word-processing software or by dictating their ideas to a teacher, parent volunteer, or older child acting as a scribe (Mayfield, 1992*b*).

Teachers need to be wary of buying software without knowing anything about it. Mayfield (1992*b*) contended that software needs to be selected carefully and used to further the teacher's goals for the children; it should not be used because it is the latest trendy technological gimmick. There are software catalogues available for educators which give details of software that teachers should know about before purchasing.

There are many listservs or discussion groups for educators on the Internet. The Reading Teacher has such a listserv for teachers who wish to discuss literacy and learning within multimedia environments. (See Appendix p. 139 for subscription directions).

It is also important when allowing children to use the Internet, that the sites are previewed by the teacher. They should not be permitted to "surf" the web aimlessly -- this is not a productive use of school time. A short list of web sites that are appropriate for teachers and students is included in the Appendix (pp. 140-41). There are countless others as well.

Social/Physical Development

Social Studies

Effective social studies programs help prepare young people who can identify, understand and work to solve the problems that face their increasingly diverse nation and interdependent world (Welton and Mallan, 1988). Most kindergarten social studies programs are less global, but are designed to familiarize children with their developing selves and their new environment, the school (Welton and Mallan, 1988). However,

Glasser stated that:

> When children enter kindergarten, they should discover that each class is a working, problem-solving unit and that each student has both individual and group responsibilities... If children learn to participate in a problem-solving group when they enter school and continue to do so with a variety of teachers throughout the six years of elementary school, they learn that the world is not a mysterious and sometimes hostile and frightening place where they have little control over what happens to them... they can use their brains individually or as a group to solve the problems of living in their school world (cited in Welton and Mallan, 1988, pp. 390-1).

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in America proposed the following for their kindergarten social studies program in 1984: (1) the awareness of self in a social setting; (2) socialization experiences to bridge home-life with life in schools (Welton and Mallan, 1988).

Shanahan *et al.* (1993) claimed that thinking about literacy separately from social connections is sort of liking thinking about roses separately from the flowers. You can do it, but the essence and beauty are lost somewhere in the transaction.

Physical Education

Allen, Brown and Yatvin (1986) contended that children need various levels of physical movement, social interaction, and real productivity in order to develop intellectually and emotionally. Not only is this true, but five-year-olds have a tremendous amount of energy that needs to be funnelled, either through planned physical education or unplanned behaviour problems.

Aesthetic Expression

Sulzby, Teale, and Kamberelis (1989) stated that teachers need to be more appreciative of children's compositional abilities -- as artists, musicians, dramatists, and builders, as well as writers. The alternate sign systems of art, music, drama, mathematics, language, and dance provide learners with different modes of representation by which to conceptualize their world and make their ideas public (Harste and Woodward, 1989).

Activities that guide children to increase oral language include dramatic play in response to life and literature, literature experiences, and artistic experiences (Glazer, 1989). Dramatic play is discussed under the section, *APPROPRIATE LEARNING ACTIVITIES.*

Art

Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1963) stated that all art is communication. Humans never really make things for themselves alone. While she was probably not talking solely about the fine arts, this is certainly applicable. Children should have the opportunity to express themselves through the fine arts. They should never have to follow a step-by-step process in order to create something -- if they do, the creation is not their own. The teacher can assign specific tasks, but the child should be given the chance to make it unique. For example, the children might be asked to use fingerpaint to create a winter scene on their paper. The children will produce creations that are personally theirs.

Music

Music, songs, arts, and crafts help oral language thrive. Musical instruments for the young child include rhythm instruments (drums, sticks, etc.), and are often used for keeping the tempo of the rhythmic language of poems and chants. Songs and song books that have been prepared as storybooks lure children in using language (Glazer, 1989).

Listening to musical recordings encourages language growth as well as sound and tempo for body movement. A teacher can select tapes or records that include songs with repeated language patterns, songs that rhyme, songs about families and things around the child, and songs that tell stories. Keeping tempo with rhythm instruments while singing helps children associate the sounds of language with physical activity, and they are able to feel the language (Glazer, 1989).

Langfit (1994) suggested that we use a familiar or simple melody to help young students read and write. For example, after reading a book, the children could put new words to the melody of "Twinkle, Twinkle" that related to the story. The teacher would write the words on a chart and the students would "read" the lyrics as they sang.

Flexibility of Curriculum

Wells (1983) maintained that if we believe that language and learning continue to be intimately related throughout the years of schooling, a major principle in planning and implementing the curriculum must be to ensure that students are encouraged to pursue and extend their own interests and given the opportunity, wherever possible, to share

responsibility for the formulation, execution and evaluation of the learning tasks in which they engage.

What is important, Wells contended, is that children are engaged in tasks that they have taken on and made their own. The result is a commitment to the task that enables them to work without close supervision, and this, in turn, frees the teacher to spend considerable periods of times with individual children when they really need or want to talk about what they are doing. Moreover, the more teachers ask children about their interests, their concerns, and their questions, the more children see themselves as constructing, rather than merely receiving, curriculum (Fallon and Allen, 1994).

Rasinski (1988) applauded the kindergarten teacher's use of the child's interest, purpose, and choice in early literacy. During kindergarten, children are often allowed to explore literacy in such a way that their own purpose and interest direct literacy development. However, he noted that when the same child enters grade one, this is not the case. The growing concern with a structured and efficient curriculum and the need to meet certain skills objectives often causes those very behaviours that children were encouraged to produce in kindergarten to be seen as liabilities in later years. Interest, purpose, and choice are often no longer the domain of the child, but belong to the curriculum.

Teachers in grades beyond kindergarten need to be aware of literacy development and need to try to maintain the same healthy environment for learning based more on the interests, purposes, and choices of the students. According to Roser, Flood, and Lapp

(1989), it is reasonable to expect that teachers can build a language rich, print filled, garden growing, pet tending, book reading, message writing, child nurturing, mind expanding, body building, humanities emphasizing environment and live to tell about it!

ASSESSMENT

For teachers to gain public trust, they must show that they are responsible. When parents wish to know about their child's development, there should be no hesitation by teachers (Johnston, 1987). However, assessment is often one of the teacher's biggest headaches. It is not simple to find out how each individual child in the class has progressed and developed.

Assessment is an inclusive term for the collection and evaluation of data on the child, the subject, the learning environment, and instructional objectives, methods, and materials (Allen, *et al.*, 1986). Evaluation, then, can be defined as the analysis and synthesis of this information so that decisions can be made about individuals and groups (Templeton, 1995).

Just as good instances of instruction are generative, good programs of evaluation are not mired in the present, but set directions for how to proceed in the future (Harste and Woodward, 1989). They provide opportunities for all participants in the educational enterprise to reflect upon where they are and where they wish to go. In this way the focus of evaluation is upon self-evaluation and the result is growth and learning (Harste and Woodward, 1989).

According to Pinnel (1985) there are two kinds of assessment: (1) teachers can assess an individual child's competence by looking at the extent to which he/she uses the various functions of language and how effectively; (2) teachers can assess the language environment by determining which functions occur and where, and which are being neglected. Johnston (1987) also stated that there are two features which will be most evident in an expert's description of a child's progress: an emphasis on processes and an emphasis on what the child can do. The following sections look at how to evaluate the kindergarten child and then how to evaluate the curriculum proposed for the child.

Evaluating the Kindergarten Child

In a functional communication approach, such as this unit, assessment focuses on such things as ability to describe objects, tell a story or narrate a sequence of events, explain a process or concept, convince another person to adopt a point of view, persuade someone to take a course of action, extend an invitation or welcome, agree on a solution to a problem, or express or interpret people's feelings and actions through dramatic play (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

The teacher relies on such ongoing assessment tools as checklists, anecdotal records, portfolios, and individual conferences as well as through informal and formal assessments as a basis for planing personalized and group instruction, requesting assistance from learning specialists, and soliciting assistance from the home (Hennings, 1994).

Goodman (1985) contended that the best way to gain insight into language learning is to observe children using language to explore all kinds of concepts in art, social studies, mathematics, science, or physical education.

Kidwatching

Kidwatching is an ongoing process that begins the minute children enter the classroom and continues throughout the day (Watson, 1985). Through observing the reading, writing, speaking, and listening of friendly, interactive peers, interested, kidwatching teachers can understand and support child language development (Goodman, 1985).

Two ideal settings for observation are story time and choice time. Both situations provide teachers with valid indicators of children's early development as readers. Although no two teachers will conduct a particular setting, such as story time, in the same manner, there is enough overlap in classroom practice so that ratings or other forms of reported observations can be meaningfully shared (Schickedanz, 1989). Two examples of observation forms can be found in the Appendix (pp. 142-43).

Kidwatching teachers believe that curriculum must be based on the strengths of children; that making a mistake is not the end, but rather an indication of what readers are trying to do (Watson, 1985). Goodman (1985) claimed that errors in language and in conceptual development reflect much more than a mistake that can be eradicated with a red pencil or a verbal admonition. What an adult perceives as wrong may in actuality

reflect development in the child. The kidwatcher who understands the role of unexpected responses will use children's errors and miscues to chart their growth and development and to understand the personal and cultural history of the child. Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982) have commented that when teachers do not allow errors to occur, they do not allow children to think.

Outstanding kidwatchers do not only sit across the room and observe. They talk with children while they are engaged with learning so that they are in touch with the process, not just evaluators of the products (McKenzie, 1985). Goodman (1985) listed some of the things the teacher actively does while kidwatching:

> • When a child achieves success in some communicative setting (including reading and writing), the teacher may find a number of ways to extend this to a new and different setting.
> • When children are involved in exploratory activities, the teacher might raise questions such as "I wonder why this is so?" or "What do you think is happening here?"
> • When children are observed to be troubled with an experience, the teacher can move in and talk about the situation with them and lead them to what they cannot yet do by themselves (p. 17).

Teachers need to trust in children's learning and in their own ability to learn along with their children. In addition, Werner and Strother (1987) stated that the teacher should encourage children for their efforts and desire to learn and explore, rather than solely praising outcomes.

Assessment enhances teachers' powers of observation and understanding of learning (Teale, Hiebert and Chittenden, 1987) because they use such processes as

kidwatching. It entails watching closely, recording, and then reflecting and interpreting what they have observed (Templeton, 1995).

Teachers know it is important to gather evidence about children's knowledge from a variety of different perspectives using multiple indicators, thus increasing the likelihood that the picture of the children's literacy knowledge and learning is accurate. Instead of comparing one child's performance to another child's, they compare each child's current performance against his or her previous performance (Vukelich, 1997). The following are some ways teachers use to record the progress or development of the children in their classes.

Anecdotal Records

Although many teachers believe that observation is central to their evaluation of a child's learning, they will also acknowledge that much of this information ordinarily remains unrecorded. The realities and practical pressures of classroom teaching work against maintaining systematic observational records (Schickedanz, 1989). It is difficult for teachers to get the time to jot down their ideas on what they have observed.

Genishi (1985) suggested that anecdotes can be replaced with records based on audiotapes. It is less time-consuming than handwritten notes. Tapes can be saved and compared to each other to document the growth of language over time. As well, she pointed out that because memories are imperfect, records based on tapes may lead to more accurate judgments of children's language abilities than handwritten anecdotes.

Student Portfolios

Performance samples of a child's work complement the observations. The student's invented spellings provide a fairly reliable indication of their intuitions concerning the alphabet and how it works (Chittenden and Courtney, 1989). These samples of the each child's work are often kept in student portfolios.

Templeton (1995) stated that expression rather than merely collection is the goal of student portfolios. The portfolio should express what children have learned and what they can do. Products in the portfolio will represent not only their finest work, but information about the process that the student has been constructing over time. Teachers are cautioned not to allow the portfolio to become a collection silo -- a storage bin filled with data which serves no useful purpose. Vukelich (1987) suggested that the teacher attach an entry slip to each selection which outlines the purpose for including it in the portfolio.

Samples of children's writing can also show strengths that are applicable to reading. For example, directionality, one-to-one matching, the ability to make connections between sounds and letters, and the ability to reread their own written language are all indications of the child's development in reading as well as writing (Depree and Iversen, 1994).

During parent-teacher conferences, the portfolio can be used to illustrate each child's literacy learning, noting the child's strengths and learning goals. Sometimes children might join in these conferences or they might even independently use their

portfolios to explain their literacy learning to their parents (Vukelich, 1987).

Checklists

Various checklists can also be kept in the student portfolio. Checklists can provide specific information about each child which the teacher can use in planning. Depree and Iversen (1994) created valuable checklists for early reading behaviours and early writing behaviours (see Appendix, pp. 144-45). Also, especially helpful for this unit, are the checklists developed by Allen *et al.* (1986) for recording the communication behaviours used by the children for each of the five communicative functions (Appendix, pp. 146-150).

Home Surveys

Many teachers use reading and writing surveys to gather information about children's attitudes and learn about their home literacy environments. For example, parents may be asked to respond to questions such as how often they read to their child, how often their child reads to them, how often their child sees them reading and writing at home, how often their child visits the public library, etc. (Vukelich, 1997). This information can be very helpful for teachers when they know what literacy background the child comes from.

Conferences

Conferences and interviews with students can be a means of assessment when used to ascertain individual needs from the students' perspective (Allen *et al.*, 1986). When reacting to children's writing and speaking samples while conferencing with individuals, teachers should begin with a comment of praise. They should concentrate on content, only commenting on a few aspects of form at a time. They should offer genuine positive comments that epitomize their reaction and give the child one or two specific goals to work on in future assignments. The teacher needs to keep those goals in mind, then, when reading or listening to the child's future assignments and comment on the child's attainment of the goals (Allen *et al.*, 1986)

To provide each child with appropriate literacy instruction, teachers need to carefully study each child's data, which has been obtained through a combination of the above methods, periodically in order to write summary statements about literacy development (Vukelich, 1997).

Teachers need to remember that the focus of evaluation is on the learner and the learning: what is expected, what has been achieved, and where to go from here (Hopkin, Hopkin, Gunyuz, Fowler, Edmison, Rivera and Ruberto, 1997). There is also no universal time line when children begin to demonstrate their learning or when all children can be expected to know specific information about reading and writing. Teachers and schools have the responsibility to provide activities and materials that foster, encourage,

and stimulate the literacy development of each child (Ollila and Mayfield, 1992). Individual growth, not achievement of absolute levels, is the goal. Teachers must accept student differences (Goodman, 1986).

Evaluation is an ongoing process. Systematic assessment is especially important in early childhood because of the complexity and rapidity of their learning (Teale, Hiebert and Chittenden, 1987).

Communicating the Progress

Traditionally, report cards and parent-teacher conferences were designed to serve the function of communicating the child's progress. However, teachers may use a variety of other means to let parents know about school programs. Some of these might include bulletin boards and displays, telephone calls, the school newsletter, and special performances for an audience (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

As mentioned in the *Parental Involvement* section, if teachers involve the parents in the on-going activities in the classroom and keep up a consistent communication with the home, report card and formal conferences become merely supplements to this more thorough communication.

Evaluating the Unit

Although teachers should certainly be expected to document and discuss the growth of their students, the most important role of the teacher is involving children in

learning through the richness of the curriculum (Goodman, 1985). While children may indeed learn language naturally, it is our responsibility to provide experiences and opportunities to promote their learning.

A good curriculum sets directions and provides examples of the kinds of settings believed to permit children to take the mental trips we associate with successful language use and learning. However, the 'real curriculum' happens in the heads of the children. When children do not take the mental trips teachers envision them taking, new activities must be designed. This process is called curriculum development (Harste and Woodward, 1989). Teachers should constantly keep trying to make the curriculum more relevant, to make language experiences in school as authentic and relevant as those outside school, to reach all children and help them expand their language competence as they continue to learn through language (Goodman, 1986).

