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CHAPTER 3

Emergent Literacy

PROFILE

Reading and Writing Connections

Procedure

To teach writing is also to teach reading. When I teach children to write, they also learn skills necessary for both efficient writing and reading.

Perhaps the most important thing I do during the day is writing the "daily message" on the chalk board. Usually we decide together what sentences we want to write, for children are more attentive when they have a say in the content and when they write about things that interest them. Sometimes we compose a poem, write a thank-you letter, or write about a book I've read to them. As I write words of our chosen sentences on the board, I encourage my students to spell along with me and to answer my questions aloud. Not all are ready to respond orally, but everyone listens and watches. As the younger students gain experience, I'll be hearing their voices too. As we work through our sentences, I explain how our language works: rules of phonics, punctuation, rhyming words, irregular spellings, formation of the letters, and the like. I even throw in the word derivation when I think they'll find it interesting. (Remember the French word *beau*? Here it is in *beautiful*!)

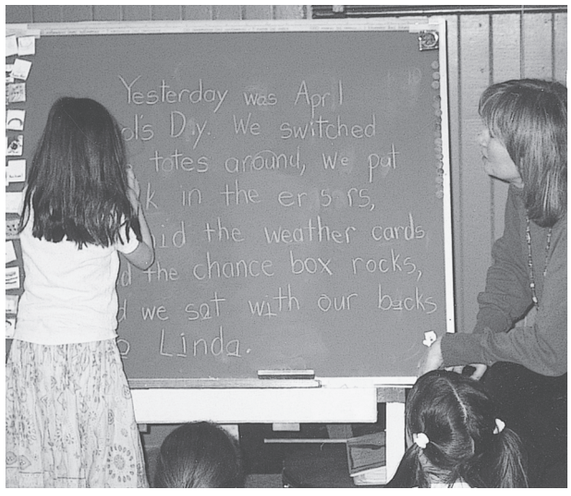
"It is a challenge to plan activities for students who are at many levels of development, activities that will help each child achieve success and grow in skills and self-confidence. Group writing followed by individual practice, writing conferences, and sharing with classmates meets this challenge."

Linda Pierce Picciotto
Primary Teacher
South Park School, Victoria, British Columbia

Courtesy of Linda Pierce Picciotto

Students learn different things from this collaborative writing, depending upon their readiness. Jamie is learning the names of the letters and to be aware of spaces between words. Some of the things I talk about have no meaning for him at this point, but he won't be required to do a too difficult worksheet afterward, and hearing about compound words and apostrophes may make them less mysterious later on. Nicky is learning the concept of root words, how to form contractions, spell irregular words, add suffixes to words, and compose interesting and varied sentences.

When we're finished, we read our message as a group. Some days we do a little editing so they can learn that skill and become aware of more descriptive language.



Courtesy of Linda Pierce Picciotto

After the group writing process, students have the chance to practise their writing on special "writing workshop" paper. While drawing their pictures, they think about what sentences to print below. If they have trouble coming up with ideas, I ask them to tell me about their drawing. It's easy to develop sentences with this information. I encourage them to start with something other than "This is . . ." to make their message more interesting. I do not help them with the writing process, for I want them to think carefully about the words, to say them quietly, to listen to the sounds and "feel the letters in their mouths." In the beginning, some only do "pretend writing," or draw strings of letters that have no relationship to sounds. With experience and maturity, they begin to include correct or "good guess" consonants and vowels, start separating words, use more interesting words, write using lowercase letters, and write longer and more complex sentences. Each child works at the level exactly appropriate to his or her own developmental level.

Assessment

When students complete their work, we have a short conference. They read the sentences to me, and we talk a bit about the content. Then I write the sentence in Standard English on the facing page while the students look on and listen as I talk about their use of correct or good guess letters and punctuation. I ask them what additional letters they can hear in certain words I pronounce carefully for them. I always make some positive remarks about their writing progress, and I suggest—or ask them to suggest—things to remember the next time they write. Some students need a little encouragement to write more or with more care.

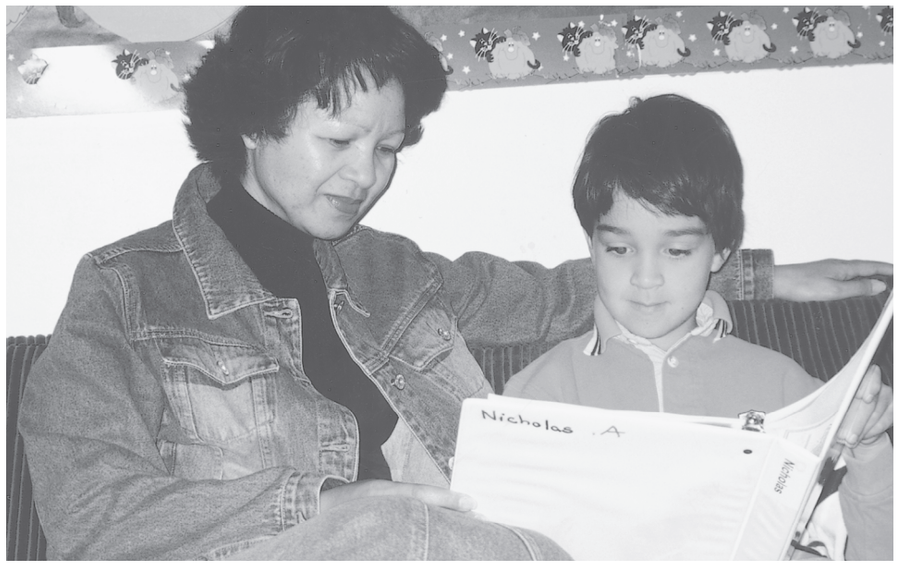
It is easy to see where each child is in his or her writing development when I conference with each one after a writers workshop. By working with individuals, I can help them with exactly the skills they need and make mental notes about certain concepts to emphasize during group writing time.

Often students share their writing with a partner, a group, or the entire class. I make sure they are supportive of one another when they make their observations. I teach them that different children develop skills at varying rates and in many ways. All students encourage each other without insults or comparisons. We celebrate our differences and our progress!

Reflections

It is a challenge to plan activities for students who are at many levels of development, activities that will help each child achieve success and grow in skills and self-confidence. Group writing followed by individual practice, writing conferences, and sharing with classmates meets this challenge. It provides the teacher with a wealth of information about the needs of his or her students. In addition, most students enjoy the writers workshop and come to be able to talk about their own growth, and to articulate what they need to focus on to continue their progress, a skill that will help them throughout their years in school and beyond.

Books published by Linda Pierce Picciotto: *Evaluation: A Team Effort* (Toronto: Scholastic Canada, Ltd., 1992); *Learning Together: A Whole Year in a Primary Classroom* (Toronto: Scholastic Canada, Ltd., 1993); *Student-Led Parent Conferences* (New York: Scholastic Inc., 1996).



Courtesy of Robin Bright and Pamela Winsor

In a combination grade 2/3 classroom, school-based family literacy activities invite parents to collaborate in learning with their children. Nicholas Armstrong and his mom, Haja, look through Nicholas's portfolio together. The portfolio was developed and maintained in school. During their portfolio conference, parent and child review work in progress, discuss completed assignments, and talk about successes and future learning goals. Portfolios also give parents access to materials that allow them to share in their child's development and performance.

The process of becoming literate begins well before the elementary grades and continues into adulthood, if not throughout life. In years past, researchers and many educators held the belief that children came to kindergarten to be "readied" for reading and writing instruction, which would formally begin in grade 1. The implication was that there was a particular point in children's development when it was time to begin teaching them to read and write, a concept known as **reading readiness**. The past four decades of research, including very careful observations of what children do and can do when offered stimulation and resources, have discredited this view. Children themselves have demonstrated that they can recognize signs and other environmental print, retell stories, scribble letters, find needed keys on a keyboard, click on designated icons, invent print-like writing, and listen closely to stories read aloud to them. Some children even teach themselves to read.

This perspective on how children become literate is known as **emergent literacy**. New Zealand educator and Reading Recovery creator Marie Clay is credited with coining the term. Now, researchers look at literacy learning from the child's point of view. The age range has been extended to include children as young as twelve to fourteen months of age, who listen to stories being read aloud; notice labels, icons, and signs in their environment; and experiment with a variety of writing tools, such as pencils, crayons, and markers. The concept of literacy has been broadened to include the cultural and social aspects of language learning, and children's experiences with and understanding of written language—both reading and writing—are included as part of emergent literacy.

Many researchers (Dickinson & Neuman, 2006; Kendrick, 2003; Teale & Sulzby, 1989) who address children's literacy development point out that

To Guide Your Reading

As you read this chapter, prepare to

- Describe how teachers and other caregivers can foster young children's literacy development
- Describe how young children develop as readers and writers
- Explain the teaching strategies recommended to teach reading and writing to beginning readers and writers
- Describe the reading and writing resource materials needed in primary-grade classrooms

- Children begin to learn to read and write very early in life.
- Young children learn the functions of literacy through participating in real-life activities and through observing others as they engage in reading and writing activities.
- Young children construct their understanding of reading and writing through active involvement with literacy materials.
- Young children's literacy development and practices reflect the social contexts and communities in which they live.

Fostering Young Children's Interest in Literacy

Most children are introduced to written language before they come to school. Parents, daycare workers, and others provide opportunities for them to begin to explore printed language, both text and visual images. They read to young children, and the children observe adults reading. Children learn to read signs and other environmental print in their community. They experiment with writing, both with pencils or other markers and digitally on various devices. They also observe adults writing and sometimes write collaboratively with adults. When young children come to kindergarten, their knowledge about written language expands quickly as they participate in meaningful, functional, and genuine experiences with reading and writing. Their literacy development is responsive to the experiences their teachers provide as they share their love for reading and writing.

Children also grow in their ability to reflect on language. The ability to talk about concepts of language is called **metalinguistics** (M. Chapman, 2002). Children's ability to think metalinguistically is developed by their experiences with reading and writing (Smith & Read, 2005; Templeton & Spivey, 1980).

WRITTEN LANGUAGE CONCEPTS

Through experiences in their homes and communities, young children learn that print carries meaning and that reading and writing are used for a variety of purposes. As noted above, they may read signs and menus, write and receive cards, send text and email messages, play simple board and computer games involving print, and read (and listen to) stories for enjoyment. While reading and writing are part of daily life for most children, families and other community members use written language for different purposes in different communities (Heath, 1983b; Sample Gosse & Phillips, 2007). It is important to realize that children come to kindergarten having had a wide range of literacy experiences. McKeough and her collaborators (2008) consider the special case of Aboriginal children in Canada. They point out the prominent place of oral narrative in the children's experiences and show us how storytelling creates a meaningful frame of reference for experiencing the relationship between written language and the world in which the children live.

The differences in perceptions and uses are important determinants of early childhood curriculum. Teachers and schools must be ready for children with different experiences. They must respect, appreciate, and work with what the children know, and be ready to offer complex and sophisticated literate practices through which children can achieve things in their immediate and future worlds (Comber, 1999).

Teachers demonstrate the purposes of written language and provide opportunities for students to experiment with reading and writing in many ways other than explicit teaching. Some of those ways include

- posting signs and labels in the classroom
- including literacy materials in dramatic play centres
- writing notes to students in the class

- reading calendars and daily weather charts
- reading and writing stories, poems, and informational texts
- posting charts to describe class routines, rules, and class helpers
- drawing and writing in journals
- making reading and writing games available on classroom computers
- writing morning messages on charts and electronic whiteboards
- recording questions and information on charts
- creating class websites with print, visual, and auditory information
- writing blogs, notes, newsletters, and email messages to parents

Concept of a Word. Children's understanding of the concept of a "word" is an important part of becoming literate. Young children have only vague notions of language terms, such as *word*, *letter*, *sound*, and *sentence*, that teachers use in talking about reading and writing (Invernizzi, 2003). Preschoolers equate words with the objects they represent. As they are introduced to reading and writing experiences, children begin to differentiate between objects and words, and finally come to appreciate that words have meanings of their own.

Researchers have investigated children's developmental understanding of the concept of word. Papandropoulou and Sinclair (1974) identified four stages of word consciousness. At the first level, young children do not differentiate between things and the words that name them, or *labels*. At the next level, children describe words as labels for things. They consider words that stand for objects as words, but they do not classify articles and prepositions as words because they cannot be represented by objects. At the third level, children understand that words carry meaning and that stories are built from words. At the fourth level, more fluent readers and writers describe words as autonomous elements having meanings of their own with definite semantic and syntactic relationships. Also, at this level children understand that words can be spoken, listened to, read, and written.

Environmental Print. Many young children begin reading by recognizing environmental print such as logos on fast-food restaurants, signs in supermarkets, and commonly used household items within familiar contexts (Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984b). They recognize the golden arches of McDonald's and say "McDonald's," but when they are shown the word *McDonald's* written on a sheet of paper without the familiar sign and restaurant setting, they cannot read the word. Researchers have found that young emergent readers depend on context to read familiar words and memorized texts (Sulzby, 1985). Slowly, children develop relationships linking form and meaning as they learn concepts about written language through reading and writing experiences.

Kathy deWitt/Alamy

When children begin writing, they use scribbles or single letters to represent complex ideas. As they learn about letter names and phoneme–grapheme correspondences, they use one, two, or three letters to stand for a word. At first, they may run their writing together, but they slowly learn to segment words and leave spaces between words. They sometimes add dots or lines as markers before learning conventional text organization. Through experience and with some

adult guidance and modelling, they learn about and begin to use writing conventions such as capital letters and other punctuation marks. As children discover that writing helps them understand and communicate with others, their interest in writing increases. They best learn the joy and power of writing when it is integrated in various themes and activities for a variety of purposes (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000).