Curriculum development happens during a thematic unit as well as at the end. When the unit begins, teachers review their plans weekly to choose and schedule activities. They also make adjustments in their original expectations about what children can do and how much time they will need for an activity. Whatever way a teacher plans, daily adjustments need to be made: activities prove more challenging than expected; special events, such as assembly programs, break into the regular schedule; unexpected happenings, such as the arrival of a package of pen pal letters, demand attention (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

At the end of a unit, the teacher determines whether objectives are clear or need to

be expanded or narrowed. The sequence and articulation of the instructional program can be analyzed. Decisions about implementing alternative curricula and educational innovations can be made (Allen *et al.*, 1986).

Ollila and Mayfield (1992) reminded teachers that the general purpose of literacy learning and teaching is to further develop, enhance, refine, and encourage children's abilities and desires to communicate. The *Foreword* section has now come full circle back to the theoretical framework for this unit. The main goal of *Going Places* is to foster growth in the language of kindergarten children by providing activities in each of the five communication functions. The aim is to get children communicating with each other in their class and with the people in the world around them.

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APPENDIX

Sample Weekly Newsletter to Parents[1]

Dear Kindergarten Parents:

Last week we learned about fire safety at home and school. Our first lesson was "Stop, Drop, and Roll." We also mapped a safe exit from our classroom and expertly demonstrated our fire safety behaviour during a school-wide fire drill. Thank you for working with your child to map and label the best fire escape route from your home. Your help reinforced a number of vocabulary words and fire safety concepts that we learned at school.

This week we will learn about traffic safety and discover how road signs, signals, and symbols help us to read and obey the rules of the streets and highways. You can help us learn more about traffic safety. When you and your children are running errands together, help them notice and read all the different traffic signs and signals.

Dear Teacher: My child is beginning to "read" storybooks, but he doesn't know all the words. Should I stop and correct him when he makes a mistake?

Signed, Helpful.

Dear Helpful: When kindergarten children first start to "read" books they use the pictures as reminders or clues to tell the story. This activity is an important first step on the road to learning how to read. Listening to your child tell or read his story builds his confidence, but correcting him will only confuse and frustrate his efforts. Later on he will begin to use the actual words to read the story.

Have a great week!
Mrs. Smith

1

Taken from Enz, Billie J. (Ed.). 1995. Strategies for promoting parental support for emergent literacy programs. The Reading Teacher, 49 (2), p.169.

Learning the Pragmatics of Language Use[2]

Young children need to learn --

- how to initiate a conversation;
- how to observe turn-taking rules;
- how to sustain a conversation;
- how to gain and hold the floor;
- how to initiate a play encounter;
- how to gain access to an ongoing play activity;
- how to address adults;
- how to talk to and with peers;
- how to ask for help or information;
- how to explain;
- how to verbally express feelings;
- how to greet and take leave;
- how to argue;
- how to speak on the telephone;
- how to anticipate the needs of the listener so as to be able to adjust the communication accordingly;
- who is allowed to speak, to whom, when, and how.

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[2] Taken from Preece, Alison. (1992). Oral language competence and the young child. In L. O. Ollila and M. I. Mayfield (Eds.), *Emerging literacy: Preschool, kindergarten, and primary grades*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Resources and Reviews[3]

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Children's books in print. New York: Bowker. [Published annually.]
Collected perspectives: Choosing and using books for the classroom (2nd ed.) (1992). H. Moir et al. (Eds.). Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Dictionary of American children's fiction, 1960-1984. [Books that have won significant awards.]

Girls are people too! A bibliography of nontraditional female roles in children's books. (1982). Newman, J. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.

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Something about the author: Facts and pictures about contemporary authors and illustrators of books for young people. [Series of more than fifty volumes.] A. Commire (Ed.). Detroit: Gale.

3

Taken from Templeton, S. (1995). *Children's literacy: Contexts for meaningful learning.* Toronto: Houghton Mifflin Company, pp 450-1.

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The elementary school library collection: A guide to books and other media (18th ed.) (1992). L. Winkel (Ed.). Williamsport, PA: Brodart.

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Guidelines for Classroom Reading of Storybooks to Children[4]

Before Reading:

- Show the cover of the book to the children. Encourage predictions of the book's content.
- Discuss the book's author and illustrator.
- Allow children to discuss their own experiences that are related to those in the book.
- Discuss the type of text the children will be hearing (folktale, fable, fantasy, realistic fiction).
- Introduce children to the main characters and setting.
- Set a purpose for the children to listen to the story.

During Reading:

- Encourage children to react to and comment on the story as they listen.
- Elaborate on the text, when appropriate, in order to help children understand the written language used in the story and the critical story components.
- Ask questions occasionally to monitor children's comprehension of the story.
- Rephrase the test when it is apparent that children do not understand the ideas.
- At appropriate points in the story, ask children to predict what might happen next.
- Allow children to voice their own interpretations of the story.

After Reading:

- Review the story components (setting, problem, goal, resolution).

4

Taken from Mason, Peterman, and Kerr. Reading to kindergarten children. In Strickland and Morrow (Eds.) *Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write*. (p.57) Newark: International Reading Association, 1989.

- Help children make connections between events involving the main character and similar events in their own lives.

- Engage children in a follow up activity that involves thinking about the text.

Guidelines for Classroom Reading of Informational Texts to Children[5]

Before Reading:

- Determine children's level of understanding of the topic presented in the text through methods such as leading a discussion about the picture on the cover or children's experiences with the topic.

- Provide demonstrations of difficult concepts.

- Set a purpose for listening.

- Establish a link between children's experiences with the topic and what they will be learning from the text.

During Reading:

- Ask questions periodically to check children's understanding of the text. Questions that actually appear in the text might provide excellent opportunities for discussion and demonstration of the topic.

- Extend new concepts to children through demonstrations, concrete examples, or pictures while reading the text information.

- Encourage comments about the demonstrations and pictures so that children talk about unfamiliar concepts.

- Provide suggestions about activities children might engage in later that will encourage them to explore the topic further.

After Reading:

- Allow children to ask questions about the text.

- Help children see how informational test can be used to learn more about their own world.

- Offer follow up activities that will tie text concepts to children's experiences.

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5 Ibid., p. 59.

Guidelines for Classroom Reading of Picture Phrase Books[6]

Before Reading:

- Let children know that these books are ones they will be able to read if they listen and look carefully at pictures and print.

- Have children attempt to read the print on the cover. Talk about words they already know.

- Let children predict what the book might be about based on the title and the cover picture.

- Have children talk about their own experiences that are related to the book topic or theme.

- If children cannot see the print, provide multiple copies or enlarge the book.

During Reading:

- Allow children who are able to read along.

- Challenge children to identify words in the text.

- Ask children how they are able to recognize the words they have identified.

After Reading:

- Briefly review the content of the text, drawing upon the experiences of the children to highlight specific events or sequences.

- Reread the text, having the children join in as they recognize the words.

- Let children explore the print by having them attempt to write words from the book.

- Extend the presentation by having children act out the text, draw pictures to go along with the text, or compose a similar text.

- Provide opportunities for children to read the book on their own.

6

Ibid., p.61.

The Reading Teacher Listserv[7]

The Reading Teacher listserv is a discussion group online for teachers to discuss literacy and learning within multimedia environments. Below are the directions for subscribing and unsubscribing to the listserv.

From your e-mail account:

1. Address your message to listserv@listserv.syr.edu
2. Leave the first line of your message blank.
3. In the second line type:
   SUB RTEACHER fullname
   e.g., if your name is Jane Doe, type:
   SUB RTEACHER Jane Doe
4. Be certain your message does not contain any other information. Disable your "signature" option, if you have one, so this is not included at the end of your message.
5. Send your message.

To unsubscribe to The Reading Teacher listerv do the following:

1. Exactly the same as above except for the message which should read:
   UNSUB RTEACHER

If you experience problems, you may send a message to djleu@mailbox.syr.edu.

7

Leu, Donald J., Jr. (Ed.) Sarah's secret: Social aspects of literacy and learning in a digital information age. *The Reading Teacher, 50* (2), p.164.

Starting Points on the World Wide Web for Classroom Teachers[8]

***AskERIC Virtual Library** -- http://ericir.syr.edu/

***Canada's SchoolNet** -- http://schoolnet2.carleton.ca/

***EdWeb** -- http://edweb.cnidr.org:90/resource.cntnts.html

***Global SchoolNet Foundation** -- http://www.gsn.org/

***History/Social Studies Web Site for K-12 Teachers** -- http://www.execpc.com/~dboals/

***Integrating the Internet** -- http://www.indirect.com/www/dhixson/index.html

***Web66**: A K12 World Wide Web Project -- http://web66.coled.umn.edu/

Academic Innovations -- Hot Web Sites -- http://www.academicinnovations.com/hotsites.html

Classroom Connect -- Internet Made Easy in the Classroom --http://www.wentworth.com/

Discovery Channel School -- http://school.discovery.com/

Empire Internet Schoolhouse -- gopher://nysernet.org:3000/11/Academic%20Wings

Houghton Mifflin Education Place -- Free Internet Resources for K-8 -- http://www.hmco.com/school/

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators -- http://www.capecod.net/schrockguide/

Kids Web -- A World Wide Web Digital Library for Schoolkids -- http://www.npac.syr.edu/textbook/kidsweb/

8

Those sites marked with an asterisk are suggested by Leu, Donald J., Jr. (Ed.) Sarah's secret: Social aspects of literacy and learning in a digital information age. *The Reading Teacher, 50* (2), p.165.

PBS Teacher Connex -- http://www.pbs.org/learn/tconnex/

The Kids on the Web -- http://www.zen.org/~brendan/kids.html

Way Cool Software Reviews -- http://www.ucc.uconn.edu/~wwwpcse/wcool.html

The Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory [McRel] --http://www.mcrel.org/resources/

LITERACY SITES

Children's Literature -- http://www.parentsplace.com/readroom/childnew/index.html

Inkspot -- Writers' Resources on the Web -- http://www.inkspot.com/

KidNews -- Kids Writing from Practically Everywhere -- http://www.vsa.cape.com/~powens/Kidnews.html

KidPub WWW Publishing -- http://www.kidpub.org/kidpub/

Share -- Grade One Themes -- http://www.hmco.com/school/rdg/itl/1/

The Children's Literature Web Guide -- http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index.html

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My Personal Home page also includes many links for teachers and students -- http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~r75vlp/homepg.htm

Observation Form[9]

Description of child's work and behaviour for each context
(cite specific indications of skills or knowledge)

Settings and Activities	***Examples of Child's Activities***
Story Time: Teacher reads to class (responses to story line; child's comments, questions, elaborations)	
Independent Reading: Book Time (nature of books child chooses or brings in; process of selecting; quiet or social reading)	
Reading Group/Individual (oral reading strategies: discussion of text, responses to instruction)	
Writing (journal stories, alphabet, dictation)	
Reading Related Activities Tasks (responses to assignments or discussion focusing on word letter properties, word games/ experience charts)	
Informal Settings (use of language in play, jokes, story-telling, conversation)	
Books and Print as Resource (use of books for projects; attention to signs, labels, names; locating information)	
Other	

9

Taken from Chittenden and Courtney. Assessment of young children's reading. In Strickland and Morrow (Eds.) *Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write*. (p.110) Newark: International Reading Association, 1989.

Observation Form 2[10]

Child _____ Grade _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

Ratings of child's interest/investment in different classroom contexts
(based on observations over a period of several weeks)

Settings and Activities	Degree of Interest/Investment				
	Very Interested, Intense		Moderately Interested		Uninterested, Attention Is Elsewhere
Story Time: Teacher reads to class (responses to story line; child's comments, questions, elaborations)	—	—	—	—	—
Independent Reading: Book Time (nature of books child chooses or brings in; process of selecting; quiet or social reading)	—	—	—	—	—
Writing (journal stories, alphabet, dictation)	—	—	—	—	—
Reading Group/Individual (oral reading strategies: discussion of text, responses to instruction)	—	—	—	—	—
Reading Related Activities Tasks (responses to assignments or discussion focussing on word letter properties, word games/ experience charts)	—	—	—	—	—
Informal Settings (use of language in play, jokes, story-telling, conversation)	—	—	—	—	—
Books and Print as Resource (use of books for projects; attention to signs, labels, names; locating information)	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—

10 Ibid., p.111.

Early Reading Behaviours Checklist[11]			
Name _____ **Age** _____ **Date** _____			
Behaviour	Always	Sometimes	Never
Handles books appropriately			
Identifies cover, author, etc.			
Demonstrates direction & return sweep			
Matches one-to-one			
Recognises some known words in isolation			
Reruns in order to search and check			
At unknown word searches using:			
picture cues			
story meaning cues			
language structure cues			
word cues			
letter and letter cluster knowledge			
analogies			
After miscue checks on reading using:			
picture cues			
story meaning cues			
language structure cues			
word cues			
letter and letter cluster knowledge			
analogies			
Self corrects			
Reads fluently/phrases appropriately			

11

Taken from Depree, Helen and Sandra Iversen. (1994). *Early literacy in the classroom. A new standard for young readers*, p. 111. Richmond Hill, ON: Scholastic Canada Ltd.

Early Writing Behaviours Checklist[12]			
Name _____ **Age** _____ **Date** _____			
Behaviour	Always	Sometimes	Never
Forms alphabet letters			
Has direction/return sweep			
Leaves space between words			
Uses initial consonants			
Uses dominant consonants			
Has consonant framework			
Uses some vowels			
Makes close approximations			
Writes some words independently			
Locates unknown words in environment			
Uses upper/lower case letters			
Uses punctuation			
Writes one sentence			
Writes two sentences			
Writes a page			
Generates quality ideas			
Sustains ideas over a story			
Writes in different genres			
Proof reads			
Edits			

12 Ibid., p. 115.

Functional Communication Overview Checklist[13]

Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____
Teacher _____ Classroom _____

Communication Functions and Behaviours	Rating Scale	Mode (Speech/Writing)	Comments
	3 Usually 2 Sometimes 1 Seldom 0 No response		
Informative			
1. Gives geographical directions.	3 2 1 0		
2. Gives directions for making objects.	3 2 1 0		
3. Gives directions for obtaining objects.	3 2 1 0		
4. Gives directions for completing a task.	3 2 1 0		
5. Describes objects and locations.	3 2 1 0		
6. Describes scenes so others can visualize them.	3 2 1 0		
7. Describes a single event.	3 2 1 0		
8. Describes a series of events.	3 2 1 0		
9. Explains a process (how something works).	3 2 1 0		
10. Explains an event (why something happens).	3 2 1 0		
11. Explains an act (what someone does).	3 2 1 0		
12. Summarizes information provided.	3 2 1 0		
13. Asks questions for/about information.	3 2 1 0		
14. Draws inferences from information.	3 2 1 0		
15. Evaluates information (agrees/ disagrees/qualifies).	3 2 1 0		

Functional Communication Overview Checklist[14]

13

Taken from Allen, R.R., Kenneth L. Brown, and Joanne Yatvin. (1986). *Learning language through communication: A functional perspective*, p. 422. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

14

Ibid., p. 423.

Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____
Teacher _____ Classroom _____

Communication Functions and Behaviours	Rating Scale	Mode (Speech/Writing)	Comments
	3 Usually 2 Sometimes 1 Seldom 0 No response		
Affective			
1. Expresses opinions about books and story characters.	3 2 1 0		
2. Expresses feelings about self, own work, and interests.	3 2 1 0		
3. Expresses feelings toward others.	3 2 1 0		
4. Shares feelings expressed in prose literature.	3 2 1 0		
5. Shares feelings expressed in poetry.	3 2 1 0		
6. Expresses affection.	3 2 1 0		
7. Expresses congratulations.	3 2 1 0		
8. Expresses sorrow/sympathy.	3 2 1 0		
9. Apologizes to others.	3 2 1 0		
10. Compliments others.	3 2 1 0		
11. Expresses appreciation and thanks to others.	3 2 1 0		
12. Encourages others to express their feelings.	3 2 1 0		
13. Asks helpful questions.	3 2 1 0		

Functional Communication Overview Checklist[15]

Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____
Teacher _____ Classroom _____

Communication Functions and Behaviours	Rating Scale	Mode (Speech/Writing)	Comments
	3 Usually 2 Sometimes 1 Seldom 0 No response		
Imaginative			
1. Predicts a story outcome.	3 2 1 0		
2. Keeps a story character diary.	3 2 1 0		
3. Tells stories to others.	3 2 1 0		
4. Composes original stories.	3 2 1 0		
5. Mimes actions/feelings.	3 2 1 0		
6. Improvises scenes/plays from literature.	3 2 1 0		
7. Dramatizes plays created by others.	3 2 1 0		
8. Composes original plays.	3 2 1 0		
9. Invents unusual expressions (similes, metaphors, analogies).	3 2 1 0		
10. Invents unusual forms (puns, riddles, rhymes, limericks).	3 2 1 0		
11. Invents original poems.	3 2 1 0		
12. Shares poetry aloud (alone/ chorally).	3 2 1 0		
13. Role-plays characters/events.	3 2 1 0		
14. Uses varied media in imaginative communication.	3 2 1 0		

15 Ibid., p. 424.

Functional Communication Overview Checklist[16]

Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____
Teacher _____ Classroom _____

Communication Functions and Behaviours	Rating Scale	Mode (Speech/Writing)	Comments
	3 Usually 2 Sometimes 1 Seldom 0 No response		
Ritualistic			
1. Takes turns in conversations.	3 2 1 0		
2. Relates comments to comments of others in conversations.	3 2 1 0		
3. Encourages others to participate in conversations.	3 2 1 0		
4. Expresses greetings.	3 2 1 0		
5. Introduces self to others.	3 2 1 0		
6. Introduces strangers to each other	3 2 1 0		
7. Takes leave of others.	3 2 1 0		
8. Engages in telephone conversations.	3 2 1 0		
9. Uses conventional forms to express thanks.	3 2 1 0		
10. Extends invitations.	3 2 1 0		
11. Makes announcements.	3 2 1 0		
12. Acknowledges others.	3 2 1 0		
13. Begins, conducts, and terminates personal interest/oral history interviews.	3 2 1 0		
14. Performs task roles in groups.	3 2 1 0		
15. Performs social-emotional roles in groups.	3 2 1 0		
16. Leads group discussions.	3 2 1 0		
17. Establishes/follows meeting agendas).	3 2 1 0		

16

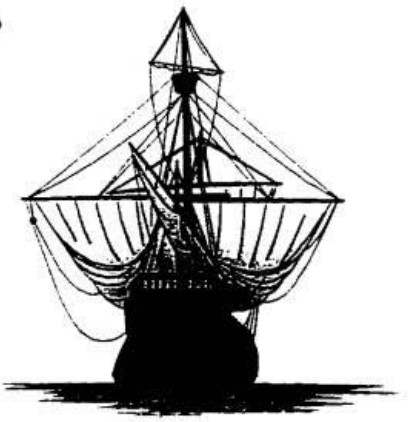
Ibid., p. 425.

Functional Communication Overview Checklist[17]

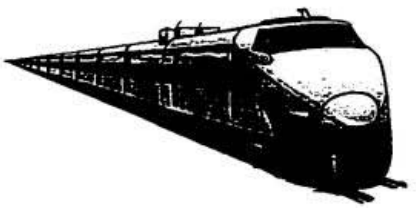
Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____
Teacher _____ Classroom _____

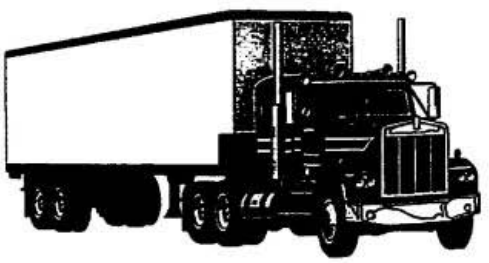
Communication Functions and Behaviours	Rating Scale	Mode (Speech/Writing)	Comments
	3 Usually 2 Sometimes 1 Seldom 0 No response		
Persuasive			
1. Expresses needs, wants, wishes.	3 2 1 0		
2. Offers assistance to others.	3 2 1 0		
3. Suggests actions.	3 2 1 0		
4. Seeks permission.	3 2 1 0		
5. Negotiates conditions for contracts.	3 2 1 0		
6. Expresses agreement/ reservations/disagreement.	3 2 1 0		
7. States reasons.	3 2 1 0		
8. Evaluates reasons.	3 2 1 0		
9. Seeks to persuade a known audience about an easy task.	3 2 1 0		
10. Seeks to persuade an unknown audience about an easy task.	3 2 1 0		
11. Seeks to persuade a known audience about a difficult task.	3 2 1 0		
12. Seeks to persuade an unknown audience about a difficult task.	3 2 1 0		
13. Detects assumptions.	3 2 1 0		
14. Employs a variety of evidence.	3 2 1 0		

17 Ibid., p. 426.



Going Places





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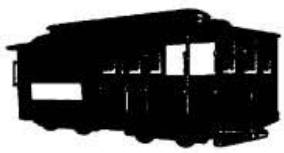

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(The Unit)

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Going Places

Overview

As Welton and Mallan[1] pointed out, teachers must plan on a day-to-day basis, making adjustments in tomorrow's lesson based on what happened today. But with a unit to provide a long-range plan, those daily adjustments will be minor. The teacher does not have to sit down at the end of a long day and wonder what to do tomorrow.

The *Going Places* unit is designed for use with Kindergarten students, who attend school for 1/2 day sessions, although it may be adapted for higher grades. I usually aim to cover a thematic unit in a month (four weeks), although sometimes it stretches a bit longer, depending on how involved the students become with the topic.

Several years ago, I assigned all the subject/content objectives from the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide developed by the Department of Education in 1984, to various themes I had planned to do in my kindergarten class over the balance of the year. I have included the "Objective Page" for the *Going Places* unit in Appendix A (pp. 270-71), as well as a list of general objectives which extend over every theme during the year (pp. 272-73). Many more curriculum objectives will be covered in the unit outside of those suggested on these take-home pages.

1

Welton, D. A., & Mallan, J. T. (1988). *Children and their world: Strategies for teaching social studies* (3rd edition). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

The *Going Places* unit is actually subdivided into four parts: Going Places 1) ... On Land, 2) ... By Air or Water, 3) ... In Your Head, 4) ... On the World Wide Web, as well as introductory lessons and culminating lessons. With so many sections, each will only get about one week's concentration. It is therefore a fast-paced theme and an exciting one to funnel the natural energy of five-year-old children.

At the beginning of each section in the unit, I have included a table of contents for that section, a resource page which lists the specific resources suggested in the lessons in that section, and a page of learning centre ideas.

Each lesson in this unit is designed for a 30-60 minute block of time, with a variety of activities in each one. Since Kindergarten ordinarily uses an integrated approach to curriculum, the subject areas are built into the theme's lessons. A teacher may choose to use two or three of these lessons in a half-day Kindergarten day. The lessons are organized such that different activities and levels of participation are included in consecutive lessons. The names of the subject areas that are included in each particular lesson appear at the beginning of the lesson plans. As well, since this unit is based on a functional language approach to learning, in each lesson plan in *Going Places*, there is a "communications box" beside each activity to indicate which purpose or function of communication the activity serves. I have also included a section entitled *Books to Read* which lists books that complement the lesson. In addition, the *Extra Ideas* section gives suggestions for related activities if time and interest allows.

Going Places

Unit Goals & Objectives

GOAL:

To reinforce and/or acquire knowledge about transportation and safety while improving information-gathering skills.

Introducing the children to simple research is one of the goals of the *Going Places* unit. Non-fiction print materials, CD-Roms, and various audiovisual resources will be used for this purpose. A list of specific resources is included at the beginning of each subsection of the unit.

CONTENT OBJECTIVES:

The children will:

- talk about and dramatize good safety practices that protect us and others at home and at school
- learn safety habits for crossing the street, riding a bicycle, boarding a bus, swimming, and skating
- know and use the safest route to school
- recognize the colours of the traffic light and understand their significance to pedestrians and drivers
- identify safe and unsafe places to play during school hours
- find out about movement; discover that things are moved by pushes and pulls
- experiment with magnets; determine what materials are attracted to magnets
- learn how to keep things from moving -- falling, going downhill, toppling over
- learn basic temporal and spatial skills (location of objects, distance, representation of objects in space)
- learn map and globe skills (understanding the fundamental purposes of maps and globes)
- use the concept of area to mean the covering of space; e.g., to count how many squares can cover a two-dimensional figure
- demonstrate that they can jump, hop, leap, slide, gallop, and skip (P.E.)
- interpret a variety of sounds (e.g., light, heavy) and feelings (e.g., sad, happy) through movement

INFORMATION SKILLS OBJECTIVES:

The children will:

- locate information for specific purposes
- use audiovisual materials and orally presented material to find information
- distinguish between fact and fiction
- brainstorm ideas to contribute to class webs
- arrange facts or events in sequence
- begin to understand the fundamental purpose of maps and globes
- classify information
- construct graphs using data from the environment
- interpret graphs orally
- find details in stories
- present information by:
    - contributing to experience charts
    - drawing pictures
    - contributing orally
    - dramatizing
- recognize main idea and sequence in stories
- summarize information
- use a cassette recorder
- use a computer

VALUES/ATTITUDES OBJECTIVES:

The children will:

- appreciate the various modes of travel and enjoy travelling vicariously.
- appreciate their homes and neighbourhoods.

Going Places

Learning Activities
&
Evaluation

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

The following learning activities will be used during the Going Places unit:

- learning webs and charts
- brainstorming
- reading fiction and non-fiction books orally to the group
- using non-fiction print materials for simple research
- graphing
- *sorting/classifying*
- accessing the Internet
- large group discussions
- following recipes
- student worksheets
- outside activities
- creating theme-related art projects
- using audiovisual resources to elicit information
- using computer technology to research
- reacting to music and poetry
- using e-mail to communicate
- writing stories and letters
- preparing for and conducting interviews
- special guests
- *field trips*
- creating poetry and songs
- role playing
- learning centres
- poetry
- singing
- dramatizing
- creating class books
- playing games

EVALUATION:

Each individual lesson has an evaluation element included in the lesson plan. This evaluation will be done primarily through observation and jot notes. Worksheets and journal writings will be kept and corrected upon completion, as well. Selected work samples and observation notes will be kept in student portfolios. Oral reviews in the form of games and group discussions will be used to assess information retention.

When the *Going Places* unit has been implemented, an evaluation will be conducted to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the unit and to record recommendations for revision. A sample evaluation form is included in Appendix A (p. 274). Also useful for evaluating the unit are the checklists developed by Allen *et al.* (1986) for recording the communication behaviours used by the children for each of the five communicative functions (Appendix, pp. 275-279). The children and the unit can both be evaluated according to how many of these behavioural objectives were accomplished during the theme.

Going Places

Resources

BOOKS:

Templeton[2] suggested that when planning and implementing a literature/language arts-based unit teachers should read all the materials they plan to use and determine the suitability of the books for core texts and read-alouds, extended reading, and recreational or independent reading.

He gave the following guidelines for extended and recreational reading: for extended reading, teachers can select ten titles -- three of them challenging, another three easy, and the balance in the middle; this will address the developmental literacy levels in their class. Several copies of each is recommended. For recreational titles, teachers should choose a diversified range from the library.

The following is a list of books that can be used in this unit. Even if they were all accessible, there would probably be too many to include.

EASY-TO-READ BOOKS:

Easy-to-read books are especially designed for beginning readers. They combine

---

2

Templeton, S. (1995). *Children's literacy: Contexts for meaningful learning*. Toronto: Houghton Mifflin Company.

the controlled vocabulary of the basal reader with creative storytelling[3].

Berenstain, Stan. ***The Berenstain Bears: The bike lesson***. Random House.

Bernard, Robin. ***Who wants a ride?*** Scholastic.
This books shows the different ways mother animals give rides to their babies.

Calmenson, Stephanie and True Kelley. ***Roller skates*** (My First Hello Reader! Series). Scholastic.

Cowen-Fletcher, Jan. ***Mama zooms***. Scholastic.
Each time Mama zooms her son in her wheelchair, his imagination transforms her into something different.

Coxe, Molly. ***The great snake escape***. Harper Collins.
While reading a newspaper in a trash can, a frog becomes trapped. His friend, the goose, enlists the aid of a king cobra and the two repay the reptile's kindness by sending it back to India, and home.

Dr. Seuss. ***And to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street***.

Franco, Betsy. ***Tina's taxi***. Scholastic.
Ride through the week with Tina and her taxi. Recognizing the context clues and the names of the days of the week makes reading this book easy and fun.

Hall, Kirsten and Laura Rader. ***At the carnival*** (My First Hello Reader! Series). Scholastic.

Joyce, Susan. ***Post card passages***. Peel Productions.
Great Aunt Gladys travels around the world, sending postcards to young Susan, who also dreams of travel. Susan, inspired by her aunt, works and saves until she can experience the adventure.

Kalman, Bobbie. ***Come to my place***. Crabtree, 1985.

3

Cullinan, B. E. (1989). Literature for young children. In D.S. Strickland & L.M. Morrow (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Young children learn to read and write*. Newark: International Reading Association.

Lyon, George Ella. ***A day at Damp Camp***. Orchard, 1996.
Rhyming word pairs describe the activities of two girls at summer camp.

McGuire, Richard. ***What goes around comes around***. Viking.
Children are exposed to a cyclical story as they follow a doll through a chain of outrageous events from the time it falls out a window until it is thrust back into the window.

McPhail, David. ***Pigs ahoy!*** Dutton.
A vacation at sea can be an adventure, especially wen you find pigs all over the ship. We see them in the pool, in aerobics class, and with the captain. A delightful story told in rhyme.

Riley, Linda Capus. ***Elephants swim***. Houghton Mifflin.
Bright illustrations and rhyming text describe the behaviour of various animals in the water. A special section in the back of the book provides scientific information about each of the 16 animals.

Spier, Peter. ***Fast-slow, high-low. A book of opposites***. Doubleday.

PREDICTABLE BOOKS:

The following books have repetitive language that encourages participation:

Alain. ***One, two, three, going to sea***. New York: Scholastic, 1964.

Allen, P. ***Who sank the boat?*** New York: Coward-McCann, 1983.

Brown, Margaret Wise. ***Four fur feet***. William R. Scott, 1961.

Burningham, J. ***Mr. Gumpy's outing.*** London: J. Cape, 1970.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. ***A house is a house for me.*** Viking Press, 1978.

Hoopes, L.L. ***Mommy, Daddy, Me.*** Harper & Row, 1988
A story in rhyme of a small boy and his parents who sail to visit his grandfather on a summer day.

Where are you going, Little Mouse? Illustrated by José Aruego and Ariane Dewey. Greenwillow, 1986.

Wildsmith, Brian. ***Toot, Toot.*** Oxford University Press, 1988.

Williams, Sue. ***I went walking.*** Gulliver Books, 1989.
During the course of a walk, a young boy identifies animals of different colours.

PICTURE BOOKS:

Encouraging children to tell stories using picture books increases oral language while building their self confidence about using language to create stories[4].

Asch, Frank. ***Mooncake.*** Prentice-Hall, 1983.

Crews, Donald. ***Freight train.*** Greenwillow, 1978.
Name all the train's cars and learn the colours as the black engine pulls them so fast they become a blur.

Crews, Donald. ***School bus.*** Greenwillow, 1984.

Crews, Donald. ***Bicycle race.*** Greenwillow, 1985.

Crews, Donald. ***Flying.*** Greenwillow, 1986.
Follow an airplane trip flying over highways, over cities, and across the country.

Crews, Donald ***Harbor.*** Greenwillow.

Crews, Donald. ***Truck.*** Greenwillow. [available as a big book]
Follows a big tractor trailer truck that is loaded with toys and driven cross country. Beginning readers point out all the stop signs, exit signs, and road markers as the big truck barrels along the highways.

Hoban, Tana. ***I read signs.*** Greenwillow.

Krahn, F. ***First snow.*** Clarion, 1982.

4

Glazer, S. M. (1989). Oral language and literacy development. In D.S. Strickland & L.M. Morrow (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Young children learn to read and write.* Newark: International Reading Association.

A boy catches a strange "thing" while on a fishing trip, and it escapes.

Krahn, F. ***How Santa Claus had a long and difficult journey delivering his presents.*** Dell, 1985.

Smith, L. ***Flying Jake.*** Macmillan, 1988.

Tafuri, N. ***Junglewalk.*** Greenwillow, 1988.

Tafuri, N. ***Follow me!*** Greenwillow, 1990.

The bus ride, illustrated by Justin Wager. New York: Scott, Foresman, 1971.

PICTURE STORY BOOKS:

Aesop. ***The hare and the tortoise.*** Troll, 1981.

Baer, Edith. ***This is the way we go to school.*** Scholastic, 1990.

Bridwell, Norman. ***Clifford takes a trip.*** Scholastic.

Burningham. ***Mr. Gumpy's motor car.*** 1973.

Burton, Virginia Lee. ***Choo Choo.*** Houghton Mifflin.

Carlson, Nancy. ***Arnie and the skateboard gang.*** Viking.

Arnie wants to master the skateboard he received for his birthday and show the other cool skaters. When Arnie is given a dangerous challenge, he has to decide to accept and race or to be courageous and say no.

Chapman, Elizabeth. ***Marmaduke goes to America.*** Brockhampton Press, 1965.

DeRegniers, Beatrice Schenk. ***Going for a walk.***

Dr. Seuss. ***And to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street.***

Ford, Frances M. ***The pony engine.*** Wonder Books, 1987.

Gantschev, Ivan. ***Train to Grandma's.*** Picture Book, 1987.

Johnson, Doug. ***Never ride your elephant to school***. Henry Holt.
When an oversized elephant decides to come to Zenith Elementary School, it creates amusing, yet frightening, situations for both the students and the teachers.

Lenski, Lois. ***More Mr. Small***. Walk, 1980.

Levinson, Riki. ***I go with my family to grandma's***. Dutton, 1986.
As five cousins and their families arrive by various means of transportation, Grandma's home gets livelier and livelier.

Loomis, Christine. ***Rush hour***. Houghton, 1996.
In a rhythmic celebration of the workday commute, a city bustles to life as people rush to work in the morning and then home
again in the evening.

Maris, Ron. ***I wish I could fly***. Greenwillow, 1986.

McLeod, E. ***The bear's bicycle***. Little, Brown, 1975.

McPhail, David. ***The train***. Little, Brown & Co.

Morris, Ann. ***On the go***. Lothrop, Lee, & Shepard, 1990.

Muller, Robin. ***Row, row, row your boat***. Scholastic.
Badger sets out on a boating adventure in Robin Muller's enchanting adaptation of the traditional song.

Peet, Bill. ***The caboose who got loose***. Houghton Mifflin.

Piper, Watty. ***The little engine that could***. Platt and Mink, 1961.

Quackenbush, Robert. ***She'll be comin' round the mountain***. Lippincott, 1973.

Ransome, Arthur. ***The fool of the world and the flying machine***. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1968.

Reid, Barbara. ***Two by two***. Scholastic.
Barbara Reid has taken the story of Noah's Ark and turned it into a rollicking rhyme accompanied by her trademark Plasticine illustrations.

Rey, Margret. ***Curious George at the railroad station***. Platt & Munk.

Schoberle, Cecile. ***Beyond the milky way***. Crown Publishers, 1986.

Looking out a city window and seeing the night sky between the buildings, a chid describes the glowing wonder of outer space and imagines another child doing the same on a distant planet.

Sendak, Maurice. ***Where the wild things are***. Harper, 1963.

Travel with Max on his imaginative trip and repeat the delicious words of his journey. Max is in charge of the wild things, as your children will be when they close the book and put it away for another day.

Shaw, Nancy. ***Sheep take a hike***. Houghton Mifflin.

These zany sheep become lost while hiking, but surprise readers with an ingenious way of finding their way home. Bright illustrations depict each sheep's involvement in the adventure.

Skogan, Joan. ***Grey Cat at sea***. Polestar,1991.

Grey Cat finds a home on a Polish factory trawler and cannot be content living anywhere but on the sea.

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

Stevens, Janet. ***Tortoise and hare race***. Holiday.

Tester, Sylvia. ***Traffic jam***. The Child's World, 1980.

Van Allsburg, Chris. ***The Polar Express***. Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

Van Leeuwen, Jean. ***Going west***. Dial.

The story is narrated effectively by 7-year-old Hannah as she describes her pioneer family's move out west. Hardships and danger are nicely balanced with family warmth, love, and survival skills. The description of the family's feelings in the unsettled land, especially loneliness and isolation, makes the story believable. The subdued, hazy, pastel drawings enhance and strengthen the text.

Watson, Wendy. ***Moving***. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1978.

When Mom and Dad make plans to move to a new house, Muffin decides to remain in the old one.

Wilcox-Richards, Nancy and Werner Zimmermann. ***Farmer Joe goes to the city***. Scholastic.

Farmer Joe and his animals go to the city to buy his wife a birthday present.

Wildsmith, Brian. ***The hare and the tortoise***. Watts, 1966.

Williams, Vera. ***Stringbean's trip to the shining sea***. Greenwillow Books, 1988.
Stringbean describes his trip to the west coast in a series of postcards.

Wilson-Max, Ken. ***Little red plane***. Scholastic.
This highly imaginative, interactive book involves readers with flaps and tabs as they prepare for take off. The sit in the pilot's seat checking all the controls for their trip.

Yorinks, Arthur. ***Hey, Al.*** Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986.
See ideas section.

Zolotow, Charlotte. ***The seashore book***. HarperCollins.
A mother's words help a little boy imagine the sights and sounds of the seashore, even though he's never seen the ocean.

INFORMATIONAL BOOKS:

Apsley, B. ***Things that go.*** Preschool Press, 1984.

Arnold, Caroline. ***How do we travel?*** Watts, 1983.

Barton, Byron. ***I want to be an astronaut***. Crowell, 1988.

Branley, Franklyn M. ***The planets in our solar system***. Crowell, 1981.

Brown, Margaret Wise and Leonard Weisgard. ***Red light, green light***. Scholastic.
The simple, rhythmic prose reinforces the notion of stopping and going at a crossroads, and gives young readers a reassuring lesson in traffic safety.

Chlad, Dorothy. ***Bicycles are fun to ride***. Children's Press.

Chlad, Dorothy. ***When I cross the street***. Childrens Press, 1981.

Cole, Joanna. ***Cars and how they go.*** Crowell, 1983.

Gibbons, Gail. ***Boat book***. Holiday, 1983.

Gibbons, Gail. ***Stargazers***. Holiday House, 1992.

Gibbons, Gail. ***Trains***. Holiday, 1987.

Gibbons, Gail. ***Trucks***. Crowell, 1981.

Klingel, Cynthia. ***Safety can be fun***. Creative Education.

Levinson, Riki. ***Watch the stars come out***.
The story of two immigrant children who make the trip to America on their own. Children can talk about why people leave their own country and move to another and what it must feel like to travel on one's own.

Lord, Suzanne and Jolie Epstein. ***A day in space***.
This book takes children aboard the Space Shuttle with full-colour photographs, and interview wit an astronaut and lots of facts to fuel their space travel fantasies.

MacKonald, G. ***Red light, green light***. Doubleday, 1944.

Munro, Roxie. ***Blimps***. Dutton, 1989.

Murphy, Bryan. ***Experiment with movement***. Scholastic.
This book examines what movement is, how we move, how gravity works and much more.

Provensen, Alice and Martin. ***The glorious flight across the Channel with Louis Bleriot***. Viking, 1983.
The Provensens tell how Bleriot experimented with flying machines until he developed a plane that could fly, and how he became the first person to fly across the English Channel. This story can help children learn about the development of the airplane.

Rockwell, Anne. ***Boats***. Dutton, 1982.

Rockwell, Anne. ***Cars***. Dutton, 1984.

Rockwell, Anne. ***Fire engines***. Dutton, 1986.

Rockwell, Anne. ***Planes***. Dutton, 1985.

Rockwell, Anne. ***Things that go.*** Dutton, 1986.

Rockwell, Anne. ***Trucks***. Dutton, 1984.

Rockwell, Anne. ***Trains***. Dutton, 1988.

Rockwell, Anne and Harlow. ***Machines***. Harper, 1985.

Royston, Angela and Terry Pastor. ***The A to Z book of cars***. Scholastic.

Scarry, Richard. ***Cars and trucks and things that go.*** Golden.

Scarry, Richard. ***The great big car and truck book***. Golden Press, 1974.

Shapp, Martha & Charles. ***Let's find out about safety***. Franklin Watts.

Smith, Jesse. ***Going places***. Golden, 1988.

Tester, Sylvia Root. ***Magic monsters learn about safety***. The Child's World.

Viorst, J. ***Try it again, Sam: Safety when you walk***. Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard.

Webb, Joan. ***Play it safe***. Golden Books.

GOING PLACES WITH THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS
Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen

Go places with Ms. Frizzle and her class as they go on magical field trips on the Magic School Bus series of informational books.

MULTICULTURAL:

Baker, Jeannie. ***Where the forest meets the sea***. Scholastic.
A boy visits a tropical rain forest in Australia.

Bunting, Eve. ***Market Day***. Harper, 1996.
In this lively story, market day in an Irish village swirls with activity.

Joosse, Barbara M. and Lavallee. ***Mama, do you love me?*** Scholastic.
While focussed on the Inuit culture of Alaska, this charming story conveys a universal message.

Kindersley, Barnabas and Anabel. ***Children just like me***. Dorling, 1995.

Readers are introduced to children in different parts of the world through colour photographs and text that describes what their daily life is like.

Pilkey, Dav. ***The paperboy***. Orchard, 1996.

A paperboy wakes up in the dark of early morning and, accompanied by his dog, happily rides his bike to deliver the Saturday paper to the houses on his route.

Schertle, Alice. ***Down the road***. Harcourt, 1995.

An apple tree bearing ripe fruit distracts Hetty from going straight home with the dozen eggs she has been sent out to buy on her first solo trip to the store.

Sis, Peter. ***A small tall tale from the far, far north***. Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.

With the help of Eskimos, Jan Welzl survives a perilous journey from central Europe to the Arctic regions in the late 1800s.

Temple, Charles. ***Train***. Houghton, 1996.

A train chuffs and clacks and rolls down the tracks in this rhythmic train ride.

REFERENCE BOOKS:

Boyle, Bill. ***My first atlas***. Scholastic.

Beautiful and accurately drawn maps and stunning full-colour photographs give children a clear visual impression of what it would be like to visit each continent. Lively, open-ended questions lead children to explore the wealth of details in the picture maps.

Kohn, Bernice. ***The look-it-up book of transportation***. Random House, 1968.

The history of transportation in dictionary form.

The big book of things that go.

Over 120 stunning full-colour photographs show the world's biggest and best trucks, ships, planes and trains! Simple text describes fascinating features and lively questions encourage children to think about how and why machines are used.

POETRY:

The wheels on the bus and other transportation songs - pictures by Dick Witt. Scholastic.

Field, Rachel. ***Taxis and toadstools***. Doubleday, 1926.

McCord, David. ***Far and few: Rhymes of never was and always is.*** Little, Brown, 1952.

Willard, Nancy. ***A visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for innocent and experienced travellers.*** Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981.

AUDIO/VISUALS:

VIDEOS:

Ordinary Bath 1985 11 min VH

Dennis Lee's storybook *The Ordinary Bath* is a raucous romp through a small boy's fantasy world. "The Stink" and the "Shimmy King" are all there.

Safe in the Ark 1988 13 min VH

Displeased with the wickedness of the world, God reveals to Noah his plan to destroy the earth. Noah builds the great ark and gathers the animals. Though it rains for forty days and forty nights, those in the ark are saved to create a new beginning.

Saying No to Danger: Taking Responsibility 1986 11 min VH

Natural curiosity and negative peer pressure can influence young children to explore areas they know to be unsafe. The animated adventures of three pigs dramatize that saying "No" to danger is a smart thing to do. The pigs' differing reactions to potentially dangerous situations will make it easier for children to recognize and avoid dangerous places, objects and behaviour.

The Little Engine that Could 1963 11 min VH

Presents in animation, the story of the little train that pulled a trainload of toys to the children on the other side of the mountain.

16 mm FILMS:

A Visit From Space 1972 10 min 16mm

This cartoon, based on the new world of space as seen through the fantasy of a child, speaks about the adventures of a little girl who meets an inhabitant of a distant planet.

Captain Beetle Goes to Sea 1977 10 min 16mm

The beetle figured that a journey to the ocean would show his insect friends the wonderful world. The insects board their log boat and make the perilous journey. They learn that the world is full of exciting things to see and do.

Follow Mr. Willoughby 1973 13 min 16 mm

A race against time involves Jamie in numerous adventures. His friend, Mr. Willoughby, an absent-minded cook leaves a present for his grandson at a bus stop. Jamie tries to catch Mr. Willoughby before his ship leaves port. Children plot their own endings.

Little Train, Little Train 1970 10 min 16mm

Two children exploring in the woods of Maine find an abandoned narrow guage railroad complete with an old bridge, a collapsing stationhouse and on old sawmill. Interspersed with old photographs, the railroad comes to life.

Magic Well 1978 14 min 16mm

Gretchen, an unselfish little girl, falls into the Magic Well and finds herself in an enchanted land where kindness is rewarded. Based on a Grimm's Fairytale.

Remarkable, Riderless Runaway Tricycle 1982 11 min 16mm

A young boy leaves his tricycle to play with a kite retrieved from a trash can. It is mistakenly picked up on trash day and taken to the junk yard. Just as it is about to be crushed for scrap metal, the tricycle magically takes off. The tricycle has an amazing adventure through town and finally reunites with the boy.

Rhyming Dictionary of Boats 1978 11 min 16mm

This musical, lyrical film helps children learn more through their fascination with boats.

Rhyming Dictionary of Planes 1978 11 min 16mm

Through song and dance, introduces children to the fascinating world of airplanes. Explains what an airplane is and the many tasks planes are made to do.

The Country Mouse and the City Mouse 1966 11 min 16mm

An animated version of Aesop's famous fable. The country mouse learns that though travel may be fun, home is still the best place.

The Helicopter Ride 1980 15 min 16mm

The whirl of the rotor, the view of the land below, the ability to hover and landing on top of skyscrapers are part of the excitement of the helicopter ride. There is also non-technical information about the helicopter.

The Island of Skog 1978 15 min 16mm

Concerns with the experiences and adventures of a group of mice. They set sail in a ship, discover an island and then try to live happily.