Watch: Creating a Rich Print Environment

Dramatic Play Centres. Young children learn about the functions of reading and writing as they use written language in their play. As they construct block buildings, children write signs and tape them on the buildings; as they play doctor, they write prescriptions on slips of paper; and as they play teacher, they read stories aloud to friends who are pretending to be students or to doll and stuffed-animal "students." Housekeeping **centres** are probably the most common play centres in primary classrooms, but these centres can be easily transformed to coordinate with units and themes, becoming a grocery store, restaurant, or a medical centre by changing the props. Materials for reading and writing can be included in each of these play centres. When young children plan and communicate through writing during play, they develop both literacy and cognitive skills (Bodrova & Leong, 2001; Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999). Ideas for four dramatic play centres and related props are offered in Figure 3–1. Each centre includes authentic literacy materials.

ALPHABET CONCEPTS

Young children need a variety of experiences and several types of information to establish a firm foundation for their literacy development. Knowledge of the alphabet is certainly one type of information they need. (Snow, Burns, & Griffin,1998). To have full knowledge of a letter, children must

FIGURE 3–1 Four Dramatic Play Centres

Post Office Centre

- Mailboxes
- Envelopes
- Stamps (stickers)
- Pens
- Notepaper and cards
- Wrapping paper
- Tape
- Packages
- Scale
- Package seals
- Address labels
- Cash register
- Money (play)

Restaurant Centre

- Tablecloth
- Dishes
- Glasses
- Silverware
- Napkins
- Menus
- Tray
- Order pad and pencil
- Apron/vest for waitstaff
- Hat and apron for chef
- Placemats with activities for children

Medical Centre

- Appointment book
- White shirt/jacket
- Medical bag
- Telephone
- Stethoscope
- Thermometer
- Bandages
- Prescription pad
- Folders (for patient records)
- Empty prescription bottles and labels
- Children's magazines

Grocery Store Centre

- Grocery cart
- Food packages
- Plastic fruit and artificial foods
- Price stickers
- Cash register (play)
- Money (play)
- Grocery bags
- Marking pen and pencils
- Cents-off coupon
- Advertisements
- Shopping lists

know its four components. The four are letter-shape knowledge or letter recognition, letter-name knowledge, letter-sound knowledge, and letter-writing ability (Bradley & Jones, 2007; Mason, 1984). Most children come to school with at least partial alphabet knowledge, and teachers help them add to their knowledge through many play activities such as letter-recognition and matching games as well as more explicit instruction in which they learn to recognize and use the letters for reading and writing.

Watch: Alphabet Sounds

The Alphabetic Principle. The one-to-one correspondence between the phonemes (or sounds) and graphemes (or letters), such that each letter consistently represents one sound, is known as the **alphabetic principle**. In phonetic languages, there is a one-to-one correspondence; however, English is not a purely phonetic language. The 26 letters represent approximately 44 phonemes, and three letters—*c*, *q*, and *x*—are superfluous because they do not represent unique phonemes. The letter *c*, for example, can represent either /k/ as in *cat* or /s/ as in *city*, and it can be joined with *h* for the digraph /ch/. To further complicate matters, there are more than 500 spellings to represent the 44 phonemes. Consonants are more consistent and predictable than vowels. Long *e*, for instance, is spelled 14 different ways in common words (Horn, 1957).

Researchers estimate that words are spelled phonetically approximately half the time (Hanna, Hanna, Hodges, & Rudorf, 1966). The nonphonetic spellings of many words reflect morphological information. The word *sign*, for example, is a shortened form of *signature*, and the spelling shows this relationship. Spelling the word phonetically (e.g., *sine*) might seem simpler, but the **phonetic spelling** lacks semantic information (Venezky, 1970).

Letter Names. The most basic information that children learn about the alphabet is how to identify and form the letters in handwriting (P. Stanovich, 1998). They notice letters in environmental print, and they often learn to sing the ABC song. By the time children enter kindergarten, they usually recognize some, if not all, letters, especially those in their own names and in common words in their homes and communities. Many children can write some of the familiar letters and some can locate the letters on a keyboard or computer screen when playing games.

Young children associate letters with meaningful contexts—names, signs, T-shirts, and cereal boxes. Children don't learn alphabet letter names in any particular order or by isolating letters from meaningful written language; instead, as McGee and Richgels (2012) conclude, learning letters of the alphabet requires many, many experiences with meaningful written language. It is crucial that explicit instruction to teach children to identify and print the letters of the alphabet be embedded in meaningful and authentic reading and writing experiences. Routines for teaching the alphabet are described in Figure 3–2.

Phonemic Awareness. *Phonological awareness* is an umbrella term used to refer to conscious awareness of the constituent sounds within words. Sounds are categorized by size largest to smallest: syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes. Considerable evidence affirms a strong relationship between phonological processing skills and the acquisition of reading and spelling in alphabetic languages (Ehri et al., 2001). **Phonemic awareness**, the basic understanding that speech is composed of a series of individual sounds, is the most difficult aspect of phonological awareness for children to learn. It is typically attained after children develop an awareness of rhyming words, syllables, and onset-rime units (Gonzalez & Gonzalez, 1993) and it provides the foundation for phonics (Cameron, 1998; Yopp, 1992). When children can choose a duck as the animal that begins with /d/ from a collection of toy animals, identify *duck* and *luck* as two rhyming words in a song, or blend the sounds /d/, /u/, and /k/ to pronounce *duck*, they are phonemically aware. The emphasis in these and other activities that illustrate phonemic awareness is on the sounds of spoken words, not reading letters or pronouncing letter names. Developing phonemic awareness enables children to use sound–symbol correspondences to read and spell words. Phonemic awareness is not

FIGURE 3–2 Routines to Teach the ABCs

Environmental Print
Teachers collect food labels, toy traffic signs, and other examples of environmental print for children to use in identifying letters. Children sort labels and other materials to find examples of a letter being studied.

Alphabet Books
Teachers read aloud alphabet books to build vocabulary and teach the names of words that represent each letter. Then children reread the books and consult them to think of words when making books about a letter.

Magnetic Letters
Children pick all examples of one letter from a collection of magnetic letters or match upper- and lowercase letterforms. They also arrange the letters in alphabetical order and use the letters to spell their names and other familiar words.

Letter Stamps
Students use letter stamps and ink pads to stamp letters on paper or in booklets. They also paint letters using letter-shaped sponges and make cookies using letter-shaped cookie cutters.

Key Words
Teachers use alphabet charts with a picture of a familiar object for each letter. It's crucial that children be familiar with the objects or they won't remember the key words. Teachers recite the alphabet with children, pointing to each letter and saying, "A—apple, B—bear, C—cat," and so on.

Letter Containers
Teachers collect coffee cans or shoe boxes, one for each letter. They write upper- and lowercase letters on the outside of the containers and place several familiar objects or pictures of objects representing the letter in each one. Teachers use these containers to introduce the letters, and children use them at a centre for sorting and matching activities.

Letter Frames
Teachers make circle-shaped letter frames from tagboard, collect large plastic bracelets, or shape pipe cleaners or Wikki-Stix (pipe cleaners covered in wax) into circles for students to use to highlight particular letters on charts or in big books.

Letter Books and Posters
Children make letter books with pictures of objects beginning with a particular letter on each page. They add letter stamps, stickers, or pictures cut from magazines. For posters, the teacher draws a large letterform on a chart and children add pictures, stickers, and letter stamps.

Letter Sorts
Teachers collect objects and pictures representing two or more letters. Then children sort the objects and place them in containers marked with the specific letters.

Whiteboards
Children practise writing upper- and lowercase forms of letters and familiar words on whiteboards.

sounding out words for reading, nor is it using spelling patterns to write words; rather, it is the ability to manipulate sounds and words orally.

Understanding that words are composed of smaller sound units—phonemes—is a significant achievement for young children. Phonemes carry no meaning, and children think of words according to their meanings, not their linguistic characteristics (Griffith & Olson, 1992). When children think about ducks, they think of animals covered with feathers that swim in ponds and make noises we describe as "quacks." They don't think of *duck* as a word with three phonemes or four graphemes, as a word beginning with /d/ and rhyming with *luck*. Phonemic awareness

requires that children treat speech as an object and that they shift attention away from the meaning of words to the linguistic features of speech. This focus on phonemes is even more complicated because phonemes are not discrete units in speech. Often they are blended or slurred together in speech. Think about the blended initial sound in *tree* and the ending sound in *eating*.

Watch: Using Songs, Chants, and Rhymes

For most children, phonological awareness develops through their literacy experiences at home and in their kindergarten classrooms as they sing songs, play with words, interact with word walls, chant rhymes, and listen to parents and teachers read wordplay books to them (Ehri & Roberts, 2006; Griffith & Olson, 1992). For some children, learning to differentiate sounds within words, especially on the phoneme level, is confusing. They benefit from explicit instruction to help them understand that their speech is composed of sounds (Ball & Blachman, 1991; P. McCarthy, 2008; Snow, Griffin, & Tabors, 2002).

Yopp (1995) recommends that teachers read aloud books with wordplay and encourage students to talk about the books' language. Teachers ask questions and make comments such as "Did you notice how _____ and _____ rhyme?" and "This book is fun because of all the words beginning with the /m/ sound." Once students are very familiar with the book, they can create new verses or make other variations. Books such as *Mabel Murple* (Fitch, 1995b) and *It's Raining Pigs and Noodles* (Prelutsky, 2000) stimulate children to experiment with sounds, create nonsense words, and become enthusiastic about reading. When teachers read books with alliterative or assonant patterns, such as *Zigzag: Zoems for Zindergartens* (Lesynski, 2004), children attend to the smaller units of language.

The goal of phonemic awareness activities is to break down and manipulate spoken words. Students who have developed phonemic awareness can manipulate spoken language in these five ways:

- match words by sounds
- isolate a sound in a word
- blend individual sounds to form a word
- substitute sounds in a word
- segment a word into its constituent sounds (Yopp, 1992)

Teachers teach minilessons focusing on each of these tasks. These lessons and learning activities should be playful and game-like, emphasizing the oral manipulation of sounds within words. Five types of phonemic awareness activities are described in Figure 3–3. These basic activities can be adapted to make connections with theme study units or other topics of study within the curriculum.

The relationship among oral language, phonemic awareness, learning to read, and later reading achievement is extremely important. Some educators have argued that a child must develop phonemic awareness before learning to read; yet there is strong evidence that phonemic awareness develops as a consequence of learning to read and write (M. Chapman, 2002). Researchers have concluded that at least some level of phonemic awareness is a prerequisite for learning to read (Tunmer & Nesdale, 1985) and that refinement is a consequence of learning to read (Perfetti, Beck, Bell, & Hughes, 1987; K. Stanovich, 1980). As they become phonemically aware, children recognize that speech can be segmented into smaller units, and they use this knowledge to learn the sound–symbol correspondences and spelling patterns they need for reading and writing. Moreover, research evidence suggests that lack of this knowledge is associated with reading difficulties and reading failure (Busink, 1997).

Phonics. **Phonics** is the set of relationships between phonology (the sounds in speech) and orthography (the spelling patterns of written language). Sounds are spelled in different ways for many reasons. One reason is that the sounds, especially vowels, vary according to their location in

FIGURE 3–3 Activities to Develop Children's Phonemic Awareness

1. ***Sound matching.*** Children choose words beginning with a particular sound. For matching games, teachers present a collection of familiar objects or toys or pictures of familiar objects and ask children to identify objects that begin with the same sound. Children can also identify rhyming words as part of sound-matching activities. They name a word that rhymes with a given word and identify rhyming words from familiar songs and stories.
2. ***Sound isolation.*** Children are given a word and are asked to identify the sounds at the beginning, middle, or end of the word or from a collection of objects or group of words, children choose the one that doesn't begin with the given sound. Yopp (1992) created new verses to sing to the tune of "Old MacDonald Had a Farm":

   What's the sound that starts these words:
   Chicken, chin, and cheek?
   (wait for response)
   /ch/ is the sound that starts these words:
   Chicken, chin, and cheek.
   With a /ch/, /ch/ here, and a /ch/, /ch/ there,
   Here a /ch/, there a /ch/, everywhere a /ch/, /ch/.
   /ch/ is the sound that starts these words:
   Chicken, chin, and cheek (p. 700)

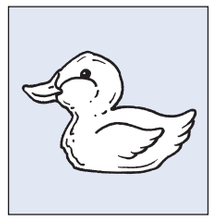
   Teachers change the question at the beginning of the verse to focus on medial and final sounds.
3. ***Sound blending.*** Children blend sounds in order to combine them to form a word. Teachers can play the "What am I thinking of?" guessing game with children. For example, the teacher says, "It lives in a pond," and then articulates each sound, "/d/ /u/ /k/." The children blend the sounds together and use the semantic and phonological information to guess the word *duck*. Children can take turns giving cues and segmenting to challenge their peers.
4. ***Sound addition or substitution.*** Children play with words and create nonsense words as they add or substitute sounds in words in songs they sing or in books that are read aloud to them. Teachers read wordplay books such as Pat Hutchins's *Don't Forget the Bacon!* (1976), in which a boy leaves for the store with a mental list of four items to buy. As he walks, he repeats his list, substituting words each time. "A cake for tea" changes to "a cape for me" and then to "a rake for leaves." Bernard Most's *Cock-a-Doodle-Moo* (1996) is another book that stimulates wordplay and laughter as children imitate and suggest other substitutions.
5. ***Segmentation.*** Segmentation requires children to slowly pronounce or stretch out words, identifying and isolating all the sounds in a spoken word. Stretching words is often closely associated with use of sound or **Elkonin boxes** (McCarthy, 2008) as shown in Figure 3–4. The use of sound boxes to teach segmentation comes from the work of the Russian psychologist D. B. Elkonin. Sound boxes can be drawn and easily manipulated on interactive whiteboards. Winsor and Pearson (1992) suggest a dramatic game in which children help animals to cross the ugly troll's bridge by paying a magic coin for each phoneme in the animals' names. Using toy animals of two, three, and four phonemes, children dramatize paying the troll while orally segmenting the words. The child who assists the dog says "d/o/g" and pays three magic coins.

a word (e.g., *go*, *got*). Adjacent letters often influence how letters are pronounced (e.g., *bed*, *bead*), as do vowel markers such as the final *e* (e.g., *bit*, *bite*) (Shefelbine, 1995).