The Kachinas 1972 6 min 16mm

A Hopi Indian boy lead Gumby and Pokey on a tour of his village. They see Kachinas dancing and the corn sacrifice to Thunderbird.

The Little Train on Caiphira 1973 14 min 16mm

The story of the delightful happy little train introduces unfamiliar percussion instruments to children and develops an appreciation for the culture and music of Brazil. We see the composer taking a journey in the train jotting down rhythms and folk tunes which he incorporated in the musical story.

The Possum that Didn't 1972 11 min 16mm

An upside-down "smiley, smiley possum" encounters civilization and its misguided boosters. In the city instead of getting happy, he is depressed. When the possum escapes and returns to the forest, he learns once more how to smile.

The Teddy Bear's Balloon Trip 1969 14 min 16mm

This cartoon fantasy takes one across many lands as a teddy bear's adventures carry him through mishaps and triumphs. He belongs to a German girl named Monica, who sends him on a balloon trip Europe to Asia to bring a gift to some Chinese children whose picture she saw in a book.

Where the Wild Things Are 1977 8 min 16mm

This animated film, based on the Caldecott Award winning book, takes place in a child's imaginary world. Max, a small boy making mischief in his wolf suit, is sent to his room without any supper. He sails to a world inhabited by weird creatures. He knows the magic trick to tame them and becomes their king.

CD-ROM:

The Magic School Bus Explores the Solar System. Microsoft.

Encyclopedia such as ***Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*** (Softkey) or ***Encarta***.

ON-LINE RESOURCES:

Many on-line resources are listed in the unit and integrated into specific lessons. See Section 4 (*Going Places in Your Head*), Lesson 2 - Planet Research (pp. 243-44) and Section 5, *Going Places on the World Wide Web* (pp. 254-57).

Going Places

Published Teacher Resources

Many of the ideas in this unit have been taken from the following pre-prepared books:

Flight. By Judy Vaden. (Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1991).

Great Games for Cooperative Learning. By Marzella Brown. (Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1990).

July & August Idea Book. By Karen Sevaly. (Teacher's Friend Publications, Inc., 1987).

Language in Centers. Kids Communicating. By Laverne Warner and Ken Craycraft. (Good Apple, 1991).

Let's Learn About Safety. By Diana Courson. (Good Apple, Inc., 1987).

Let's Learn About Social Studies. By Elaine Commins. (Humanics Learning, 1990).

Magnets. Macmillan Early Science Activities. (Macmillan).

Mudpies to magnets. A preschool science curriculum. By Robert A. Williams, Robert E. Rockwell, & Elizabeth A. Sherwood. (Gryphon House, 1987).

Poetry Place Anthology. (Instructor Books).

Science Learning Centers for the Primary Grades. By Carol A. Poppe and Nancy A. Van Matre. (The Center for Applied Research in Ed., 1985).

Summer Idea Book. By Karen Sevaly. (Teacher's Friend Publications, Inc., 1990).

Safety (Macmillan, 1990).

Safety (Theme Series). By Gayle Perry. (Creative Teaching Press, 1990).

The Footbook for Fast Finishers K-3. Ideas for Teachers. By Christina Frost and Bronwen Loveday. (Longman Cheshire Pty Ltd., 1990).

The Good Apple Guide to Learning Centers. By Craig and Michele Borber. (Good Apple, Inc., 1978).

The World Around Me. By Mary Beth Spann Minucci. (First Teacher Press, 1990).

Thematic Poems, Songs and Fingerplays. 45 Irresistible Rhymes and Activities to Build Literacy. By Meish Goldish. (Scholastic, 1993).

Thematic Units - Book 1 K-1-2. (Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company Inc., 1991).

Theme-A-Saurus II. The Great Big Book of More Mini Teaching Themes. By Jan Warren. (Warren Publishing House, Inc., 1990).

Themes Teachers Use. By Marjorie J. Kostelnik (Ed). (Good Year Books, 1996).

Transportation. (Theme Series). By Rozanne Williams. (Creative Teaching Press, 1990).

25 Thematic Mini-Books: Easy-to-make Reproducible Books to Promote Literacy. (Scholastic, 1992).

Whole Language Days. By Virginia Ferguson and Peter Durkin. (Longman Cheshire, 1992).

Going Places

General Unit Ideas

General Unit Ideas

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General Unit Ideas

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General Unit Ideas

THE MORNING MESSAGE[5]

Before the children arrive each morning (or afternoon), write a special message on the chalkboard. It might include the date, the day of the week, the weather, and sentences beginning with the following words:

- "Yesterday, we..." reviewing something they did the day before
- "Today we will ..." giving a hint to something they will do

The morning message can also announce birthdays, special visitors, upcoming field trips, etc. Children will be highly motivated to read this daily message.

THE PLAY AREA

Set up the dramatic play area of the classroom as an airport or travel agency. Included in such a setting could be a great deal of print - travel posters and brochures, a schedule board indicating destinations, times and numbers of flights, airline tickets, and magazines. Writing materials should be present so that children can write phone messages, tickets, boarding passes, and itineraries, and make signs for the area.[6] You can also include recipe cards cut in half for tickets, maps or an atlas, suitcases with luggage tags.[7]

GUEST STORY READER

Invite guests in to share stories with the children. Write the invitation as a class and, if possible, have a student deliver it to the chosen person. Contact the guest and ask

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5

Crowell, D. C., Kawakami, A. J., & Wong, J. L. (1986). Emerging literacy: Reading-writing experiences in a kindergarten classroom. *The Reading Teacher, 40*(2), 144-149.

6

Teale, W. H., & Sulzby, E. (1989). Emergent literacy: New perspectives. In D.S. Strickland & L.M. Morrow (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Young children learn to read and write*. Newark: International Reading Association.

7

Schickedanz, J. A. (1986). *More than ABCs: The early stages of reading and writing.* Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

them to send a brief acceptance message. This provides the students with visible evidence that their writing is powerful enough to elicit a response from someone else. As the guest reader shares why they chose their particular story and what makes it special to them, they are helping the children understand the affective link between people and literature.[8]

After the reading take a photograph of the guest with the group. The guest can hold the book so the title can be seen. Display these pictures in the reading corner. Before the guest leaves the class can perform for them; a song, poem, fingerplay or story.

Write a thank-you note to the guest after the visit.

PRESENTATION SIGN-UP SHEET[9]

Post this sign-up sheet on the classroom door.

Please sign up if you would like a

- Poet
- Storyteller
- Book read aloud to your class

Teacher's Name	Poet	Storyteller	Read Aloud

RECOMMENDED BOOK LIST[10]

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[8]Teale & Sulzby, 1989.

[9]Strickland, D. S., & Taylor, D. (1989). Family storybook reading: Implications for children, families, and curriculum. In D.S. Strickland & L.M. Morrow (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Young children learn to read and write*. Newark: International Reading Association.

[10]

Ibid.

Post this chart on the wall in your reading corner or next to the 'library return' bin.

Recommended Book List		
Title	Author	Reader

AUTHOR'S CHAIR[11]

Each day, children take turns sitting in the 'Author's Chair' to read aloud what they or another child or adult author has written. Listeners respond by stating what they think a story says and then asking questions of the author. Sharing their writing, gives the author the opportunity to hear the whole piece for the first time. They may notice changes that they need to make as they read it aloud and may go back to edit their writing.

'SOAR INTO READING' READING RECORDS[12]

A rocket theme displays the number of books the children have read together with parents at home. From construction paper each child designs, decorates and personalizes a 6" x 12" (15 x 30 cm) rocket. A 2" x 4" (5 x 10 cm) puff of "vapour" emitting from this rocket represents each book - this is the prescribed piece of paper where the child writes the book's title and author on the front and the parent or adult signs the back.

The puff is tapes to the bottom of the rocket, which is directed skyward. Blast off occurs when enough puffs have been added to one another to necessitate its moving upward. The ceiling is the limit as each subsequent move takes place. Another rocket may be used if necessary.

11

Hennings, D. G. (1994). *Communication in action: Teaching the language arts*, (5th Edition). Toronto: Houghton Mifflin Company.

12

Murdock, A. E. (1988). Soar into reading. *The Reading Teacher, 41*(3), 243-4.

THEMATIC SHOW AND TELL[13]

The children can bring theme-related items from home such as postcards, toy vehicles, photographs of trips, etc. The teacher can record a sentence, dictated by the student, about each item on chart paper or paper strips, writing and reading them collaboratively with the children. The children can take the writings home to share with their families.

FAVOURITE BOOK GRAPH

After most of the transportation books have been read to the class, complete a 'favourite book' graph with the children. Duplicate the covers of four or five of the books read. Ask the children to colour the covers with markers. Glue them across the top of a large piece of chart paper. Have each child draw a scene from his or her favourite book and glue it under the appropriate book cover. Allow time for children to discuss their pictures with the class. When the graph is complete, interpret it by discussing which books were best and least liked.

TRANSPORTATION COLLAGE

Suggest that the children and their parents look for interesting clips (mostly pictures) about transportation from newspapers or magazines. Have them bring these to school and add them to a special bulletin board. The child who brings the clip may post it in collage fashion (See Appendix B, pp. 281-82 for interesting examples of newspaper clips).

PICTURE MATCH[14]

Create a set of cards with pictures of various vehicles, boats, planes, etc. and matching word cards for each. Children can play several games with these when they have completed assigned work or have free time. They might separate the two decks of

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13

Britt, B. M. (1988). Show & tell. Write & read. *The Reading Teacher, 41*(4), 486-487.

14

Oldford-Matchim, J. (1994). *Help your child become a reader: A guide for reading conversations, activities and games*. St. John's, NF: Significant Others as Reading Teachers (SORT).

cards and match the pictures with the words by first choosing a picture card and then turning each card in the word deck face up until the word is found. Or they could play concentration where they turn all cards face down and turn over two at a time trying to match the picture card with the matching word card.

WORD RING COLLECTION[15]

As you work through the unit, you can create a word ring collection to keep in the writing centre or each child can make one. The collection will consist of a key ring or shower curtain ring on which are placed small cards having a hold punched in one corner . Each card will contain a word used in the theme such as names of vehicles or ways of going places. Students can use the word ring collections when writing.

MAKING A BULLETIN BOARD TOGETHER

To fulfill the objective of learning bus safety rules, have the children help you make a bulletin board. Display a large yellow school bus (see Appendix B, p. 283) on a bulletin board. Make blank word clouds to display the bus safety rules. Encourage the children to contribute the rules that they think should be included in the display. Print the rules on the clouds and arrange them around the bus. The children may draw their faces to put in the windows of the bus.

THINK BIG -- MAKING A TRANSPORTATION ENVIRONMENT[16]

Understand the child's need for realism in play activity. Bring real vehicles to school, if possible. Teachers of young children have been known to park an eighteen wheeler on the kindergarten playground for about two weeks so that children can climb, explore, play, and find out as much as possible about the truck. Make a rowboat a part of the equipment on the playground. Ask the school to let your class come to the bus barn and look under the hood and wheel bases of one of the buses. Invite the local fire chief to bring a fire truck to the school campus. Plan for every child to have a trip on the truck and sound the siren if he/she chooses. Visit an airport. Bring a horse or pony to school one afternoon so that children can have a ride.

15

Ibid.

16

Warner, L., & Craycraft, K. (1991). *Language in Centers. Kids Communicating.* Good Apple.

READING CORNER POEM[17]

The following poem about reading is excellent to display in the reading corner during this theme. The children can read it together every time they go there for a story.

Reading is a trip

I'm squeezed between the covers of a book
My seat belt's strapped to go
As my body becomes motionless
My mind sprints and leaps so!
Now, I hold the world in my two hands
And the author is my guide
Off we go...
Let's really take a ride!
Wow! Look at that beautiful jungle
And those ice cream mountains fly by
All of a sudden I screech to a halt
There's a tiger staring me in the eye!
Did you know we can go to this place
Where no one ever says no?
Where boys and girls are kings and queens
Now that's a place to go!
And you can catch any fish in the sea
Or travel to any star in the sky
Turn the page now
And perhaps find out why.
Then I stop and fill the pockets of my mind
With jewels I have never known
The world is free for the looking
And the sky is too big to own.
When I return from this trip
I'll never be the same
But I know one thing for sure
A book will take me back there again and again and again.

James A. Lipsky

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17 Lipsky, J. A. (1994). *The Reading Teacher, 47*(8), p.663.

FIELD TRIPS

This theme offers many opportunities for field trips. Children may visit an airport, a bus station, a fire hall, etc. Some field trip ideas for teachers are included in Appendix B, pp. 284-85.

POETRY

Decorate your room with poetry. Read the poems often so the children will become familiar with them. Some poems appear on pp. 286-88 in Appendix B.

PANTOMIME

When children are restless and need a stretch, do some pantomime with them. They can pretend they are:

- balls bouncing, rolling, and hurtling through the air
- kites flying on the breeze
- machines such as helicopters with propellers

VOCABULARY CARDS

Vocabulary cards can be used for playing games such as Concentration or can be used as resources when writing. Cards containing pictures and transportation vocabulary are included in Appendix B, pp. 289-92.

TRANSPORTATION SONGS

Fill in any spare time with a catchy little song such as those found in Appendix B, pp. 293-94. Practice them often so that the children will be able to sing them for parents on Parent Day.

COOKING

Fancy, but simple thematic cooking! (Appendix B, p. 295).

AWARDS

Receiving an award for something they did, is an excellent ego-booster. Several transportation awards are included in Appendix B, p. 296).

THEME PATTERN

Use the pattern in Appendix B, p. 297 for writing activities, learning centre recording sheets, etc.

Going Places

Introductory Lessons

Introductory Lessons

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Introductory Lessons

RESOURCES USED

BOOKS

One of:

The hare and the tortoise. Aesop. (Troll, 1981).

The hare and the tortoise. Brian Wildsmith. (Watts, 1966).

Tortoise and hare race. Janet Stevens. (Holiday).

SONGS

Traveling, traveling by Meish Goldish (*Thematic poems, songs and fingerplays*)

POEMS/CHANTS

Preferred Vehicles by Leland B. Jacobs

The Hare and the Tortoise

Going Places

Lesson 1 - Ways to Travel

(L.Arts, Math, Music, Dramatic Play, Art)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- participate in a brainstorming session on ways to travel.
- classify the travel modes in different categories.
- explain their actions when classifying.
- invent a rhyme and share it with classmates.
- use their imaginations to build model transportation machines.
- describe the process of building their models.

Preparation:

Copy the poem, *Preferred Vehicles* by Leland B. Jacobs (written below),[18] on chart paper.

Have available chart paper, markers, art paper and drawing materials as well as papier-mache, clay, cardboard, or other materials to build a model transportation machine.

Lesson:

Read the following poem to the children, tracing the words with your hand. Then get them to read it with you several times.

Preferred Vehicles

A bicycle's fine for a little trip
  Up the street or down;
An automobile for a longer trip,
  Off to another town;
An airplane's fine for around the world,
  To many a far-out place;
And a rocket, oh, for the longest trip
  Away into outer space.

Leland B. Jacobs

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[18]Taken from *Poetry Place Anthology* (Instructor Books).

Informative

Put the following question on a blank sheet of chart paper: "How Do We Get From Here to There?" Allow the children to brainstorm all the different ways that they can go places and record them on the chart. Give hints to include such modes as horse, camel, rocket ship, wagon, skis, glider, elephant, subway, skateboard. Also, various kinds of cars, boats, trucks, buses and airplanes can be discussed. When they have exhausted their list, see how many different ways they can categorize them. For example, group them according to how many wheels they have or no wheels; those that carry only one or two people and those that carry a group; those that they can use to go places (bicycle, feet). Encourage them to suggest other categories such as those that move people and those that move things. Ask them to explain why they put some things where they did.

Imaginative

Play the rhyming game (Appendix C, p. 299). Ask the children to pick another vehicle from the chart and make their own rhyme. They can then share their rhyme with the class, leaving out the last word and allowing their classmates to fill in the blank.

Informative/ Imaginative

Introduce the song, "Traveling, Traveling" (Appendix C, p. 300). After singing it through and making up actions to go with each verse, divide the class into five groups and assign each a different verse. Each group will practice singing and doing the actions for their verse. Try singing the song in a round, each group joining in one line after the previous group has begun. Invite the children to parade around the classroom while acting out their individual modes of travel.[19]

Imaginative/ Informative

Have each child use papier-mache, clay, cardboard, or other materials to build a model transportation machine, such as a sports car, a jet plane, or a submarine. Invite children to display their models and describe how they made them.[20]

19

Suggestions for sharing taken from Goldish, M. (1993). *Thematic poems, songs and fingerplays. 45 irresistable rhymes and activities to build literacy*, p.71. Scholastic.

[20]Ibid.

Books to Read:

And to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street. Dr. Seuss.
Cars and trucks and things that go. Richard Scarry. (Golden).
Going places. Jesse Smith. (Golden, 1988).
How do we travel? Caroline Arnold. (Watts, 1983).
I go with my family to Grandma's. R. Levinson. (Dutton, 1986).
More Mr. Small. Lois Lenski. (Walk, 1980).
Mr. Gumpy's outing. J. Burningham (London: J. Cape, 1970).
Never ride your elephant to school. Doug Johnson. (Henry Holt).
On the go. Ann Morris. Lothrop, (Lee, & Shepard, 1990).
The great big car and truck book. Richard Scarry. (Golden Press, 1974).
Things that go. Anne Rockwell. (Dutton, 1986).
Things that go. B. Apsley. (Preschool Press, 1984).
This is the way we go to school. Edith Baer. (Scholastic, 1990).
Traffic jam. Sylvia Tester. (The Child's World, 1980).

Extra Ideas:

Create a vehicle (Appendix C, pp. 301-02).
Chart: How I Get to School (Appendix C, p. 303).
Creative writing (Appendix C, p. 304)
You might like to briefly talk about the history of transportation (Appendix C, p. 305).

Evaluation:

Observe children's participation in the brainstorming session. Are they able to create categories in which to classify the vehicles? Note their ability to create a rhyme. Do they have a sense of rhyming? After creating their models, can they describe, sequentially, the process used?

Going Places

Lesson 2 - How Things Move

Learning Centres Activities

Objectives:

The children will:

- find out about movement; discover that things are moved by pushes and pulls.
- experiment with magnets; determine what materials are attracted to magnets.
- learn how to keep things from moving -- falling, going downhill, toppling over.
- offer assistance to others.
- suggest actions.
- state reasons.

Preparation:

1. *Magnet Magic*: Fill a jar with water and put a paper clip inside. Provide several magnets.

2. *Attract or Don't Attract*: Provide several magnets and a variety of small objects; some that attract and some that do not. Set up two boxes labelled with "Attract" and "Don't Attract" for them to use for sorting.

3. *Magnetmania*: Provide copies of worksheets (Appendix C, p. 306), pencils, and two bar magnets for each student in the group. Make sure the north and south poles are clearly labelled.

4. *Merrily We Roll Along*: Provide toy vehicles with bar magnets attached to the top with an elastic band. Make sure the bar magnets are not all pointing in the same direction.

5. *Stop Sign*: Create a ramp and provide several toy vehicles with wheels. Supply a variety of small objects; some that can be used to stop the motion of the toy on the ramp and some that could not be used.

6. *Push or Pull*: Provide a variety of toys or pictures and two boxes for sorting labelled "Push" and "Pull."

7. *Attractive Creatures*: Make copies of the pattern for the puppet (Appendix C, p. 307-08). Supply paper clips, drawing and colouring materials, a magnet for each child in the group and a stage made from a shoe box.

8. *Magical Magnet Masterpieces*: Provide a magnet for each child in the group, a cake pan or box lid, paper cut to fit inside the pan or box, mixed tempera paint, small objects which are attracted by magnets -- paper clips, ball bearings, washers, bobby pins,

nails, etc. Cover the surface of the table with newsprint.

Lesson:

Informative/ Persuasive

Have the children circulate the room in groups to visit each activity table.

Most of the communication used in the centre activities will be informative and explorative in nature. They may use persuasive forms as they offer assistance to others in their group, suggest actions, and state reasons for the things that happen in the centre.

CENTRE ACTIVITIES

1. **Magnet Magic** (Appendix C, p. 309)

Children must try to make the paper clip dance inside the bottle, using the magnet. They should ponder why this happens and write in their science learning logs.

2. **Attract or Don't Attract?**

Children must sort the objects provided into two categories, those that attract and those that do not attract. Why are some of them attracted to the magnets while others are not?

3. **Magnetmania**

Children use two bar magnets to find out which poles attract and which repel and record this information on the worksheet (Appendix C, p. 306).

4. **Merrily We Roll Along** (Appendix C, p. 310) (After Magnetmania)

After completing the Magnetmania activity, the children should be able to put all the toy vehicles in a line so that they attach to each other.

5. **Stop Sign**

Using a ramp and the materials provided, children must try to find as many ways as they can to stop the toy vehicles from going down the 'hill.' They can draw pictures in their Science Learning Logs to illustrate what they found.

6. **Push or Pull?**

Sort the toy vehicles in categories of push or pull to describe how they move.

7. Attractive Creatures (Appendix C, pp. 307-08)

Children can make little paper puppets using the pattern given and make them 'walk' on the stage.

8. Magical Magnet Masterpieces[21]

Children will place a piece of paper in the pan or lid and drip several drops of paint on the paper. They will put one of the small objects on the paper and paint by sliding the magnet over the bottom of the container. The rim of the container will help confine the paint and keep the magnet clean. They can change objects or add another colour of paint.

Large Group: Push and Pull Game

In this game, the children pretend to be magnets. Pair the children. When the leader calls out "Attract," the two children 'stick together;' "Repel," they fly apart. Call out different parts of their bodies such as "Attract your fingers" or "Repel your toes." Allow children to take turns being the leader.

Books to Read:

Cars and how they go. Joanna Cole. (Crowell, 1983).
Experiment with movement. Bryan Murphy. (Scholastic).
Machines. Anne and Harlow Rockwell. (Harper, 1985).

Extra Ideas:

Talk about machines a bit more. Use the song, *Machines* and corresponding activities (Appendix C, pp. 311-12).

Evaluation:

Take note of the cooperation and participation in the learning centres. Can all children demonstrate their understanding of the attraction and repulsion of magnets? Can

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21

Idea taken from Williams, R. A., Rockwell, R. E., & Sherwood, E. A. (1987). *Mudpies to magnets. A preschool science curriculum.* Gryphon House.

they tell the difference between pushes and pulls? Did they demonstrate that they knew how to keep things from moving -- falling, going downhill, toppling over? When expressing opinions to others in the centres, did children state reasons?

Going Places

Lesson 3 - Fast and Slow Ways to Go

(Math, L.Arts, Science)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will be able to:

- classify types of vehicles.
- sequence vehicles according to their speed.
- communicate why they made the decisions they did.
- express opinions about story characters.
- express encouragement and congratulations to others.

Preparation:

Make copies for each child of the vehicle clip art sheet (Appendix C, p. 313) and the tortoise and hare sheet (Appendix C, p. 314) .

Locate and preread a book telling the story of the Tortoise and the Hare (several are listed in the *Books to Read* section).

Copy the poem/chant, *The Hare and the Tortoise* (Appendix C, p. 315) on to chart paper.

Have available: scissors, masking tape, string or yarn and hole puncher(s).

Lesson:

Informative

Give each child a copy of the clip art sheet of vehicles. Have them cut the pictures apart and sort them in three categories: those that travel on land, those that travel on water, and those that travel through the air. Share the results.

Ask the children to rearrange the pictures now to show the fastest vehicle to the slowest. Have them explain why they ordered them the way that they did. They may glue their pictures on a long strip of paper[22].

22

Idea taken from Minucci, M. B. S. (1990) *The world around me*. First Teacher Press.

Affective

Read the story of the tortoise and the hare from one of the books listed at the end of the lesson. Ask students to express their opinions about the characters in the book. Do they think it was a fair race? How do they think the Hare felt after losing the race? What should he do to feel better? (Apologize for bragging?).

Read the poem/chant, *The Hare and the Tortoise*. Have the children stand in place and stamp their feet on each word of the refrains "Go, go, go," "No, no, no," and so on. Or have them march around the classroom as they recite, taking a small step on each word of the refrains. They can use their hands to represent the tortoise and the hare, wiggling their fingers upside down each time one of the animals moves[23].

Affective

Children can colour and cut out the tortoise and hare for racing. Conduct races between paper tortoises and hares using the instructions on p. 316 (Appendix C.). Before each race, the participants should shake hands and wish each other "Good Luck" in addition to predicting which animal will win. After the race, participants should congratulate the winner.

Books to Read:

Fast-slow, high-low. A book of opposites. Peter Spier. (Doubleday).
I wish I could fly. Ron Maris. (Greenwillow, 1986).
Row, row, row your boat. Robin Muller. (Scholastic).
The hare and the tortoise. Aesop. (Troll, 1981).
The hare and the tortoise. Brian Wildsmith. (Watts, 1966).
Tortoise and hare race. Janet Stevens. (Holiday).

Evaluation:

Observe classification and sequencing activities. Note any children having difficulties. Can the children communicate why they made the decisions they did? Are they able to express their opinions freely about story characters? Do they demonstrate

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23

Ideas taken from Goldish, M. (1993) *Thematic Poems, Songs and Fingerplays. 45 Irresistible Rhymes and Activities to Build Literacy*. Scholastic.

good 'sportsmanship,' expressing encouragement and congratulations to others as requested?

Section 1

Going Places

... On Land

... On Land

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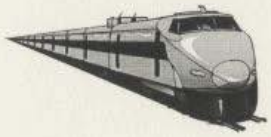

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RESOURCES USED

BOOKS:

Let's find out about safety. Martha and Charles Shapp. (Franklin Watts).
Mama zooms. Jan Cowen-Fletcher
The pony engine. Frances M. Ford (adapted by Doris Garn). (Wonder Books, 1987).

POETRY:

Preferred Vehicles by Leland B. Jacobs
My Bike by Bobbe Indgin
Keep Your Helmet On! By Rozanne Williams
Car Attack By Doug MacLeod

SONGS:

Walking Song by Diana Courson (*Let's learn about safety*)
Safety Break by Greg Scelsa. Taken from *Safety* (Theme Series)
The Colour of the Light. Taken from *Safety* (Macmillan)

AUDIO/VISUALS:

The Little Engine that Could -- video 11 min

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LEARNING CENTRE IDEAS

Preparation:

1. *Safe Travelling*: Put the following toys in the centre: a car, a plane, a speedboat, a fighter plane, a motorcycle, a rocket or space ship, a bicycle. Provide paper and drawing materials.

2. *Safety on the Playground Booklet*: provide copies of the pages for the mini-book, *Spib Learns to Play it Safe* (Appendix D, pp. 318-19), scissors, colouring materials.

3. Practising Addition: make copies for each child of the *Addition Grand Prix* worksheet (Appendix D, p. 320). Provide pencils, counters, and stopwatches.

4. *Graphing*: make copies for each child of the graphing worksheet (Appendix D, p. 321). Fill a coffee can with various small transportation toys in the categories of trucks, planes, cars, and boats.

5. *Let's Measure*: make copies of the measuring sheet (Appendix D, p. 322). Provide a centimetre ruler for each child in the group.

6. *Water/ Land/Air Sorting*: Provide old magazines to cut up, scissors, glue, shape books of 'Water', 'Land', 'Air' with plain paper stapled inside (see examples in Appendix D, p. 323).

7. *Carton Vehicles*: Provide various sizes of milk cartons (washed), scrap paper, brads to fasten paper wheels on to carton, scissors, glue, poster paint (add detergent to the paint to make it adhere to the wax of the carton). Provide other various materials that they could use for seats, steering wheels, license plates, etc.

SOCIAL STUDIES CENTRE

Safe Travelling[24]

The children must draw a picture for each vehicle, showing what a person needs in each one to travel safely.

Answers:

Car - *seatbelt*
Plane - *seatbelt*

24

Idea from Commins, E. (1990) *Let's Learn About Social Studies*. Humanics Learning.

Speedboat - *life jacket*
A fighter plane - *parachute*
Motorcycle - *helmet*
Rocket or space ship - *space suit/helmet*
Bicycle - *bicycle helmet*

Safety on the Playground Booklet

Students can make the mini-book, *Spib Learns to Play it Safe* about safety on the playground. This activity requires cutting, colouring and folding.

MATH 1

Practicing Addition

In pairs, children can use manipulatives to help them go around the race track on the Addition Grand Prix worksheet. Show them how to use the stopwatch and record their time.

MATH 2

Graphing

Children will use the graphing worksheet provided to graph the kinds of toy vehicles at the centre. They should write their interpretations in their journal.

MATH 3

Let's Measure

Children will use a centimetre ruler to measure each vehicle and write its length. Make sure children know where the zero is located.

MATH/SOCIAL STUDIES

Water/ Land/Air Sorting

Children will look through magazines and cut out transportation pictures. Paste the pictures in the correct scrapbook (Water, Land or Air). They can write the names of the vehicles underneath the pictures.

ART

Carton Vehicles

Children can make milk carton vehicles by attaching wheels, adding other accessories, and painting their vehicles. They should write a story in their journals about their vehicles. They can share their stories with classmates later.

QUICK FINISH ACTIVITIES

Safety Signs Worksheet (Appendix D, p. 324).
Traffic Lights Worksheet (Appendix D, p. 325).
Dot to Dot Worksheet (Appendix D, p. 326).
Find the Mistakes (Appendix D, p. 327).
Seat Belt Colouring Sheet (Appendix D, p. 328).

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Lesson 1 - Traffic on the Street

(L.Arts, Health, Dramatic Play, Art, Music)
(50-60 minutes)

* Plan to do this lesson on a fine day and send home permission slips a couple of days in advance.

Objectives:

The children will:

- do a traffic survey, recording the results of their count and sharing them with the class.
- demonstrate their knowledge of crosswalk safety through role play and then through real life situations during a walk.
- create a persuasive poster about using crosswalks.
- help create a verse to a rap song on safety.

Preparation:

Scout out the best location for children to do a traffic survey with no danger of a child running into the street.

Have available: poster paper and materials for drawing, colouring, etc.

Lesson:

Informative

If the school is near a street, take five minutes to do a traffic survey. Get each child to identify two types of vehicles they would like to count (ex. buses, cars). Have them make small charts to record their survey. Show them how to make tally marks. Share the results when they come back to class.

Informative/ Imaginative

Ask the children how they would cross the street they just surveyed with so much traffic on it (*use the crosswalk*). Have them role play how to use the crosswalk safely. Talk about the hand signalling stop and the walking man signalling go on a traffic pole. Demonstrate how to extend your arm to let people know that you wish to cross where there is no light. Talk

about the importance of obeying the crossing guard when there is one. Do not tell them all of this information, but draw it out of them.

Take the children outside for a walk. Appendix D, pp. 329-30 give suggestions for activities to do on your walk to demonstrate crosswalk safety. You may also teach them the song included on p. 330, *Walking Song*.