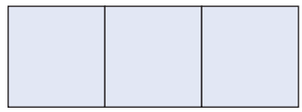
Phonics is sometimes viewed as a controversial topic. Noted scholar Ken Goodman called it "the most widely misunderstood aspect" of reading instruction (1993, p. 1). Reading is a complex process, and the phonological system works in conjunction with the semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic systems—not in isolation. Therefore, it is essential for students to know phonics (sound–symbol relationships), but that is not all they need to know. It is now widely accepted that phonics should be taught explicitly within a balanced approach that integrates specific instruction in reading skills and strategies with meaningful reading and writing of connected text. Further, phonics

FIGURE 3–4 Using Elkonin Boxes for Segmentation Activities

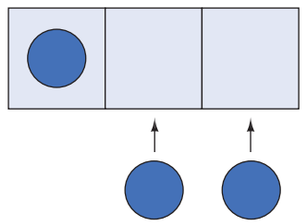
1. The teacher shows students an object or the picture of an object, such as a duck, a bed, a game, a bee, a cup, or a cat.



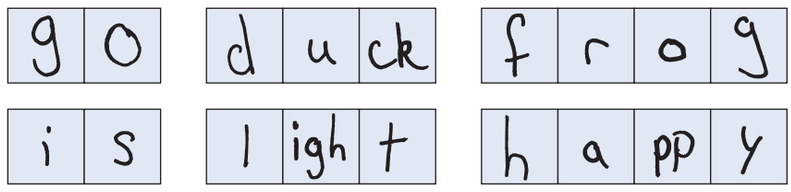
2. The teacher prepares a diagram with a series of boxes, corresponding to the number of sounds heard in the name of the object. For example, the teacher draws three boxes side by side to represent the three sounds heard in the word *duck*. The teacher can draw the boxes on the chalkboard or on small cards for each child to use. The teacher also prepares markers to place on the boxes.



3. The teacher or students say the word slowly and move markers onto the boxes as each sound is pronounced.



4. Elkonin boxes can also be used when spelling words. The teacher draws a series of boxes corresponding to the number of sounds heard in the word, and then the child and teacher pronounce the word, pointing to each box or sliding markers into each box. Then the child writes the letters representing each sound or spelling pattern in the boxes.



instruction should focus on the most useful information for identifying words and be systematic, intensive, and completed by grade 3.

Teachers teach sound–symbol correspondences, how to blend sounds to decode words, how to segment sounds to spell, and the most useful phonics generalizations or "rules." Phonics concepts build on phonemic awareness. The four most important concepts that primary-grade students learn are consonants, vowels, onsets and rimes, and phonic generalizations.

1. ***Consonants.*** Letters are classified as either consonants or vowels. The consonants are *b*, *c*, *d*, *f*, *g*, *h*, *j*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *q*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *v*, *w*, *x*, *y*, and *z*. Most consonants represent a single sound consistently, but there are some exceptions. For example, *c* does not represent a sound of its own. When it is followed by *a*, *o*, or *u*, it is pronounced /k/ (e.g., *castle*, *coffee*) and when it is followed by *e*, *i*, or *y*, it is pronounced /s/ (e.g., *cell*, *city*). *G* represents two sounds, as the word *garage* illustrates. It is usually pronounced /g/ (e.g., *glass*, *go*), but when *g* is followed by *e* or *i*, it is pronounced /j/, as in *giant*. *X* is also pronounced differently according to its location in a word. When *x* is at the beginning of a word, it is often pronounced /z/, as in *xylophone*, but sometimes the letter name is used, as in *X-ray*. At the end of a word, *x* is pronounced /ks/, as in *box*.

   The letters *w* and *y* are particularly interesting. At the beginning of a word or a syllable they are consonants (e.g., *wind*, *yard*), but when they are in the middle or at the end, they are vowels (e.g., *saw*, *flown*, *day*, *by*).

   Two kinds of combination consonants are blends and digraphs. Consonant blends are two or three consonants that appear next to each other in words, and their individual sounds are blended together, such as *grass*, *belt*, and *spring*. Consonant digraphs are letter combinations that represent single sounds. The four most common are *ch*, *sh*, *th*, and *wh*. Another consonant digraph is *ph*, as in *graph* and *photo*.

2. ***Vowels.*** The remaining five letters—*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*—are vowels, and *w* and *y* are vowels when used in the middle and at the end of syllables and words. Vowels represent several sounds. Short-vowel sounds are /a/ as in *cat*, /e/ as in *bed*, /i/ as in *win*, /o/ as in *hot*, and /u/ as in *cup*. Long-vowel sounds are the same as the letter names, and they are illustrated in the words *make*, *feet*, *bike*, *coal*, and *mule*. Long vowels are usually spelled with two vowels, except when *y* is used at the end of a word.

   When *y* is a vowel at the end of a word, it is pronounced as long *e* or long *i*, depending on the length of the word. In one-syllable words such as *by* and *try*, the *y* is pronounced as long *i*, but in longer words such as *baby* and *happy*, the *y* is pronounced as long *e*.

   When the letter *r* follows one or more vowels in a word, it influences the pronunciation of the vowel sound, as in *car*, *air*, *are*, *ear*, *bear*, *first*, *for*, *more*, *murder*, and *pure*, and these are referred to as *r-controlled vowels*. Vowel sounds are more complicated than consonant sounds, and there are additional vowel combinations representing other sounds. These vowel combinations often represent more than one sound and are used in only a few words:

   au as in *laugh* and *caught*
   aw as in *saw*
   ew as in *sew* and *few*
   oi as in *oil*
   oo as in *cook* and *moon*
   ou as in *about* and *through*
   ow as in *now*
   oy as in *toy*

3. ***Onsets and rimes.*** One-syllable words and syllables in longer words can be divided into two parts: the onset and the rime. The *onset* is the consonant sound that precedes the vowel, and the *rime* is the vowel and any consonant sounds that follow it. For example, in *show*, *sh* is the onset and *ow* is the rime, and in *ball*, *b* is the onset and *all* is the rime. For *at* and *up*, there is no onset—the entire word is the rime. Research has shown that children make more errors decoding and spelling final consonants than initial consonants and that they make more errors on vowels than on consonants (Treiman, 1985). These problem areas correspond to rimes, and educators now speculate that onsets and rimes could provide the key to unlocking phonemic awareness. This is partly because both the sound and spelling of rimes tend to be fairly predictable (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Children can focus their attention on a rime (sometimes referred to as a *word family*), such as *ay*, and create rhyming words, including *bay*, *day*, *lay*, *may*, *ray*, *say*, and *way*. These words can be read and spelled by analogy because the vowel sounds are consistent in rimes. Wylie and Durrell (1970) identified thirty-seven rimes that can be used to produce nearly five hundred words that primary-grade students read and write. These rimes and some common words using them are presented in the first Teacher's Notebook.

4. ***Phonics generalizations.*** Because English does not have a one-to-one correspondence between sounds and letters, both linguists and educators have tried to create rules, or generalizations, to clarify English spelling patterns. One such rule is that *q* is followed by *u* and pronounced /kw/. Only a few phonics generalizations have a high degree of utility for readers. Eight high-utility generalizations are listed in the second Teacher's Notebook. Even though these rules are fairly reliable, very few approach 100 percent utility. It is important, therefore, for teachers to teach children to be flexible when applying the rules, reminding them of the need to always check for contextual meaning when decoding.

Students acquire some phonics knowledge as a natural part of reading and writing activities, but teachers teach about phonics directly in the primary grades. Effective phonics instruction is systematic and explicit. In addition to direct instruction, teachers often explain phonics concepts as they engage children in authentic literacy activities using children's names, titles of books, and environmental print in the classroom. Teachers answer students' questions about words, and they model the use of phonics knowledge to decode and spell words as they engage in classroom routines such as reading big books together and writing class news in morning messages. Phonics

Teacher's Notebook: THIRTY-SEVEN RIMES AND SOME COMMON WORDS USING THEM

-ack	black, pack, quack, stack
-ail	mail, nail, sail, tail
-ain	brain, chain, plain, rain
-ake	cake, shake, take, wake
-ale	male, sale, tale, whale
-ame	came, flame, game, name
-an	can, man, pan, than
-ank	bank, drank, sank, thank
-ap	cap, clap, map, slap
-ash	cash, dash, flash, trash
-at	bat, cat, rat, that
-ate	gate, hate, late, plate
-aw	claw, draw, jaw, saw
-ay	day, play, say, way
-eat	beat, heat, meat, wheat
-ell	bell, sell, shell, well
-est	best, chest, nest, west
-ice	ice, mice, nice, rice
-ick	brick, pick, sick, thick
-ide	bride, hide, ride, side
-ight	bright, fight, light, might
-ill	fill, hill, kill, will
-in	chin, grin, pin, win
-ine	fine, line, mine, nine
-ing	king, sing, thing, wing
-ink	pink, sink, think, wink
-ip	drip, hip, lip, ship
-ir	fir, sir, stir
-ock	block, clock, knock, sock
-oke	choke, joke, poke, woke
-op	chop, drop, hop, shop
-or	for, or
-ore	chore, more, shore, store
-uck	duck, luck, suck, truck
-ug	bug, drug, hug, rug
-ump	bump, dump, hump, lump
-unk	bunk, dunk, junk, sunk

instruction, explicit or implicit, is always linked to meaningful reading and writing. Without those links, children see little reason to learn phonics (Cunningham, 2009).

Young Children Become Readers

Learning to read is a process that happens over time, beginning in infancy as children acquire language. Children move through identifiable stages as they learn. In some research, the stages have been labelled *emergent reading*, *beginning reading*, and *fluent reading* (Juel, 1991). In emergent reading, also known as the *selective-cue stage*, children gain an understanding of the communicative purpose of print. They notice environmental print, dictate stories for the teacher to record, and reread predictable books after they have memorized the pattern. From this foundation, children move into the beginning reading stage, known as the *spelling–sound stage*. In this stage, children

Teacher's Notebook: THE MOST USEFUL PHONICS GENERALIZATIONS

Pattern	Description	Examples	
1. Two sounds of *c*	The letter *c* can be pronounced as /k/ or /s/. When *c* is followed by *a*, *o*, or *u*, it is pronounced /k/—the hard *c* sound. When *c* is followed by *e*, *i*, or *y*, it is pronounced /s/—the soft *c* sound.	cat cough	cent city
2. Two sounds of *g*	The sound associated with the letter *g* depends on the letter following it. When *g* is followed by *a*, *o*, or *u*, it is pronounced as /g/—the hard *g* sound. When *g* is followed by *e*, *i*, or *y*, it is usually /j/—the soft *g* sound. Exceptions include *get* and *give*.	gate go guess	gentle giant gym
3. CVC pattern	When a one-syllable word has only one vowel and the vowel comes between two consonants, it is usually short. One exception is *told*.	bat cup land	
4. Final *e* or CVCe pattern	When there are two vowels in a one-syllable word and one of them is an *e* at the end of the word, the first vowel is long and the final *e* is silent. Two exceptions are *have* and *love*.	home safe cute	
5. CV pattern	When a vowel follows a consonant in a one-syllable word, the vowel is long. Exceptions include *the*, *to*, *be* and *do*.	go	
6. *R*-controlled vowels	Vowels that are followed by the letter *r* are overpowered and are neither short nor long. One exception is *fire*.	car for birthday	
7. -igh	When *gh* follows *i*, the *i* is long and the *gh* is silent. One exception is *neighbour*.	high night	
8. Kn- and wr-	In words beginning with *kn-* and *wr-*, the first letter is not pronounced.	knee Write	

Source: Adapted from Clymer, T. (1996). The utility of phonic generalizations in the primary grades. The Reading Teacher, 50, 182–187.

learn phoneme–grapheme correspondences and begin to decode words. In the fluent reading stage, children have learned how to read, recognize most words automatically, and decode unfamiliar words quickly. They are fluent readers who are able to concentrate their cognitive energy on comprehension and meaning-making.

Primary-grade teachers organize language arts instruction in ways that address the children's developmental needs and take into account the wide variations in experiences they bring to their learning. Instruction provides children with the opportunity to acquire the foundational skills they need to be successful readers and writers. Resource-based units, shared reading, guided reading, and language experience approach are four ways teachers organize instruction for young readers.

Children also need opportunities to read some books themselves—independently. Young children often begin by reading books with predictable refrains and repetition of events, and then move on to easy-to-read books to practise decoding and to develop reading fluency. Through a multifaceted language arts program of literature, daily reading and writing experiences, and explicit instruction in phonics, skills, and strategies young children develop into fluent readers and writers.

Children learn, too, from their technology-based activities, such as video games, interactive websites, children's television, and digitized toys. Involving young children in digital technology clearly affects their academic success (Wohlwend, 2010). In addition to advanced literacy knowledge, they develop fine motor skills needed for keyboarding problem-solving necessary for navigating search engines, concentration needed to understand complex concepts, and other abilities. Experiences with digital technology inside and outside classrooms contribute to literacy development.

Teachers plan and teach resource-based units using high-quality books of children's literature. Within the unit of study, instruction and learning activities engage children in using the six language arts as described in Chapter 2. Teachers differentiate activities to make them developmentally appropriate. These include hands-on activities, time for children to listen while being read to, time for children to read independently, and minilessons on phonics and other specific reading strategies. Sometimes, resource-based units also focus children's attention on a particular theme presented within the literature. Figure 3–5 presents an outline for a resource-based unit focused on Laura Numeroff's books, beginning with *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (1985).