Persuasive

When you return to class, review the safety rules. Get the children to make safety posters which attempt to persuade children in the school to use the crosswalk. Tell them to pay particular attention to the words they use on their posters - are they persuasive? Will other children understand why they should use the crosswalk? Put the posters up in the hall outside of the classroom.

Imaginative

Teach the rap "Safety Break" so they can perform it on Parent Day at the end of the theme. Encourage students to help make up a second verse to the rap.

Safety Break[25]

Listen everybody to what we say
if you wanna be safe at work and play.
Listen please for safety's sake,
We're gonna take time for a safety break.
Safety break, safety break, safety break, safety break.

Look both ways when you cross the street;
be careful where you put your feet.
Cross at the crosswalk or a stop sign,
a green traffic light will do just fine.
Stay on the sidewalk when you can;
whatever you do have a safety plan.

If you know what we mean, clap your hands three times
(Clap, clap, clap).
If you really know, everybody say, "Ho!" (Ho!)
Safety break, safety break, safety break, safety break.

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25 By Greg Scelsa. Taken from Perry, G. (1990). *Safety* (Theme Series). Creative Teaching Press.

Books to Read:

Poetry Place Anthology -- "Crossing the Street" (Scholastic).
Try it again, Sam: Safety when you walk. J. Viorst. (Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard).
When I cross the street. D. Chlad. (Childrens Press, 1981).

Extra Ideas:

Traffic sign scavenger hunt -- to send home (Appendix D, p. 331).
More ideas from *Let's Learn About Safety.* By Diana Courson. (Appendix D, p. 332)
Song, *Safety First* and corresponding activities (Appendix D, pp. 333-34).
Learn about roads, highways and biways (Appendix D, pp. 335-36).

Evaluation:

Note participation in the lesson, if they successfully completed their traffic surveys, demonstrated safety rules outside during the walk and if they understood how to make their posters persuasive.

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Lesson 2 - Chauffeur and Bicyclist

(L. Arts, Art, Health, Dramatic Play)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- recognize the colours of the traffic light and understand their significance to pedestrians and drivers and demonstrate their knowledge by playing a game.
- role play a driver or bicyclist obeying the signs of the road.
- recognize and vocalize proper dress for safely riding a bike.
- prepare for an interview by planning questions.

Preparation:

Make a traffic light with coloured tissue paper covering the three holes. Make these materials available for all the children.

Make a couple police hats and badges from pattern (Appendix D, p. 337).

Find a flashlight for yourself and some for students, if available.

Copy the poem, *My Bike*, by Bobbe Indgin[26] on chart paper.

Have available: blank chart paper and markers, a long scarf, untied shoelaces, loose pants, a long skirt, a bike helmet, tied shoes, shorts, straight-leg jeans.

Lesson:

Informative

Show the children a traffic light that you have made. Shine a flashlight behind each colour to indicate which light is on. Ask them to give the meaning for each light (*red-stop, yellow-caution or slow down, green-go*). Play Red Light, Green Light with the children running in place. They run when the light is green, slow down when it is yellow and stop when it turns red.

Have the children use the materials provided to make their own traffic lights.

Teach the song, *The Colour of the Light* (Appendix D, p. 338). Have them

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[26]Taken from *Poetry Place Anthology*. Instructor Books.

practice shining the flashlight behind the corresponding colour light as they sing each verse.

Informative/ Imaginative

One child will pretend to be the chauffeur, while another will be the passenger. The other children will be dispersed throughout the classroom with their traffic lights held up. They will indicate the colour of their light by shining the flashlights through them. (If flashlights are not available, they can point to the colour with their other hand).

The passenger tells the driver where they want to go and the chauffeur must take them there obeying all the traffic signals on the way. Change the driver and passenger several times. The traffic lights must change colour each time the car changes drivers.

Give the police hats and badges to several children and encourage them to 'pull over' anyone they think is not obeying the traffic rules -- they might be speeding or ignoring a sign.

After several children have taken turns as chauffeur, change some of the traffic lights to signs such as a stop sign, one way sign, crosswalk (with a child crossing). Allow several turns as passenger and driver again.

The teacher will model a bicyclist going through the "streets." Use the appropriate hand signals at the lights and stop signs. Have several children pretend to ride their bikes.

Read the following poem to the children, then get them to read it with you several times.

My Bike

I'm off like lightning! Watch me go
  Up the hill, pumping slow,
Then zooming down the other side
  Like a roller-coaster ride.

Through the puddles
  My bike is a boat;
My wet wheels keep
  Me dry while I float.

The sidewalk's my highway
  As I whizz along,
Singing a happy
  Pedalling song.

Bobbe Indgin

Informative

Show the class the long scarf and other clothes items listed under *Preparation*. Ask the children to tell you which clothes are best for riding.[27] What is wrong with the other items?

Informative

Ask them if they would like to learn more about bicycle safety. Tell them that they will be having a special visitor next class to come in to talk to them. Ask them to think about questions they want to ask him or her about the correct way to ride their bikes. Write them on chart paper.

Books to Read:

I read signs. Tana Hoban. (Greenwillow).
Magic monsters learn about safety. Sylvia Root Tester. (The Child's World).
Red light, green light. G. MacKonald. (Doubleday, 1944).
Red light, green light. Margaret Wise Brown & Leonard Weisgard. (Scholastic).

Extra Ideas:

Cooking: Traffic Light Pops and Stop and Go Pretzels (Appendix D, p. 339).
Fingerplay, "In the Car" with road sign patterns (Appendix D, pp. 340-41).
Paint to Stop and Go Music (Appendix D, p. 342).
Song, "Twinkle, Twinkle Traffic Light" (Appendix D, p. 343).

Evaluation:

Note their participation and understanding of street safety. Do they all seem to know the meaning of the street signs used? Are they able to think of appropriate interview questions?

27
Idea taken from Courson, D. (1987) *Let's Learn About Safety*. Good Apple, Inc.

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Lesson 3 - Bicycle Safety

(L.Arts, Health, Art, Dramatic Play)
(45-50 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- listen attentively to a special guest talk about bicycle safety.
- recall what they learned and participate in creating an experience chart.
- participate in writing a thank-you note to the police officer.
- demonstrate persuasive techniques through dramatic play.

Preparation:

Make arrangements for a police officer to visit your class to talk about bicycle safety.

Have available: chart paper, markers, paper, writing and colouring instruments.

Lesson:

Informative

A police officer will visit your class to talk to the children about bicycle safety. Remind children beforehand how to be good listeners when they are having a special guest. Allow the children to ask the questions that they prepared for the police officer.

When the guest has gone, review what they have learned by writing an experience chart entitled: *When riding your bike, remember:*

Ritualistic

Write a collaborative thank-you note to the police officer that visited. Have each child write and illustrate one safety rule that they learned from the session to send with the note.

Persuasive

Role play situations where a child is riding unsafely on their bikes and another child tells them that what they are doing

is unsafe. How can they persuade the other child to ride the safe way?

Persuasive

Teach the poem, *Keep Your Helmet On!* By Rczanne Williams (Appendix D, p. 344). Encourage them to read with expression using persuasive tones.

Books to Read:

Bicycle race. Donald Crews. (Greenwillow, 1985).
Bicycles are fun to ride. Dorothy Chlad. (Children's Press).
The bear's bicycle. E. McLeod. (Little, Brown, 1975).
The Berenstain Bears: The bike lesson. Stan Berenstain. (Random House).

Audio/Visual:

Remarkable, Riderless Runaway Tricycle 1982 11 min 16mm

Extra Ideas:

Worksheets on bicycle safety (Appendix D, pp. 345-46).

Evaluation:

Observe the listening skills of your students. Do individuals need to be taught how to listen more effectively? Do they recall the things the police officer said when making the experience chart? Note how each child attempts to persuade others. Do individuals need to be taught how to persuade?

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Lesson 4 - In a Wheelchair

(L.Arts, Math, Art)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- talk about their feelings about a ride in a wheelchair.
- participate in preparing for and having an interview.
- respond to a story by drawing a picture and writing a caption.
- participate in writing a thank-you note with classmates.

Preparation:

Make arrangements to borrow a wheelchair for the session. Invite someone who uses a wheelchair. It might be a child who attends your school or someone in the community.

Locate and pre-read the book, *Mama Zooms* by Jan Cowen-Fletcher.

Have paper and art materials available.

Lesson:

Affective/ Informative

Ask the children to think about what it would be like to be in a wheelchair. Allow them to take turns wheeling themselves across the classroom. Ask them how they would get downstairs or upstairs or how they would get outside to the playground (*they would have to depend on someone to help them*). Ask individuals how they felt being in the chair. How do they think someone feels who has to stay in the wheelchair every day? Tell the children that they are going to interview someone who uses a wheelchair. Collaboratively make a list of questions to ask your guest.

Informative

A child in your school or an adult will visit your class. Have the children take turns asking the previously identified questions. Remind children beforehand how to be good listeners when they are having a special guest. Invite your guest to stay for the next activity.

Imaginative

Read the book, *Mama Zooms*. Each time the mother zooms her son in her wheelchair, his imagination transforms her into something different. Ask your guest if he or she ever imagines that the wheelchair is something different. Get the children to draw a picture and write a caption of what they might imagine a wheelchair being if they had to use one all the time. Your guest might like to participate in this activity.

When the guest has gone, review what they have learned by revisiting the questions on the chart and the answers your guest gave.

Ritualistic

Write a collaborative thank-you note to the guest that visited.

Books to Read:

Mama zooms by Jan Cowen-Fletcher

Extra Ideas:

Tire tracks. Pour a small amount of paint in a meat tray. Roll old toy cars or truck's tires in the paint and "drive" on white paper. Experiment with different colours of paint, different kinds of tires, and different kinds of movements.

Evaluation:

Take note of listening skills and development in writing, as well as participation.

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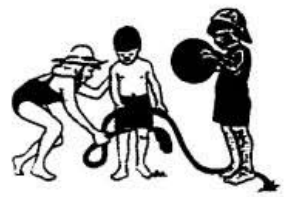

Lesson 5 - Safety on Foot

(L.Arts, Art, Phys. Ed.)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- know and use the safest route to school.
- identify safe and unsafe places to play during school hours.
- demonstrate their ability to jump, hop, leap, slide, gallop and skip.
- talk about and dramatize good safety practices that protect us and others at home and at school.
- learn safety habits for swimming and skating.

Preparation:

Copy the poem, *Car Attack* on chart paper.

Have available: chart paper, markers, paper and drawing materials for posters.

Locate and pre-read the book *Let's find out about safety* by Martha and Charles Shapp.

Lesson:

Read the poem, *Car Attack* with the children. After several readings together, children can act it out.

Car Attack

On last year's Halloween
A car hit Auntie Jean.
Unhinged by this attack,
My Auntie hit it back.

She hit it with her handbag
And knocked it with her knee.
She socked it with a sandbag
And thumped it with a tree.

On last year's Halloween
A car hit Auntie Jean.
And now, my Auntie's better
But the car is with the wrecker.
By Doug MacLeod

Imaginative

Teach them the rudiments of stage performance -- i.e., when Auntie Jean hits the car, she does not really hit it; she stops just short of the target, so that it seems that she connects[28]. Have them practice this technique. Children can work in groups so that one child is Auntie Jean and the other is the car. They can switch roles as well. When reading the last verse, one child can read the first three lines in a factual-formal news announcer's voice, and another can deliver the last line in a carefree, throw-away manner. At the end of the poem, the cars can all crumple in dilapidated heaps.

Informative

Have the children imagine reasons why Auntie Jean was hit by the car. Was she acting safely when it happened? Encourage students to help complete a chart entitled, "Safely Getting to School." Have them create a list of safety rules they need to remember on their way to school. The list should include safety rules for walking, riding in a car, riding in a bus, etc.

Informative

If it is a nice day, take the children outside the school. Gather the group together and ask them to point out places that would be unsafe for them to play. Why? Allow them to play for 10 or 15 minutes in safe areas. While outside, get the children to experiment with different ways of moving including jumping, hopping, leaping, sliding, galloping, and skipping.

Informative/ Imaginative

Read the book *Let 's find out about safety* by Martha and Charles Shapp. Ask the children to write and illustrate one of the safety rules they need to remember in their homes. Compile their pages to create a class safety book. Share the book, getting each student to read the page they authored.

28

Ideas and poem taken from Ferguson, V., & Durkin, P. (1992). *Whole Language Days.* Longman Cheshire.

Persuasive

Orally talk about safety when swimming and skating. Ask the children to pick one of these activities and make a persuasive poster encouraging other children to obey the safety rules. Post these outside your classroom.

Books to Read:

Arnie and the skateboard gang. Nancy Carlson. (Viking).
Going for a walk. Beatrice Schenk DeRegniers.
I went walking. Sue Williams. (Gulliver Books, 1989).
Let's find out about safety. Martha and Charles Shapp. (Franklin Watts).
Play it safe. Joan Webb. (Golden Books).
Safety can be fun. Cynthia Klingel. (Creative Education).

Extra Ideas:

Experiment with different ways of walking (see Appendix D, p. 347).
Folk song, "Here We Go Looby-Loo."

Audio/Visual:

Saying No to Danger: Taking Responsibility 1986 11 min VH

Evaluation:

Observe children throughout the lesson, noting their understanding of safety rules. Are they able to demonstrate the various movements (jump, hop, leap, etc.)? Do they use appropriate language and pictures to persuade on their posters?

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Lesson 6 - On the Track

(L.Arts, Art)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- watch a video for a purpose (to glean information about trains).
- create their own train cars based on what they have learned.
- roleplay characters/events.
- compose original stories and tell them to others.

Preparation:

Book the VCR and locate the video, *The Little Engine that Could.*

Make copies of the information sheet, *The Great Freight Train* (Appendix D, p. 348).

Have available materials useful for making train cars such as boxes, cardboard, construction paper, paints, etc.

Lesson:

Informative

Show the video, *The Little Engine that Could* (11 min). Before viewing, ask the children to especially watch for the different kinds of cars on the train.

Informative/ Imaginative

Give them each a copy of *The Great Freight Train* information sheet. Have the students help you identify the different kinds of freight cars. Divide the class into groups of four or five and encourage them to construct their own trains and rail cars out of the materials provided. They can paint their boxcars and then decorate them with wheels, animals, produce, cars or fuel. Read one of the books suggested below such as *Pony Engine* and get the children to act it out using their trains.

Imaginative Have them make up their own stories in their groups to share with the class.

Books to Read:

Choo Choo. Virginia Lee Burton. (Houghton Mifflin).
Curious George at the Railroad Station. Margret Rey. (Platt & Munk).
The Caboose Who Got Loose. Bill Peet. (Houghton Mifflin).
The Pony Engine. Frances M. Ford (adapted by Doris Garn). (Wonder Books, 1987).
Toot, Toot. Brian Wildsmith. (Oxford University Press, 1988).
Freight train. Donald Crews. (Greenwillow, 1978).
The Little Engine that Could. Watty Piper. (Platt and Mink, 1961).
The Polar Express. Chris Van Allsburg. (Houghton Mifflin, 1985).
The Train. David McPhail. (Little, Brown & Co.). **Multicultural*
Train. Charles Temple. (Houghton, 1996).
Trains. Gail Gibbons. (Holiday, 1987).
Trains. Anne Rockwell. (Dutton, 1988).
Train to Grandma's. Ivan Gantschev. (Picture Book, 1987).

Other Audio/Visuals:

Little Train, Little Train 1970 10 min 16mm
Two children exploring in the woods of Maine find an abandoned narrow guage railroad complete with an old bridge, a collapsing stationhouse and on old sawmill. Interspersed with old photographs, the railroad comes to life.