SHARED READING

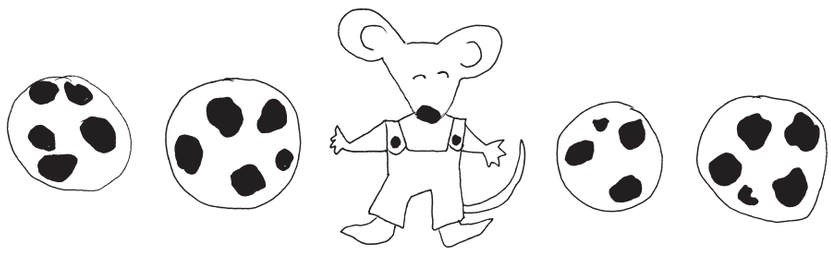
Watch: Shared Reading

In shared reading, teachers read a book aloud as children follow along in individual books, follow the book as it is projected on an electronic whiteboard, or look at an enlarged version of a picture book, called a ***big book***. Teachers use this approach to share with students the enjoyment of high-quality literature when students cannot read the books independently (Holdaway, 1979). Teachers use the big book to read *with* children rather than *to* children (Bainbridge & Malicky, 2004; Morrow, 2005). Through shared reading, whether in printed or digital text, teachers demonstrate how print works, provide opportunities for students to use the prediction strategy, and increase children's confidence in their ability to read. In many classrooms, the big books are accompanied by a set of small copies of the book for individual reading. After reading the big book with the teacher, children read the small copies independently. The steps in shared reading are explained in the Step by Step box.

Predictable Books. The stories and other books used for both shared and guided reading with young children often have repeated words and sentences, rhyme, or other patterns. Books that use these patterns, known as **predictable books**, make a valuable tool for emergent readers because the repetition enables children to predict the next sentence or episode in the story (Heald-Taylor, 1987; Tompkins & Webeler, 1983). Four characteristics of predictable books are

1. ***Repetition.*** In some books, phrases and sentences are repeated over and over. Examples include *Is Your Mama a Llama?*(Guarino, 1989) and *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* (B. Martin, 1992). Sometimes each episode or section of the text ends with the same words or a refrain; other times, the same statement or question is repeated.

FIGURE 3–5 Outline for a Resource-Based Unit on Laura Numeroff's books.



1. Preparing

- The teacher collects and displays books by Laura Numeroff, including *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (Numeroff, 1985), *If You Give a Pig a Pancake* (Numeroff, 1998), *If You Give a Moose a Muffin* (Numeroff, 1991), *If You Take a Mouse to the Movies* (Numeroff, 2000), *If You Take a Mouse to School* (Numeroff, 2002), *If You Give a Pig a Party* (Numeroff, 2005), and *If You Give a Dog a Donut* (2011).
- The teacher brings in several types of cookies for children to sample. Students talk about their favourite cookies, and they create a graph and chart of their favourite cookies.
- The teacher introduces *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* as the first of Numeroff's books the class will be reading together. The teacher includes information about the author and tells the children they will be reading several stories written by her.
- The teacher shares a book box of objects mentioned in the story (cookie, glass of milk, straw, napkin, mirror, scissors, broom, etc.), and children talk about how some of the items might be used in the story.
- Students and the teacher begin making a word wall with the words cookie and mouse.

2. Reading

- The teacher reads the big book of *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* using shared reading.
- The teacher rereads the book, and students join in reading repeated words and phrases.

3. Responding

- The students and teacher participate in a grand conversation about the book.
- Students dramatize the story using objects in the book box.
- Students draw pictures in reading logs and add words (using invented spelling) to record their reactions to the book.

4. Exploring

- Students and teacher add interesting and important words to the word wall.
- Students buddy-read small-size versions of the book with partners and reread the book independently.
- On successive days, the teacher teaches minilessons on
  - the /k/ sound using cookie to illustrate two ways it is written
  - the author, Laura Numeroff
  - irregular plurals (e.g., *mouse–mice, child–children, moose–moose*).
- The teacher explains the concept of a circle story, and students sequence picture cards of the events in the stories to make a circle diagram. Some children attempt circle story writing in the writing centre.
- The teacher sets up centres for students to sort objects related to the phonics lessons, paint pictures of the story characters, to listen to recordings of books by Numeroff.
- As the unit proceeds and additional books are read, the teacher adapts the responding and exploring activities and minilessons to coordinate with the stories.

5. Extending

- Students write their own stories of adventures of the story characters.
- Students create projects, including book bags of objects related to the stories.
- Students share their writing and other projects from the author's chair.

Step by Step: SHARED READING

1. **Introduce the book.** The teacher introduces the book by activating children's prior knowledge about the topic or by presenting new information on a topic related to the book, and then by showing the cover of the book and reading the title and author. Then children make predictions about the book. The purpose of these introductory activities is to involve children in the reading activity and to build their anticipation. The book is displayed on an easel in clear view for all.
2. **Read the book.** The teacher reads the book aloud while children follow the text. The teacher models fluent reading and uses a dramatic style to keep the children's attention. The teacher points to the text and encourages children to chime in on (read chorally) words they can predict and for phrases, sentences, and refrains that are repeated. Periodically, the teacher stops to ask the children to make predictions about the story or to redirect their attention to the text.
3. **Children respond to the book.** Children respond to the book by drawing and writing in reading logs and by sharing their responses in a grand conversation. While drawing and writing, they may use the book to learn more about written language.
4. **Reread the book.** Children and the teacher read the book again together in a group. Children reread the book independently or with partners, taking turns using the big book or reading from small copies. Children need to read the book several times in order to become comfortable with the text.
5. **Teach minilessons.** The teacher uses the book as the basis for minilessons to explore letters, words, and sentences in the text. Minilessons may also focus on rhyme, word-identification strategies, and reading procedures, concepts, strategies, and skills.
6. **Create projects.** Children extend their understanding of the book through other reading and talking activities and through drama, writing, and multimedia projects.

2. ***Cumulative sequence.*** In some books, phrases or sentences are repeated and expanded in each episode. In *The Gingerbread Boy* (Galdone, 1975), for example, the Gingerbread Boy repeats and expands his boast as he meets each character. Other examples include *We're Going on a Picnic* (P. Hutchins, 2002) and *Bear Snores On* (K. Wilson, 2002).
3. ***Rhyme and rhythm.*** Rhyme and rhythm are important devices in some books. Sentences have a strong beat, and rhyme is used at the end of each line or in another poetic scheme. Some books have an internal rhyme within lines. Books in this category include Dr. Seuss's *Hop on Pop* (1963), *Chicka, Chicka Boom Boom* (Martin & Archambault, 1989), and *A Frog in the Bog* (K. Wilson, 2003).
4. ***Sequential patterns.*** Some books use a familiar sequence—such as months of the year, days of the week, numbers 1 to 10, or letters of the alphabet—to structure the text. For example, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969) combines number and day-of-the-week sequences as the caterpillar eats through an amazing array of foods. Laura Numeroff's *If You Give a Pig a Party* (2005) is another example.

A list of predictable books illustrating each of these patterns is presented in Figure 3–6.

Big Books. Teachers use enlarged picture books called *big books* in shared reading, most commonly with primary-grade students. In this approach, developed in New Zealand, teachers use a big book placed on an easel or chart stand where all children can see it; the teacher reads the big book with small groups of children or with the whole class (Holdaway, 1979). When reading big books, teachers follow the shared reading procedures described in Step by Step.

Many picture books are available in big book editions. Some popular ones include *Red Is Best* (Stinson, 1982), *Follow the Polar Bears* (Black, 2001), and *Where's Waldo* (Hanford, 2003). In addition to stories, many informational books associated with particular curriculum topics in science and social studies are available. Shared reading of texts such as *It's about Me*, *It's about You* (Bryan, 2005) facilitates integrated learning of the language arts across curriculum. Some big books are published with accompanying DVDs that include oral readings of the texts along with interactive response activities. Children listen and respond individually and in small groups during literacy-centre time. Another option many teachers choose is to read collaboratively (following the steps for shared reading) from stories and other text available on the Internet and projected on classroom digital whiteboards.

FIGURE 3–6 Books with Predictable Patterns

Repetitive Sentences

Bennett, J. (2000). *Jason Mason Middleton-Tap*. Vancouver: Raincoast.
Carle, E. (1990). *The Very Quiet Cricket*. New York: Philomel.
Carle, E. (1995). *The Very Lonely Firefly*. New York: Philomel.
Cohen, C. L. (1996). *Where's the Fly?* New York: Greenwillow.
Fleming, D. (1994). *Barnyard Banter*. New York: Henry Holt.
Guarino, D. (1989). *Is Your Mama a Llama?* New York: Scholastic.
Hutchins, P. (1986). *The Doorbell Rang*. New York: Morrow.
Kovalski, M. (1987). *The Wheels on the Bus*. Boston: Little, Brown.
Martin, B., Jr. (1983). *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Martin, B., Jr. (1992). *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Stinson, K. (1984). *Red Is Best*. Toronto: Annick Press.
Tankard, J. (2007). *Grumpy Bird*. Toronto: Scholastic Canada.
Viorst, J. (1972). *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. New York: Atheneum.
Williams, S. (1989). *I Went Walking*. *San Diego:* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Repetitive Sentences in a Cumulative Sequence

Beck, A. (2002). *Elliot Gets Stuck*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Brett, J. (1989). *The Mitten*. New York: Putnam.
Galdone, P. (1975). *The Gingerbread Boy*. New York: Seabury.
Kalan, R. (1995). *Jump, Frog, Jump!* New York: Greenwillow.
Karas, G. (1994). *I Know an Old Lady*. New York: Scholastic.
Litzinger, R. (1993). *The Old Woman and Her Pig*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
West, C. (1996). *"I Don't Care!" Said the Bear*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.

Rhyme and Rhythm

dePaola, T. (1985). *Hey Diddle Diddle and Other Mother Goose Rhymes*. New York: Putnam.
Fernandes, E. (2002). *Busy Little Mouse*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Fitch, S. (1992). *There Were Monkeys in My Kitchen*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada.
Gilman, P. (1994). *Jillian Jiggs to the Rescue*. Richmond Hill, ON: Scholastic Canada.
Lee, D. (2001). *The Cat and the Wizard*. Toronto: Key Porter Books.
Martin, B., & Archambault, J. (2000). *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*. New York: Aladdin Books.
Seuss, Dr. (1963). *Hop on Pop*. New York: Random House.
Wilson, K. (2007). *A Frog in the Bog*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

(continued)

FIGURE 3–6 (*continued*)

Sequential Patterns

Carle, E. (1969). *The Very Hungry Caterpillar.* Cleveland: Collins-World.

Galdone, P. (1986). *Over in the Meadow.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Godfrey, M. (1992). *Is It OK If This Monster Stays for Lunch?* Toronto: Oxford University Press.

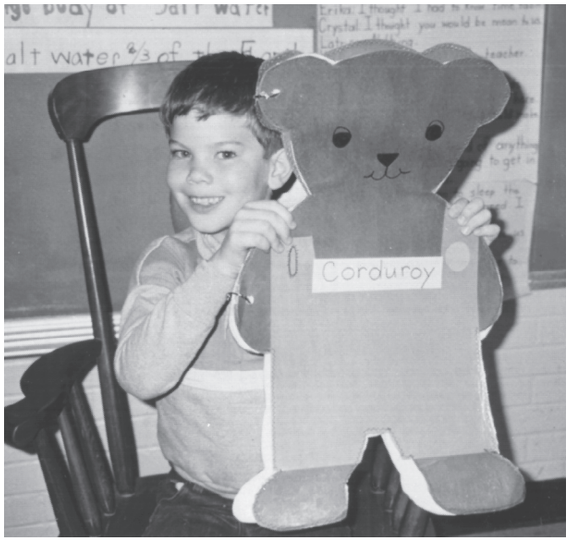
Kingsley, C. (2001). *Ten Little Puppies.* Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

Numeroff, L. J. (1985). *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie.* New York: HarperCollins.

Numeroff, L. J. (1991). *If You Give a Moose a Muffin.* New York: HarperCollins.

Numeroff, L.J. (2000). *If You Give a Pig a Pancake.* New York: HarperCollins

Numeroff, L. J. (2005). *If You Give a Pig a Party.* New York: HarperCollins.



Courtesy of Gail E. Thompkins

A grade 1 student holds up a class big book to retell the story of Corduroy.

Teachers and children also make big books together. Publishing software and other production facilities available in many schools make it possible to create personalized, informative, and theme-related big books. One popular authoring activity is creating class "All about Us" big books to which children contribute pages on which they draw large self-portraits and write about their favourite activities. Other types of big books authored and illustrated by teachers and children include collections of favourite poems, retellings of stories, personalized versions of familiar stories, and informative accounts of their learning about specific topics. Writing these books digitally makes it possible to reproduce them in small versions suitable for children to share with their families.

GUIDED READING

Guided reading, sometimes referred to as *levelled reading*, involves teachers working with small groups of readers (usually four to six) of similar strengths and instructional needs. They read texts determined to be at the children's instructional level—texts the children can read successfully with some support. Typically, teacher and children each have a copy of the text. The teacher introduces the text and guides the children in a preview or walk-through of the text to note particular vocabulary and language structures, introduce unfamiliar concepts, ask for predictions, and set a purpose for reading. That is, the teacher scaffolds the children's reading before directing them to reread independently. Teachers often embed applicable explicit strategy instruction in the walk-through of the text. During the independent reading, the teacher assists individual readers as needed. After reading, teachers review and reinforce students' strategy use and engage students in discussion that prompts higher-level thinking. Advocated by researchers (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, 2001), guided reading is widely implemented in primary-grade Canadian classrooms to help students develop and use the strategies needed to be independent readers; it enables them to read progressively more complex texts at increasing levels of difficulty. The steps in guided reading lessons are shown in the second Step by Step box.

While it is generally accepted that a guided reading instructional model benefits all students, Avalos, Plasencia, Chavez, and Rascon (2007) have shown that a modified model is especially beneficial to **English language learners (ELLs)**. Their modifications include increasing the time teachers and students interact; adding a shared reading of the guided-reading text, including detailed vocabulary instruction; and paying close attention to language structures and cultural relevance. These modifications offer ELLs opportunities to acquire aspects of language that **native speakers**

Step-by-Step: GUIDED READING

1. **Choose a book.** Teachers choose a book that students in a small group can read with 90 to 94 percent accuracy and collect copies of the book for each student in the group.
2. **Introduce the book.** Teachers show the cover, read the title and author's name, and activate students' background knowledge on a related topic. They use key vocabulary words as they talk about the book but don't directly teach them. Students also "picture walk" through the book, examining the illustrations.
3. **Read the book.** Teachers have students read the book independently and ask individual students to take turns reading aloud. They help individual students decode unfamiliar words, deal with unfamiliar sentence structures, and comprehend ideas whenever assistance is needed.
4. **Respond to the book.** Students talk about the book and relate it to others they've read, as in a grand conversation.
5. **Teach concepts.** Teachers teach a comprehension strategy or a phonics skill, review vocabulary words, or examine an element of story structure.
6. **Do independent reading.** Teachers have students reread the book several more times to develop fluency. They often place the book in students' book baskets so students can reread it independently.

typically acquire implicitly. Through modified guided reading, teachers can help ELLs achieve the goal of guided reading—to read progressively more challenging texts independently and successfully.

Language Experience Approach. The language experience approach (LEA) has long and deep roots as a way of approaching literacy instruction for young children; it first gained popularity in the 1960s (Ashton-Warner, 1965; Stauffer, 1970) when fine-quality children's literature and other resources were not as abundant as they are now in most Canadian classrooms. LEA is based on children's own language and experiences, hence its capacity for differentiation and response to children's interests and instructional needs.

In this approach, stories are usually composed as a group. Children dictate sentences about their experiences to their teacher, who records their language by writing on a large chart or digital whiteboard The text they develop becomes their reading material. Because the content is familiar, and because the text is their language, children can usually read the chart stories easily. Collaboratively composing, dictating, and then rereading demonstrates to the children the connections between reading and writing. The basic steps in LEA are described in the accompanying Step by Step box.

Teachers and children engage in many variations of the basic steps. One variation is having the children participate in the writing, referred to as *interactive writing*. When children participate or "share the pen" (McCarrier, Pinnell, & Fountas, 2000) by writing some of the letters and words in the chart story, it shows them that writing does not need to be perfect and demonstrates that their contributions to the chart writing are valued. Interactive writing can be used for many types of writing projects in many areas of the curriculum. Examples include morning messages, lists, clusters and other diagrams, collaborative books, classroom newspapers, stories, science experiment reports, and poems. In many Canadian classrooms, the two strategies of LEA and interactive writing are combined and, depending on the technology available, the texts written are published in a variety of ways.

Watch: Interactive Writing

Step by Step: LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH (LEA)

1. **Provide an experience.** A meaningful experience is identified to serve as the stimulus or prompt for the writing. For group writing, it can be an experience shared in school, a book read aloud, a field trip, or some other experience—such as having a pet or playing in the snow—familiar to most children. For individual writing, the stimulus can be any experience that is important for the particular child.

2. **Talk about the experience.** The children and teacher discuss the experience prior to writing. The purpose of the talk is to generate thoughts and words and to review the experience so that the children's written text will be interesting and complete. The teacher often begins with an open-ended question, such as "What do you want to say about _____?" As children talk about their experiences, they clarify and organize ideas, use more specific vocabulary, and extend their understanding.

3. **Record the children's expression of ideas.** Traditionally, the children dictate and the teacher writes what they say. Texts for individual children are written on sheets of writing paper or in small booklets. Group texts are written on chart paper. Where facilities are available, dictations may be composed on an interactive whiteboard or written on a computer keyboard and projected for all to see. The teacher's writing is a model for the students, showing letter forms and correct spelling and punctuation. When writing, teachers preserve the children's language as much as possible. It can be a great temptation to change the children's language, but editing should be kept to a minimum so that children do not get the impression that their language is inferior or inadequate.

   For individual texts, the teacher continues to take the child's dictation and write until the child finishes or hesitates. If the child hesitates, the teacher rereads what has been written and encourages the child to continue. For group texts, the teacher leads children to collaboratively formulate sentences to include their ideas and to take turns dictating sentences. As the teachers take dictation and write, they encourage talk about the words, the spelling patterns, and the punctuation being used. The children can also be engaged in orally spelling and writing individual words. Children can also be invited to contribute to the composition by writing some letters, words, and sentences with careful teacher guidance. Discussion and participation in the writing helps children become observant of the writer's craft and the features of written language.

   After writing each sentence, the teacher leads children in choral reading of the sentence. As the chart story progresses, the teacher engages children in choral rereading of all that has been written so far.

4. **Read the text.** After the text has been written, the teacher leads the children in choral reading of the whole text, reading with the children to encourage fluent reading. This reading reminds children of the content of the text and demonstrates how to read it aloud with appropriate intonation. After reading group texts together, individual children can take turns rereading. Group texts can also be printed and copied to give each child a copy to read independently.

INVITING OTHERS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Children benefit from repeated opportunities to listen to stories and to read and reread simple texts. Two ways teachers facilitate these opportunities are cross-age reading buddies and travelling bags of books.

Cross-Age Reading Buddies. Upper-grade students can be paired with primary-grade children to become reading buddies. Older students read books aloud to younger children, and they also read with the children. The effectiveness of cross-age tutoring is supported by research, and teachers report that students' reading fluency increases and their attitudes toward school and learning become more positive (Caserta-Henry, 1996).

Teachers arranging a buddy reading program decide when the students will get together, how long each session will last, and what the reading schedule will be. Primary-grade teachers explain the program to their students and talk about activities the buddies will be doing together. Primary-grade students may want to draw pictures in advance to give to their buddies. Upper-grade teachers teach a series of minilessons about how to work with young children, read aloud and encourage children to make predictions, select books to appeal to younger children, and help them respond to books. Older students choose books to read aloud and practise reading them until they can read the books fluently. Pending reading abilities, it may be appropriate for reading buddies to choose easy-to-read stories, novels, or informational texts such as those listed in Figure 3–7.

There are significant social benefits to cross-age tutoring programs. Children get acquainted with other children they might otherwise not meet and learn to work with older or younger children. As they talk about books, they share personal experiences and interpretations. They also talk about reading strategies, how to choose books, and their favourite authors or illustration styles. Sometimes reading buddies write notes or email messages back and forth, or the two classrooms share holiday or other celebrations, and these activities strengthen the social connections between the children.

For more information on LIFT, see Chapter 4's opening profile.

Travelling Bags of Books. A second way to encourage more one-on-one reading is to involve families in literacy activities through travelling bags of books. Some teachers with whom we work refer to their home literacy support as LIFT (Literacy Is a Family Thing). They create thematically

FIGURE 3–7 Easy-to-Read Books

Stories

Abramson, B. (2006). *Off We Go!* Toronto: Tundra Books.

Bellingham, B. (2005). *Lilly's Special Gift.* Halifax, NS: Formac.

Bradford, K. (2005). *Ghost Wolf.* Victoria, BC: Orca Book.

Chataway, C. (2002). *The Perfect Pet.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Edwards, F. (1997). *Downtown Lost and Found.* Toronto: Firefly Books.

Gay, M.-L. (2002). *Stella, Fairy of the Forest.* Vancouver: Groundwood Books/Douglas & McIntyre.

Helmer, M. (2002). *Three Barnyard Tales: The Little Red Hen; the Ugly Duckling; Chicken Little* (Once-Upon-a-Time series). Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Higgs, S. (2006). *Best Friends, No Matter What.* Toronto: Scholastic Canada.

Hood, S. (2005). *Pup and Hound in Trouble.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Hughes, S. (2003). *Bobcat Rescue.* Toronto: Scholastic Canada. (And others in Wild Paw series)

Lewison, W. C. (1992). *"Buzz," Said the Bee.* New York: Scholastic.

Northey, L. (2002). *I'm a Hop Hop Hoppity Frog.* Don Mills, ON: Stoddart Kids.

Parish, P. (1963). *Amelia Bedelia.* New York: Harper & Row. (And other books in the series)

Scrimger, R. (2002). *Princess Bun Bun.* Toronto: Tundra Books.

(continued)

FIGURE 3–7 Easy-to-Read Books *(continued)*

Easy Novel Series

Bates, C. (2001). *Shooting Star*. (Sports Stories series). Halifax, NS: James Lorimer & Co.

Hughes, M. (2001). *Jan's Awesome Party*. (First Novels series). Halifax, NS: Formac Publishing.

Hutchins, H. (2012). *Think Again, Robyn* (First Novels series). Halifax, NS: Formac Publishing.

Kerrin, J. (2009). *Martin Bridge Onwards and Upwards*. Toronto: Kids Can. (And others in Martin Bridge series).

Langlois, A. (2011). *Mia, Matt and the Lazy Gator* (First Novels series). Halifax, NS: Formac Publishing.

Little, J. (2001). *Orphan at My Door: The Home Child Diary of Victoria Cape*. (Dear Canada series). Toronto: Scholastic Canada.

Park, B. (2003). *Junie B., First Grader: Toothless Wonder*. New York: Random House Children's Books.

Staunton, T. (2012). *Morgan Gets Cracking* (First Novels series). Halifax, NS: Formac Publishing.

Poetry

Heidbreder, R. (2006). *Drumheller Dance*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Heidbreder, R. (2012). *Noisy Poems for a Busy Day*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Lesynski, L. (2004). *Zigzag: Zoems for Zindergarten*. Toronto: Annick Press.

Lesynski, L. (2007). *Shoe Shakes*. Toronto: Annick Press.

Yolen, J. (2000). *Color Me a Rhyme: Nature Poems for Young People*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press.

Social Studies

Bourgeois, P. (2005a). *Canadian Fire Fighters*.Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Bourgeois, P. (2005b). *Canadian Garbage Collectors*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Bourgeois, P. (2005c). *Canadian Police Officers*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Bourgeois, P. (2005d). *Canadian Postal Workers*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Drake, J., & Love, A. (2009). *Kids Book of the Far North*. Toronto: Kids Can Press. (And other books in the Kids of series).

Highway, T. (2003). *Fox on the Ice* (Songs of the North Wind series). Toronto: HarperCollins Canada.

Rondina, C. (2012). *Lighting Our World*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Weir, R., & Routhier, A. (2003). *O Canada: Our National Anthem*. Toronto: North Winds Press.

Science

Bourgeois, P. (2007). *The Jumbo Book of Space*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Berkowitz, J. (2009). *Out of This World*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Bourgeois, P. (2008). *The Dirt on Dirt*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Coren, S. (2006). *Why Do Dogs Have Wet Noses?* Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Faulkner, M. (2004). *A Day at the Sugar Bush: Making Maple Syrup*. Toronto: Scholastic Canada.

Hodge, D. (2008). *Who Lives Here? Wetlands*. Toronto: Kids Can Press. (And others in the Who Lives Here series)

Mason, A. (2005). *Move It! Motion, Forces, and You*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Mason, A. (2006). *Change It! Solids, Liquids, Gases, and You*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Serafini, F. (2008). *Looking Closely Inside the Garden* (Looking Closely series). Toronto Kids Can Press.

Swanson, D. (2001). *Burp! The Most Interesting Book You'll Ever Read about Eating*. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Wilson, B. (2005). *Izzie: Book Two: Trongate Fury* (Our Canadian Girl series). Toronto: Penguin Books.

organized bags of books and activities for their students to take home and enjoy with their families. Children keep the bags at home for a few days before returning them for others to borrow. Most bags contain three books, including both narrative and informational texts. Bags also include suggestions for family literary activities and the materials needed for each. Parents and children share their responses to the literature and activities with one another and with the teachers by writing in a journal kept in the bag. Examples of text sets for travelling bags of books are listed in Figure 3–8.

Teachers introduce programs like LIFT at a special meeting at which they explain the purpose of the travelling bags of books and how to use the books and materials with the children. It is important that families understand that their children are not expected to read all of the books

independently, nor are they expected to complete all of the suggested activities. Teachers also show sample journal entries to encourage parents to share their families' responses by writing in the response journal kept in each bag.

Introduction meetings provide opportunities for teachers to help families and caregivers understand their role in helping children grow into literacy. Teachers explain that shared reading is a wonderful time for children to develop positive associations with reading (Purcell-Gates, 1996). Programs like LIFT are popular with many families and offer emergent readers and writers essential support.

FIGURE 3–8 Text Sets for Travelling Bags of Books

Books by Paulette Bourgeois

Bourgeois, P. (2000). *Franklin Helps Out.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Bourgeois, P. (2001). *Franklin Says I Love You.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Bourgeois, P. (2002). *Franklin Plays Hockey.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Bourgeois, P. (2004). *Franklin Forgives.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Bourgeois, P. (2005). *Franklin Celebrates.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Bourgeois, P. (2012). *Franklin's Partner.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.