The Little Train on Caiphira 1973 14 min 16mm
The story of the delightful happy little train introduces unfamiliar percussion instruments to children and develops an appreciation for the culture and music of Brazil. We see the composer taking a journey in the train jotting down rhythms and folk tunes which he incorporated in the musical story.

Extra Ideas:

Egg Carton Trains, Teddy Bear Train, Colour Train (Appendix D, p. 349).

Number Trains, Little Red Train (Appendix D, p. 350).
Action poem and songs (Appendix D, pp. 351-52).
Choral speaking: Song of the Train (Appendix D, p. 353).

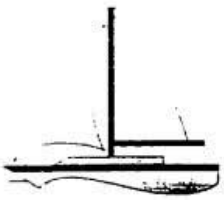
Evaluation:

Observe the children during the video. Are they listening intently to find out about the different kinds of train cars? Does the train car they created demonstrate their understanding of what a real train car looks like? Can they roleplay the events of the story in sequence? How are their storytelling skills? Do they need advice?

Section 2

Going Places

... By Air or Water



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RESOURCES USED

BOOKS:

Harbor by Donald Crews
Stringbean's trip to the shining sea by Vera Williams. (Greenwillow Books, 1988).
Two by Two. Barbara Reid.

POETRY:

I'd Like to be a Lighthouse by Rachel Field
Little Airplane by Rozanne Williams

AUDIO/VISUALS:

The Helicopter Ride 1980 15 min 16mm

... *By Air or Water*

LEARNING CENTRE IDEAS

CLIPART

Aircraft (Appendix E, pp. 355-358). Make these pictures available for students in case they have an interest in aircraft. They may colour them or create stories about them.

WRITING

Up and Away!

Children draw themselves in an air balloon (on p. 359 in Appendix E) and write a story about their trip.

WATER

Sinkers & Floaters

Provide a variety of objects for children to put in a pan of water and sort according to whether they sink or float.

Boat Play

Allow children to play with different kinds of boats. Children may make tube rafts as outlined at the centre (Post a copy of Appendix E, p. 360 at the table). Encourage them to make up stories as they play.

MATH

Cargo Hold

Draw or find a large picture of a ferry boat and an airplane. Children will find out the area of these vehicles by finding out how many 'boxes' they can fit in them. They can use bread bag fasteners or small squares of paper for the boxes.

LISTENING

Pretape yourself or someone else reading one of the suggested books such as *Stringbean's trip to the shining sea* by Vera Williams. Have several coopies of the book at the centre. Also have available paper and drawing materials so children can illustrate and write about their favourite part of the story.

... By Air or Water

Lesson 1 - Ship to Shore

(*L. Arts, Art*)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- pay attention to a picture book to discover different kinds of boats.
- share their experiences on boats.
- participate in creating a class mural.
- contribute to a discussion on boating safety.
- create and share a story.

Preparation:

Locate the book, *Harbor* by Donald Crews.

Post a large blue paper background for the class mural (corrugated cardboard or painted newsprint).

Have available: construction paper, drawing materials, scissors, glue.

Copy the poem, *I'd Like to be a Lighthouse* by Rachel Field, on to chart paper.

Find some pictures of lighthouses.

Lesson:

Informative

Share the book, *Harbor* by Donald Crews. Talk about the different kinds of boats in the harbor.

Informative/ Affective

Ask the children to tell their classmates about any experiences they have had on boats. What kind of boat was it? Was it fast or slow? Big or small? How did they feel while in the boat? Have they ever had a scary experience on a boat?

Imaginative

Get the children to make a large class mural of a harbor. Post a large blue paper background. Have children make boats out of construction paper to add to the water. The teacher could be responsible for making the land that forms the harbor. Have children share the type of boat they made before posting it on the mural. An alternative activity would be to use newsprint and paint the mural, each child doing a section of the harbor.

Informative/ Imaginative

Ask the children what kind of things help keep you safe in a boat (*life jackets, lighthouses*). Read the poem, *I'd Like to be a Lighthouse* by Rachel Field. Talk about lighthouses; what they look like, their purpose. Show pictures of lighthouses. Ask the children to draw a picture and write a lighthouse story. Have them share their stories and pictures with the class.

I'd Like to be a Lighthouse[29]

I'd like to be a lighthouse
All scrubbed and painted white.
I'd like to be a lighthouse
And stay awake all night.
To keep my eye on everything
That sails my patch of sea;
I'd like to be a lighthouse
With the ships all watching me.

By Rachel Field

Books to Read:

Boat book. Gail Gibbons. (Holiday, 1983).
Boats. Anne Rockwell. (Dutton, 1982).
Grey Cat at sea. Joan Skogan. (Polestar, 1991).
Harbor. Donald Crews
Mommy, Daddy, Me. L. L. Hoopes. (Harper & Row, 1988).
One, two, three, going to sea. Alain. (Scholastic, 1964).
Pigs ahoy! David McPhail. (Dutton).
Row, row, row your boat. Robin Muller. (Scholastic).

29

From Field, R. (1926). *Taxis and Toadstools*. Doubleday.

Stringbean's trip to the shining sea. Vera Williams. (Greenwillow Books, 1988).
Who sank the boat? P. Allen (Coward-McCann, 1983).

Audio/Visuals:

Captain Beetle Goes to Sea 1977 10 min 16mm
Follow Mr. Willoughby 1973 13 min 16 mm
Rhyming Dictionary of Boats 1978 11 min 16mm
The Island of Skog 1978 15 min 16mm

Evaluation:

Watch the children's attention during the book sharing. Can they recall the kinds of boats they saw? How are their oral skills developing? Do they demonstrate an understanding of story?

... By Air or Water

Lesson 2 - Into the Ark

(L. Arts, Math, Art, Dramatic Play)
(40-50 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- listen attentively to a story and be able to put themselves in the place of the characters, discussing their feelings.
- help follow a simple recipe to make playdough.
- create a scene from the book using playdough.
- reenact the story with classmates.

Preparation:

Locate the book *Two by Two* by Barbara Reid.

Copy the recipe for uncooked playdough on to chart paper.

Have available the following materials: measuring cup, salt, flour, water, food colouring, cooking oil.

Lesson:[30]

Read Barbara Reid's *Two by Two* with the children.

Affective

Ask them how they would feel if they had to help out like the sons and daughters in this story. How might they feel if people made fun of them like they did of Noah? Would they stick to what they believed in, despite what other people thought? Discuss the story's end, whether they liked it or not.

Informative/ Imaginative

Talk about the story's illustrations and how they were created. Ask them if they would like to make a scene from the

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Ideas in this lesson taken from Oldford-Matchim, J. (1994). *Help your child become a reader: A guide for reading conversations, activities and games.* (pp. 75-76). St. John's, NF: Significant Others as Reading Teachers.

story the same way.

While they are thinking about which scene they would like to depict, involve them in following the recipe for playdough given below:

Uncooked Playdough

1 cup of salt
2 cups of flour
1 cup of water with a few drops of colouring added
2 tbsp cooking oil added to water

Mix together salt and flour. Gradually add liquid. Add enough flour to have firm liable dough. Knead as for bread. Store in a plastic bag or large container. If you keep it in the refrigerator, it may last for several weeks.

Imaginative

Dramatize the story of Noah's ark. Some children might like to be animals, with the others guessing what they are as they board the ark. Use tables and/or chairs to create the ark. Guide them through the re-enactment encouraging imaginative play.

Books to Read:

Noah's Ark. Peter Spier. (Doubleday, 1977).
Two by Two. Barbara Reid.

Audio/Visuals:

Safe in the Ark 1988 13 min VH

Extra Ideas:

Songs, *Michael Rowed the Boat Ashore; Row, Row, Row your Boat*

Evaluation:

Observe the children for participation and interest, as well as ability to retell a story.

... By Air or Water

Lesson 3 - Come Flying

(*Art, L. Arts, S. Studies*)
(50-60 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- participate in reading and actively expressing poetry.
- use their imagination to role play the experience of flying an airplane.
- discuss the purposes of maps and globes.
- watch a film and respond to it by contributing to an experience chart.
- participate in creating a class poem.
- write and illustrate a story in their journals.

Preparation:

Make copies of the pilot's hat (Appendix E, p. 361).
Make available: colouring materials, scissors, glue or stapler.
Set up the film projector and locate the film, *The Helicopter Ride*.
Also have available: chart paper, markers, the children's journals, drawing and colouring materials.

Lesson:

Distribute copies of the pilot's hat. Allow children to colour and cut out, attaching a headband.

Put on a pilot's hat and recite the poem, *Little Airplane* by Rozanne Williams as you pretend to fly around the room, arms outstretched.

Imaginative

Little Airplane

I'm a little airplane
Above the clouds I go.
Banking right, banking left
Flying high and low.
Now it's time for me to land

I see the airport runway.
Gently, gently I touch down.
I'll take you with me some day.
By Rozanne Williams

Invite the children to jump into their airplanes and join you in the sky. Remind them to fasten their seatbelts! When they have taken the roles, ask them to describe what they can see out their window. If they need help, ask questions such as "What do the people in that park look like to you?" "How do cars look different from up here?", etc.

Informative

After you have landed, ask the children if they would like to see what things really look like from up in the air. Show the film, *The Helicopter Ride* (15 min).

Talk about maps and globes. Explain that they are a representation of what can be seen from up in the air. Discuss reasons why people need maps.

Informative/ Affective

Encourage the children to help you brainstorm about their experience with flying, in addition to what they learned in the film. Print ideas on the chart, stressing the five senses. How did flying make them feel? What did they see? Hear? Smell?? When the list is exhausted choose some of the phrases to make a class poem. Read the poem together, tracking the words.

Informative/ Imaginative

Get children to help you list orally the different kinds of air travel. Have them pick one to draw and write about in their journals. Allow them to share their writings with their classmates.

Books to Read:

Blimps. Roxie Munro. (E. P. Dutton, 1989).
Flying. Donald Crews. (Greenwillow Books, 1986).
Flying Jake. L. Smith. (Macmillan, 1988).
Little red plane. Ken Wilson-Max. (Scholastic).

Planes. Anne Rockwell. (E. P. Dutton, 1985).
The fool of the world and the flying machine. Arthur Ransome. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1968).
The glorious flight across the Channel with Louis Bleriot. Alice & Martin Provensen. (Viking, 1983).

Extra Ideas:

Make a Glider (Appendix E, p. 362).
The Great Air Machine Race (Appendix E, p. 363).
Air travel mobiles (Appendix E, pp. 364-66).

Other Audio/Visuals:

Rhyming Dictionary of Planes 1978 11 min 16mm
The Teddy Bear's Balloon Trip 1969 14 min 16mm

Evaluation:

Observe children's participation in the dramatic play and the poetry session.

Section 3

Going Places

... In Your Head

... *In Your Head*

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... *In Your Head*

RESOURCES USED

BOOKS:

Gravity is a mystery by Franklyn M. Branley (Crowell, 1970).
Junglewalk by N. Tafuri
The planets in our solar system by Franklyn M. Branley. (Crowell, 1981).

A variety of books, fiction and nonfiction, about the planets and space travel.

CD-ROM:

The Magic School Bus Explores the Solar System. Microsoft.

Encyclopedia such as *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*. Softkey or *Encarta*.

... *In Your Head*

LEARNING CENTRE IDEAS

CENTRE RECORDER

Make copies of the rocket centre recorder (Appendix F, p. 368) for each child, adjusting the numbers accordingly with the number of centres you use. Children will circle the number of the centres as they are completed.

WRITING

Creative writing. Children complete the statement, "If I Were Stranded on the Moon!..." (Appendix F, p. 369). They can draw a picture on the back of their sheets to go with their stories.

READING

Riddle Match & Planet Ordering. In this Solar System Centre, children match riddles to the planets on a bulletin board and write the names of the planets according to their distance from the sun. All the information about preparation, as well as file folder directions and a worksheet are included in Appendix F, pp. 370-73.

ART

Sun/Stars Mobile. In this Sun Centre, children will follow simple directions to make a sun and stars mobile, while learning facts about the sun. All the information about preparation, as well as file folder directions are included in Appendix F, pp. 374-76.

SCIENCE

Learning About Gravity. Children will listen to a book about gravity and then make a parachute to demonstrate the force of gravity. All the information about preparation, as well as file folder directions are included in Appendix F, pp. 377-79.

MATH

Telling Time. Students demonstrate their knowledge of telling time as they fill in an astronaut's schedule. They will also make their own digital clock. All the information

about preparation, as well as worksheets are included in Appendix F, pp. 380-82.

QUICK FINISH ACTIVITY:

Concentration. Make a copy of the alien playing cards (Appendix F, pp. 383-85), colour, paste on construction paper, and laminate. Children can play concentration during free time.

... In Your Head

Lesson 1 - Going on a Safari

(L.Arts, S.Studies, Dramatic Play, Physical Education)
(30-40 minutes)

Objectives:

The children will:

- use their imaginations to go on a safari with classmates.
- participate orally in the dramatic play.
- participate in various movements, helping to develop flexibility, strength, coordination and endurance.
- contribute to retelling the experience in sequence.
- express how they felt during their adventure.
- write a story about their favourite parts of this imaginary experience.

Preparation:

Find the book, *Junglewalk* by N. Tafuri.

No prior preparation necessary, unless you would like to find pictures of some of the things mentioned in the dramatic play such as a jungle, jungle animals, grasslands, a jeep, etc.

Make available: paper and drawing instruments.

Lesson:

Look at the picture book, *Junglewalk* by N. Tafuri. Encourage the students to create a text for the illustrations.

Informative/ Imaginative

Tell the children that we are all going on a safari. What should we wear? (A hat to keep the sun off, long sleeves to protect our arms from branches). What should we bring? (Snacks, matches, a knife...). Follow the outline below[31], allowing the children to contribute to the dramatic play introducing their own ideas. You could ask individuals if they can see anything ahead, for example.

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[31]Taken from *Transportation.* Creative Teaching Press, 1990, p.10.

1. Fly to a faraway destination (*arms up, bank to the left and right*).
2. Land the plane and unload your supplies (*stretch way up, then down, repeat many times*).
3. Drive your jeep into the deep, dark jungle (*hold onto steering wheel, change gears*).
4. Walk into the jungle (*lift knees high when taking steps*).
5. Hurry, get away from the lion! (*run in place and climb with arms*).
6. Row your boat down a river (*hold oar and paddle*).
7. Oops! You fall in the river! Swim quickly before the crocodiles eat you! (*swim with arms*)
8. Run away from a herd of elephants! (*run in place*)
9. Cross a rope bridge (*move feet heel to toe, arms outstretched*).
10. Arrive back at the airport and fly home (*arms up*).

Get the children to retell their adventure, keeping the events in the proper sequence. Ask them if there was something that happened to them or something they saw which they did not share during the safari.

Affective

Ask them how they felt at different stages of the dramatic play. For example, was there a part where you were afraid? How did you feel when you fell in the river? When you finally arrived back at the airport?

Informative/ Imaginative

Ask them to think of the safari and decide which part was their favourite. Have them draw a picture and write about this on blank sheets of paper. Suggest that they bind their pages together to make a class book about their adventure. Get them to help you name it.

Books to Read:

Junglewalk. N. Tafuri
Sheep take a hike. Nancy Shaw. (Houghton Mifflin).
Where the forest meets the sea. Jeannie Baker. (Scholastic).
Where the wild things are. Maurice Sendak. (Harper, 1963).

Extra Ideas:

Go on an imaginary trip under the sea! Use the song, *The Deep Blue Sea* and corresponding activities (Appendix F, p. 386-87).

Audio/Visual:

Where the Wild Things Are 1977 8 min 16mm

Evaluation:

Observe the children for interest and participation in the lesson. Have them read their writings to you and respond to them individually in writing.