Books about Frogs and Toads

Azore, B. (2007). *Wanda and the Frogs.* Toronto: Tundra Books.
Carney, E. (2009). *Frog!* New York: National Geographic Society.
Donaldson, C. (2006). *Canada's Wetland Animals.* Toronto: Scholastic Canada.
Lobel, A. (1970). *Frog and Toad Are Friends.* New York: Harper & Row.
McLeod, H. (2011). *Kiss Me!* Markham, ON: Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
Pallotta, J. (1990). *The Frog Alphabet Book: And Other Awesome Amphibians.* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

Books about Mice

Asch, F. (2007). *Mrs. Marlowe's Mice.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Fagan, C. (2007). *Ten Old Men and a Mouse.* Toronto: Tundra Books.
Fitch, S. (1997). *There's a Mouse in My House.* Toronto: Doubleday Canada.
Hood, S. (2012). *The Tooth Mouse.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
Lionni, L. (1969). *Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse.* New York: Pantheon.
Steer, D. (2005). *Thank You, Little Mouse.*Toronto: Scholastic Canada.

Books about the Alphabet

Fauchon, J. (2005). *The Métis Alphabet Book.* Saskatoon: The Gabriel Dumont Institute.
Jocelyn, M. (2005). *ABC x 3.* Toronto: Tundra Books.
Lohnes, M. (2007). *F Is for Fiddlehead: A New Brunswick Alphabet.* Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press.
Major, K. (2000). *Eh? To Zed: A Canadian AbeCedarium.* Red Deer, AB: Red Deer Press.
Moak, A. (2002). *A Big City ABC.* Toronto: Tundra Books.
Ruurs, M. (2001). *A Pacific Alphabet.* Vancouver: Whitecap Books.
Ulmer, M. (2001). *M Is for Maple: A Canadian Alphabet.* Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press.

Books about Trees

Bralier, T. (2009). *Tess's Tree.* Toronto: HarperCollins Canada.
Eger, D. (2006). *Who's in Maxine's Tree?* Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers.
Hickman, P. (1996). *The Kids Canadian Tree Book.* Toronto: Kids Can Press.
McCormick, R. (2002). *Plants and Art Activities.* St. Catharines, ON: Crabtree Publishing.
Silsbe, B. (2001). *A Tree Is Just a Tree?* Vancouver: Raincoast.
Weale, D. (2004). *Three Tall Trees.* Charlottetown, PEI: Acorn Press.

Books about Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Ahlberg, A. (2000). *The Bravest Ever Bear.* Cambridge, MA: Candlewick.
Barnes, L. (1995). *Goldilocks and the Three Bears.* Toronto: Somerville House.
Buehner, C., & Buehner, M. (2007). *Goldilocks and the Three Bears.* New York: Dial.
Campbell, E. (2003). *Goldilocks Returns.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

(continued)

FIGURE 3–8 Text Sets for Travelling Bags of Books *(continued)*

Smith, S. (2004). *Goldilocks and the Three Martians.* New York: Dutton.
Tolhurst, M. (1990). *Somebody and the Three Blairs.* New York: Orchard Books.
Yolen, J. (1995). *The Three Bears Rhyme Book.* New York: Harcourt.

Book about Families

Downey, R. (2001). *Love Is a Family*. New York: HarperCollins.
Munsch, R. (2003). *Lighthouse: A Story of Remembrance.* Toronto: Scholastic Canada.
Ohi, R. (2007). *A Trip with Grandma.*Toronto: Annick Press.
Richardson, B. (2007). *The Aunts Come Marching.* Vancouver: Raincoast Books.
Smith, L. (2011). *Grandpa Green.* New York: Roaring Brook Press.
Stinson, K. (2007). *Mom and Dad Don't Live Together Anymore.* Toronto: Annick Press.
Zweilbel, A. (2005). *Our Tree Named Steve.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

In planning for family literacy activities, teachers are aware of the increasing diversity among families in Canadian schools. They are aware that there are wide variations in families' capacities to support young readers and writers, especially to support them in their language of classroom instruction. Schools, therefore, often work collaboratively with community agencies to support families in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways such as multigenerational programs in which children and adult family members read together. Other programs that support **family literacy programs** focus on providing instruction for adults so that they, in turn, are able to read to children. At their core, school-based family literacy programs are parent–teacher partnerships that require open, dependable, and non-intrusive communication directed toward bridging the literacy traditions and practices that are integral to family and classroom life (Paratore, 2006).

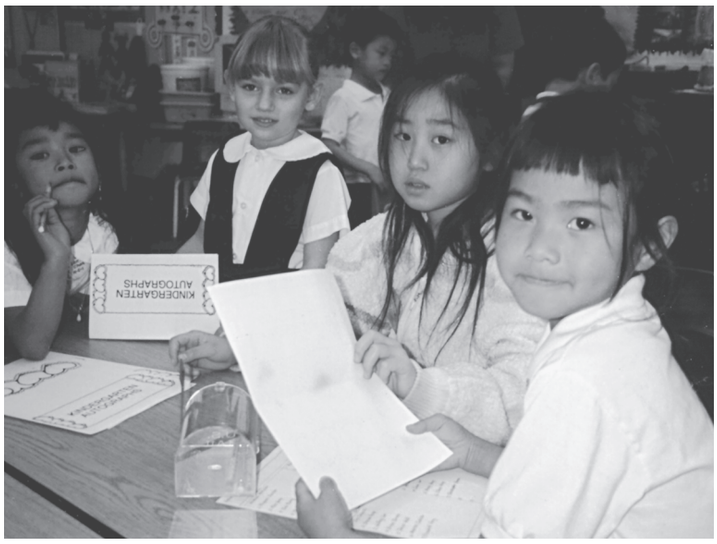
Young Children Become Writers

Many young children become writers before entering kindergarten; others are introduced to writing during their first year of school (Bright, 2002). Young children's writing development follows a pattern of stages similar to their reading development: emergent writing, beginning writing, then fluent writing. In the initial emergent writing stage, children make scribbles to represent writing. At first, the scribbles may appear randomly on a page, but with experience children line up the letters or scribbles from left to right and from top to bottom. Children also begin to "read," or tell what their writing says. The next stage is beginning writing, and it marks children's growing awareness of the alphabetic principle. Children use invented spelling to represent words, and as they learn more about phoneme–grapheme correspondences, their writing approximates conventional spelling. The third stage is fluent writing, in which children use conventional spelling and other conventions of written language, including capital letters and punctuation marks.

Four samples of young children's writing are shown in Figure 3–9. The first is a kindergartner's letter to the Great Pumpkin. The child wrote using scribbles, much like cursive writing, and followed the left-to-right, top-to-bottom orientation. The Great Pumpkin's comment, "I love you all," can be deciphered. The second is a page from a grade 1 student's dinosaur book. The text reads, "No one ever saw a real dinosaur." The third is from a grade 1 writer's reading log. The child used invented spelling to list the animal characters that appear in *The Mitten* (Brett, 1989). The fifth animal from the top is a badger. The fourth is also a list. A kindergartner wrote this list of favourite foods as part of a resource-based unit on *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969). The list reads, "orange, strawberry, apple, pizza, birthday cake."

Emergent Writing. Emergent writing takes many different forms. It can be scribbles or a collection of random marks on paper. Sometimes children imitate adults' cursive writing as they scribble. Children

FIGURE 3–9 Four Samples of Young Children's Writing



Courtesy of Gail E. Thompkins

Children in kindergarten learn about the alphabetic principle as they collect classmates' autographs at the writing centre.

can string together letters that have no phoneme–grapheme correspondences, or they can use one or two letters to represent entire words. Children who have more experience with written language can invent spellings that represent more sound features of words, and they can apply spelling rules. A child's progressive spellings of "Abbie is my dog. I love her very much," beginning at five years old and over a period of eighteen months, are presented in Figure 3–10. The child moves from using scribbles to single letters to represent words (top two entries), to spelling phonetically and misapplying a few spelling rules (third and fourth entries). Note that in the fourth example, the child is experimenting with using periods to mark spaces between words.

Young children's writing grows out of talking and drawing. As they begin to write, their writing is literally their talk written down, and children can usually express in writing the ideas they talk about. Emergent writing is important to young children's development as writers because it gives them opportunity to experiment with written language, especially to invent spellings that reflect their knowledge of written language. The spellings they use give teachers a window onto their writing development and suggest the instruction they need to advance toward fluent writing. Understanding and acceptance of emergent writing by adults helps them to encourage children to experiment when they draw and write. Children who are willing to experiment and take risks in their writing move smoothly through the developmental stages.

For more information on the five stages of the writing process, see Chapter 5, "The Reading and Writing Processes," pages 177–193.

When children begin writing, teachers accept their writing as it is written and focus on the message. As children gain experience with writing, teachers encourage them to read their work to themselves and to "fix" one or two errors. Revising becomes more formal as children learn about audience and start to want to add more or make other changes to their writing to make it appeal to their classmates. Gradually teachers lead them to experience the writing process as it is described in Chapter 5 concerning experienced writers.

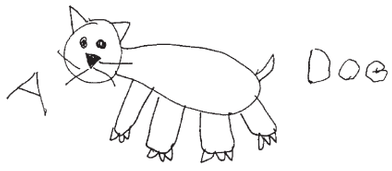
Writing Centres. Writing centres can be set up in kindergarten and primary classrooms so that children have a special place to write. The centre may include any combination of a table, chairs with a box of supplies (such as pencils, crayons, a date stamp, and different kinds of paper), and a bank of computers or tablets. The alphabet, printed in upper- and lowercase letters, should be available for children to refer to as they write. This is an important aid for young writers if the keyboards they use show only uppercase letters. In addition, there should be a place for children to file their writing papers as well as routines for saving digital texts. Teachers, aides, or parent volunteers should be available to encourage and assist children at the centre. They can observe children as they invent spellings and can provide information about letters, words, and sentences as needed.

The Author's Chair. In primary-grade classrooms, teachers often designate a special chair as the author's chair (D. H. Graves & Hansen, 1983). The "author's chair" is where children and the teacher sit to share their writing with the class. In some classrooms, teachers also read aloud to the class from the author's chair. When they do, they name the author(s) of the book and, if possible,

FIGURE 3–10 Emergent Writing

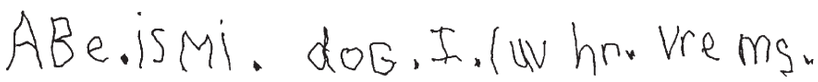
Scribble Writing

One-Letter Labelling

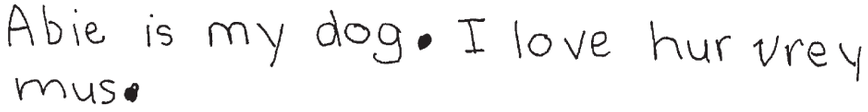


Invented Spelling without Spacing

More Sophisticated Invented Spelling with Spacing



Invented Spelling with Application of Rules



tell something about the person(s). Graves and Hansen (1983) describe children's growing awareness of authors and of themselves as authors in three phases:

1. ***Authors write books.*** After hearing many books read to them and reading books themselves, children develop the concept that authors are the people who write books.
2. ***I am an author.*** Sharing the books they have written with classmates from the author's chair helps children view themselves as authors.
3. ***If I wrote this published book now, I would make some changes.*** Children learn that they have options when they write, and this awareness grows after they have experimented with various writing functions, forms, and audiences.

When children share their writing, one child sits in the author's chair and a group of children sit on the floor or in chairs in front of the author. The author reads the piece of writing aloud and shows the accompanying illustrations. Then children in the audience who want to make a comment raise their hands, and the author chooses several children to ask questions, give compliments, and make comments. Then the author chooses another child to share and takes a seat in the audience.

Review

Emergent literacy is the accepted perspective on how children learn to read and write (Hayden & Kendrick, 2002). Young children learn concepts about written language as they observe teachers, demonstrations and as they experiment with reading and writing. Teachers offer instruction through resource-based units, shared reading, guided reading, and the language experience approach. Children gradually become fluent writers; they progress from using graphic symbols to represent their thoughts to writing using knowledge of phoneme–grapheme correspondences and other conventions of printed language.

The following key concepts are presented in this chapter:

1. Emergent literacy, the concept that young children move into reading and writing through experiences with written language, has replaced the traditional "readiness" approach.
2. As children learn about words, they move from recognizing environmental print and icons to reading contextualized words in books and on screens.
3. Children use phonics as well as information from the other three language systems as they learn to read.
4. Both reading and writing development have three stages: emergent, beginning, and fluent.
5. Two ways teachers read books with young children are shared and guided reading.
6. In resource-based units, teachers engage children in using the six language arts.
7. The language experience approach employs children's own language to offer meaningful reading and writing experiences.
8. Children use emergent writing to experiment with written language concepts, including invented spelling.
9. Young children begin writing using an abbreviated form of the writing process.
10. Young children learn about audience as they share their writing from the author's chair.

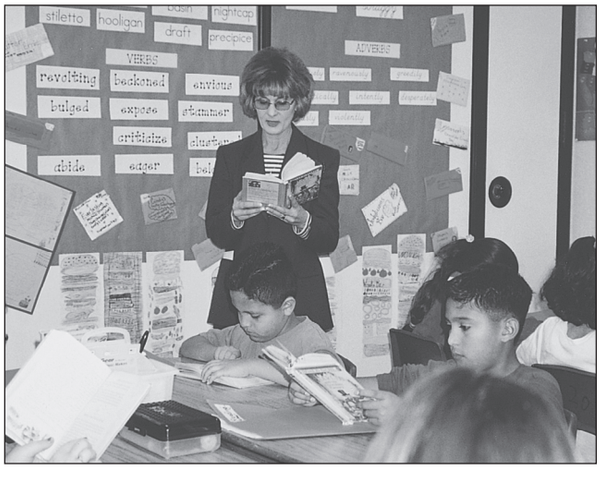
Theory to Practice

1. Observe how children in a kindergarten or grade 1 classroom are learning concepts about written language. Examine reading materials available in the classroom, including predictable books, big books, and online digital stories and opportunities for writing, such as dramatic play, writing centres, and computer-based writing activities.
2. Establish and monitor a buddy-reading program between a group of primary-grade readers and upper-grade readers.
3. Collect books and other materials for two travelling bags of books and share them with a small group of grade 1 and 2 students and their families.
4. Compose a language experience story about an event or favourite story with a group of young children and produce it as a big book for their classroom library.
5. Create a dramatic play centre that incorporates authentic reading and writing materials, and observe as children use the materials.
6. Observe a classroom teacher engage children in a guided reading lesson. Take note of how the teacher introduces the book and relevant vocabulary, teaches strategies, and has the children read the text.

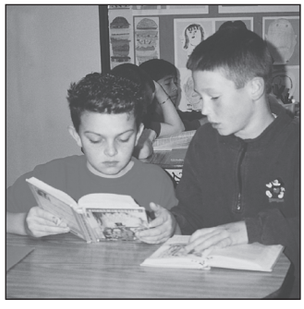
Resource-Based Units

Reading

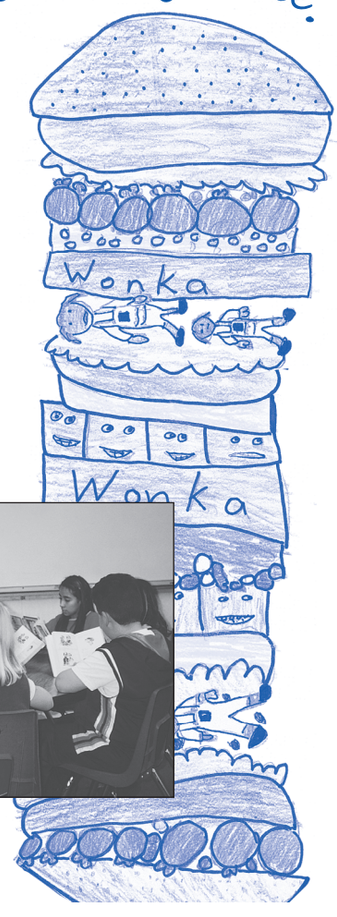
The fifth graders in Mrs. Kenney's class are reading Roald Dahl's delicious fantasy, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. It's the story of Charlie Bucket, an honest and kind boy, who finds the fifth winning Golden Ticket, entitling him to a visit inside Willy Wonka's famous chocolate factory. Charlie and the four other children who also found winning tickets have a wild time visiting the factory, and, in the end, Mr. Wonka gives Charlie the best present of all—his factory!



Mrs. Kenney varies the ways students read each chapter. She reads the first chapter aloud, using whole-class shared reading, and students follow along in their copies of the book. For the other chapters, students alternate reading independently, reading with a buddy, reading in small groups, and reading together as a class.



Create your own Wonka goodie.



Responding

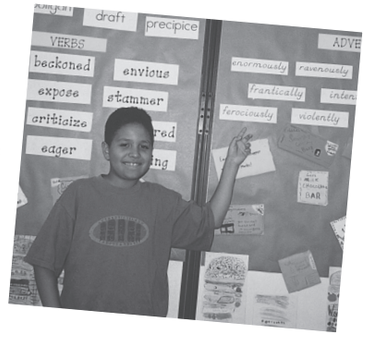
Mrs. Kenney's students respond to the story in two ways. They participate in small-group and whole-class discussions called *grand conversations.* In these lively discussions, they share their ideas about the story, ask questions to clarify misunderstandings, and make connections to their own lives. Mrs. Kenney participates in the whole-class grand conversations and often asks students to think about Charlie and compare him to the other four children.

The fifth graders also write in double entry reading logs. At the beginning of the literature focus unit, students staple together booklets of paper for their journals and divide each page into two columns. After reading each chapter, they choose a quote and write it in the left column and then write a response in the right column.

Quote	Response
Ch. 19 Pg. 94 "The place was like a witch's kitchen!"	I chose this quote because did you know — it's a simile!

QUOTE	MY THOUGHTS
Ch 11 Pg 50 "You've got a Golden Ticket! You found the last Golden Ticket! Hey, what do you know?"	I feel excited and happy because Charlie never had anything much in his life. Maybe now his life will take a turn for the better.

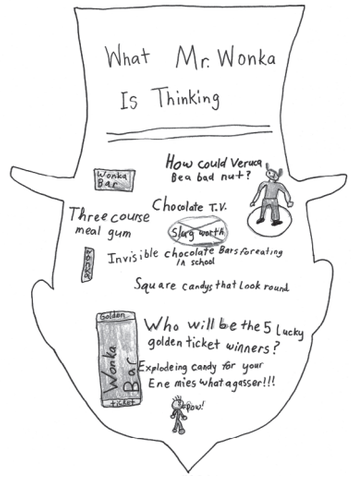
Teaching Minilessons



Mrs. Kenney and her students choose important words from each chapter as they read *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The words are organized by parts of speech on the word wall because Mrs. Kenney is teaching a series of grammar minilessons. The noun list includes *hooligan*, *precipice*, and *verdict*; the verb list includes *beckoned*, *revolt*, *stammer*, and *criticize*. The adjective list includes *despicable*, *scraggy*, and *repulsive*; *ravenously*, *violently*, and *frantically* are on the adverb list.

Mrs. Kenney also uses the words from the word wall as she teaches minilessons on root words and affixes to small groups of students. Students take turns choosing a word from the word wall and breaking apart the word's prefix, root, and suffix as Mrs. Kenney writes the information on the whiteboard. Then students record the information on small, individual whiteboards.

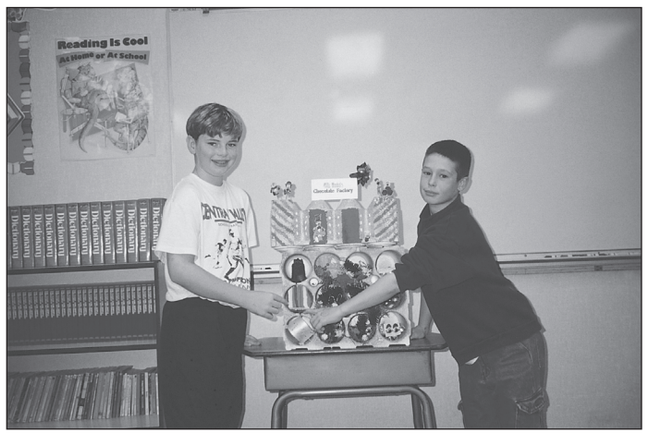
In this literature focus unit, Mrs. Kenney is focusing on character. During a series of minilessons, students investigate how Roald Dahl developed Charlie's character and compare him with Willy Wonka and the other four children with winning Golden Tickets.



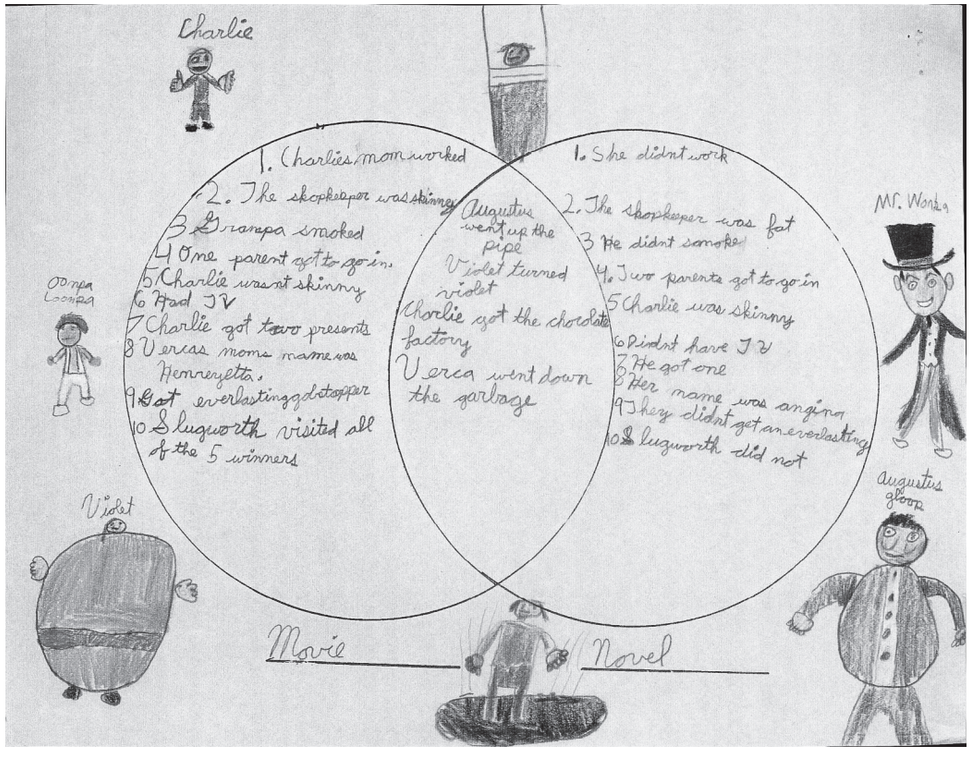
After studying about the characters, students create open-mind portraits of one of the characters. One student's open-mind portrait of Willy Wonka is shown here. The portrait goes on top and the page showing his thoughts goes underneath.

Creating Projects

Students create a variety of projects to extend the book and apply their learning. These two boys created a model of Willy Wonka's chocolate factory. Other students researched how chocolate is made and created a poster to display what they learned, wrote poems about each of the characters in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, or read another of Roald Dahl's stories.



As the concluding activity, Mrs. Kenney and her students view *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, the film version of the story starring Gene Wilder. Afterward, students work in small groups to create Venn diagrams comparing the book and the film versions. One student's Venn diagram is shown here. After discussing the differences, most students agree that they preferred the book.



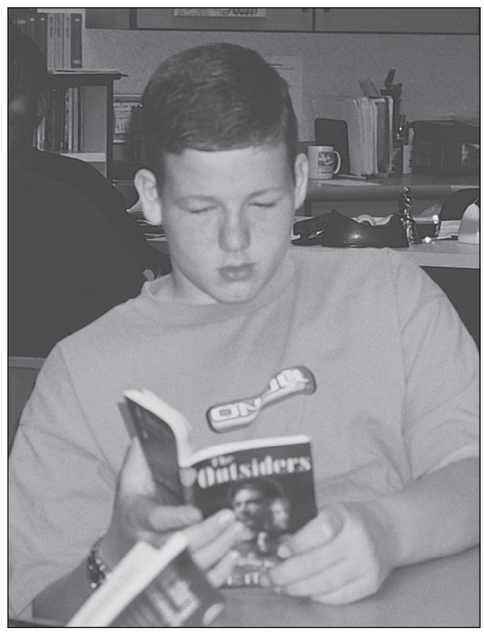
Literature Circles

Reading

Mrs. Goodman's eighth graders participate in literature circles. The teacher introduces six books written at varying levels of difficulty, and students sign up for the book they want to read. The students are currently reading these books:

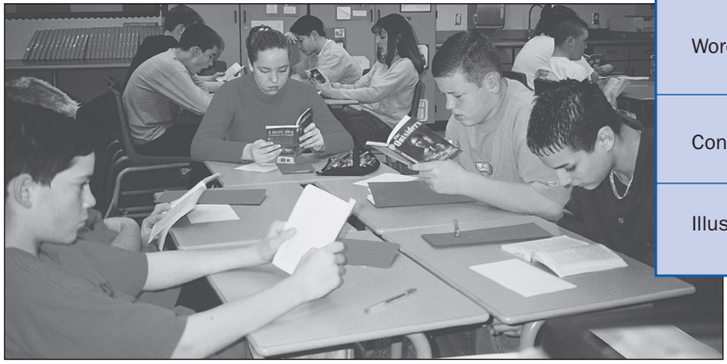
- *The Outsiders*, by S. E. Hinton
- *The Face on the Milk Carton*, by Caroline Cooney
- *Holes*, by Louis Sachar
- *I Am the Cheese*, by Robert Cormier
- *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee
- *What Jamie Saw*, by Carolyn Coman

Students have set a reading schedule and they spend time reading during class and at home.



Students in each literature circle assume roles to deepen their understanding of the story and ensure the smooth functioning of their group. They rotate these roles each day so that everyone has the opportunity to experience all roles.

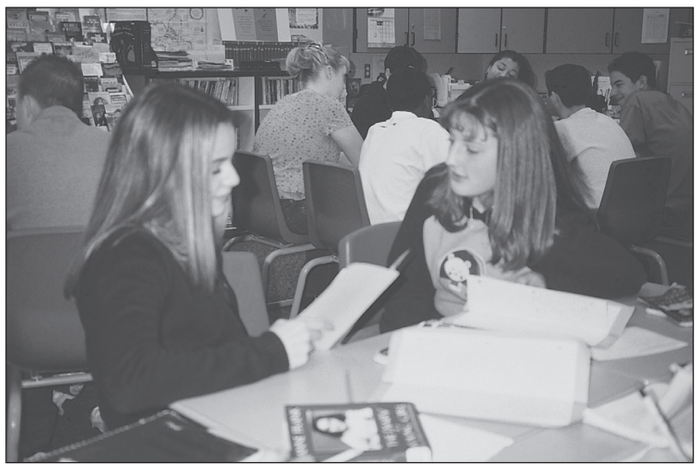
ROLES	
Discussion Leader	This student keeps classmates focused on the big ideas in the story.
Harmonizer	This student helps everyone stay on task and show respect to classmates.
Wordsmith	This student identifies important words in the story and checks the meaning of words in a dictionary.
Connector	This student connects events in the story with real-life experiences.
Illustrator	This student draws pictures to help classmates visualize events in the story.



Responding

Students frequently meet in their literature circles to discuss the story they're reading, and students fulfill their roles. They talk about what's happening in the story, ask questions to clarify confusions, make connections to their own lives, and predict what will happen next. As students talk, Mrs. Goodman circulates around the classroom, joining each group for a few minutes.

Students also write in reading logs. Sometimes they write summaries and make predictions, and at other times they write reflections and ask questions. After writing, students often divide into groups of two or three to read their entries to classmates.



Reading Log

I am liking To Kill a Mockingbird a lot. But it's very different from other books I've read. Instead of describing the scenery and how the people look, it tells the history of everything. The book tells you what has happened. That makes it harder to picture what is happening but easier to make up what you want. I don't think I've ever read a description of Scout anywhere in the book. I didn't quite understand the beginning of the book because it was introducing everything really fast. But now, I'm beginning to understand what is going on.

Reading Log

My questions are:

- *Why don't Scout and Jim call their father Dad but use his real name (Atticus)?*
- *Why doesn't Scout play with other girls?*
- *What does everyone look like?*
- *Why doesn't anyone search for the truth about the Radleys?*

Creating Projects

Students create projects after they finish reading and discussing a story. They write poems and sequels, research a topic on the Internet, develop PowerPoint presentations, create artifacts related to the story, and design story quilts.

After students identify a project they want to develop, they meet with Mrs. Goodman and she approves their choice and helps them get started.

"When jamie saw Van Throw nin"

This picture is a square from a story quilt about *What Jamie Saw*, a story about child abuse. Students in the literature circle draw pictures to represent events from the book and put them together to make the quilt, which presents a strong message about the effects of child abuse.

Sharing

Sharing is the concluding activity. Students in each literature circle share the book they've read and their project with Mrs. Goodman and the class. Sometimes students work together to give a group presentation to the class, and sometimes students develop individual presentations. The students demonstrate their understanding of the story through their presentation, and they hope to interest their classmates in choosing the book and reading the story.

Mrs. Goodman explains how students will be graded before the literature circle begins and posts the criteria in the classroom. For this literature circle, students are graded on four items; each item is worth 25 points. At the end of the literature circle, Mrs. Goodman prepares a grading sheet with the criteria, evaluates students' work, and assigns the grades.

GRADING SHEET

Name Justin

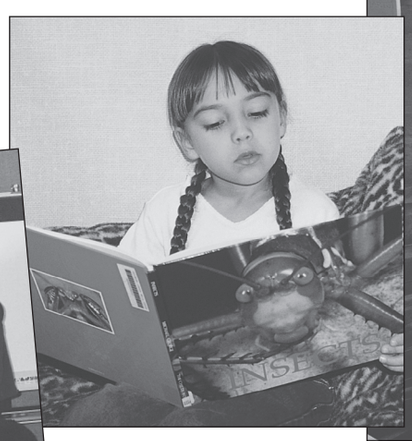
Book The Face on the Milk Carton

1. Reading Log	20
2. Roles in the Literature Circle	25
3. Working Together in a Group	25
4. Project at the End	22
	92

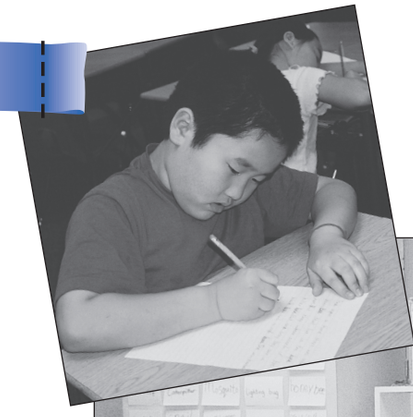
Theme Study and Inquiry-Based Units

Reading

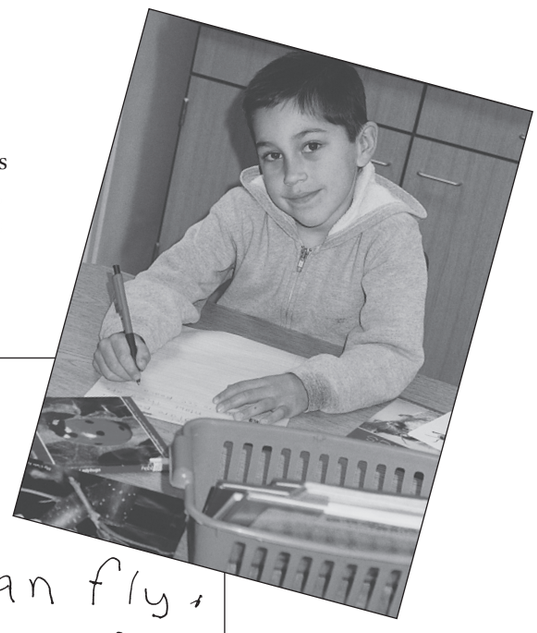
Ms. McCloskey works with 40 kindergarten through third grade students in their multiage classroom. The students are engaged in a thematic unit on insects, integrating all areas of the curriculum. They participate in a variety of reading activities. They listen to Ms. McCloskey read books aloud and read along with her as she shares big books. During centres time, they reread familiar books with buddies and read independently. They also read other books at their own reading levels during guided reading.



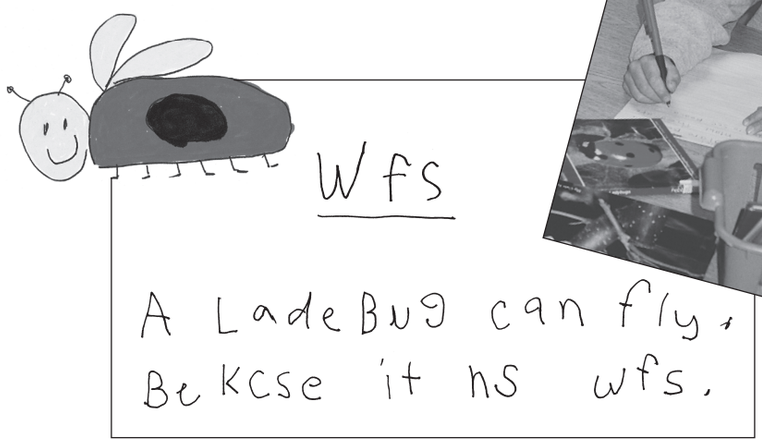
Learning Logs



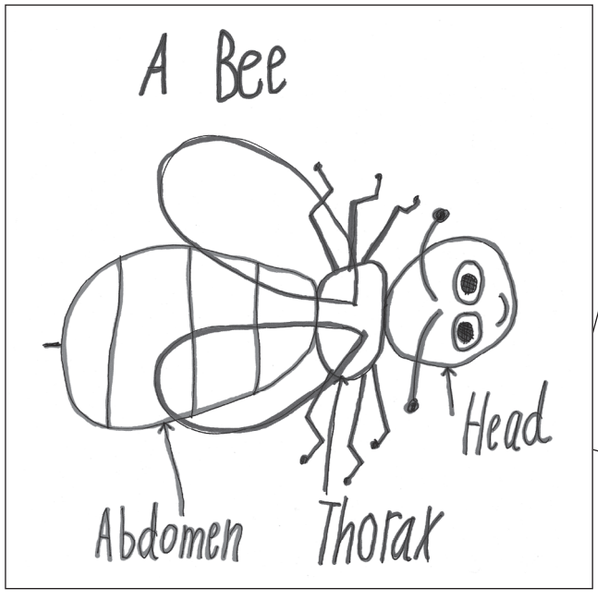
Each day, children write entries for their learning logs at the writing centre. They meet with Ms. Russell, a student teacher working in the classroom, to write about insects. Many of the children are English learners, so Ms. Russell helps them to expand their sentences and include science words in their entries. She also reviews spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar skills with individual children. Then children file their papers in their learning log folders, which are kept at the writing centre. At the end of the thematic unit, children compile their learning logs and decorate the covers.

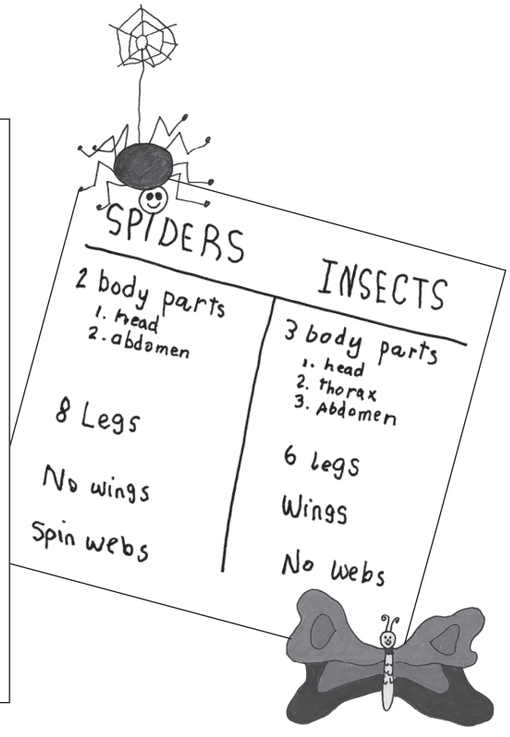


This entry, titled "Wings," was written by a kindergartner who is still learning about capital letters and punctuation marks. He added the second part, "because it has wings," in response to Ms. Russell's question, "How can a ladybug fly?"



Graphic Representations





The children make diagrams, charts, and drawings to record information they're learning about insects. They learn to draw insects accurately with three body parts and six legs. They use diagrams to organize information they're learning as Ms. McCloskey reads a book or presents a demonstration. They also use attribute charts to record descriptive words as they observe insects in the "Look and Learn" science centre.

Creating Projects

The children are creating a multigenre display on insects. Each child writes a story, poem, or report for the display, which will cover an entire wall of the classroom. The children use the writing process to develop their compositions, and all children, even the kindergartners, type their final copies on the computer with a teacher's assistance.

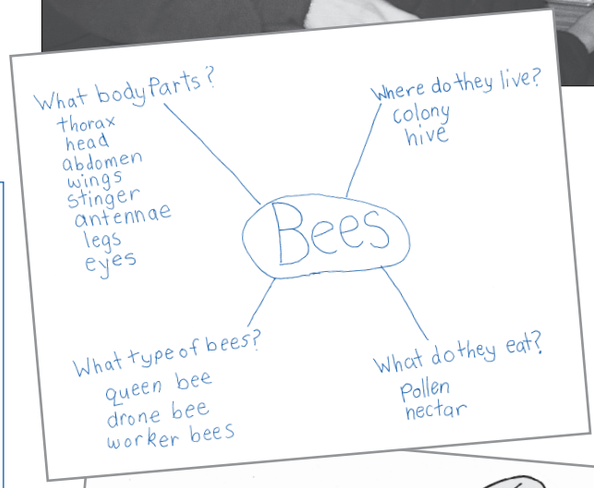
The Bees

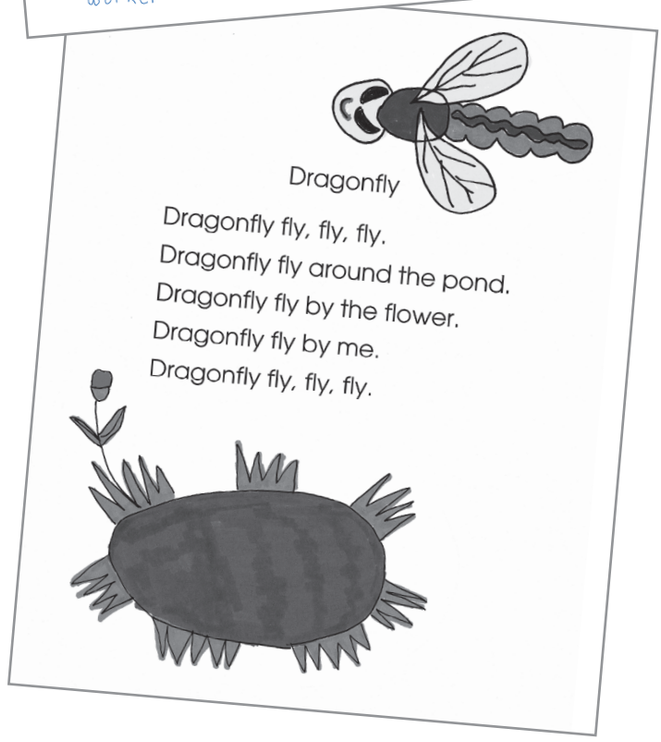
Bees have three body parts: a thorax, an abdomen, and a head. On their body they have some little and big wings, a stinger, two antennae, six legs, and two large black eyes.

The bees live in a hive. Sometimes bees live in a group of bees, and it is called a colony. A lot of bees live in a colony and a lot of bees live in a hive.

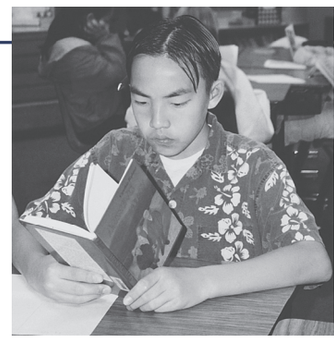
There are three kinds of bees. There is a queen bee, drone bees, and worker bees. The queen lays eggs on the hive and the worker bees take care of the baby bees. One of the worker bees gets pollen from the flowers. When the worker bees get pollen, they dance because they can't talk.

Bees eat pollen and nectar to make honey. When bees make honey they have to go get pollen and nectar. We need bees because bees could make honey for us. If bees is not in this province there will be no honey for us.



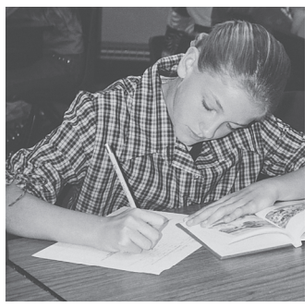


Reading and Writing Workshop



Reading & Responding

Mrs. McClenaghan's fifth and sixth graders participate in reading workshop for an hour each morning. The students read books they've selected from the classroom library, including *A Wrinkle in Time*, by Madeleine L'Engle; *The Sign of the Beaver*, by Elizabeth George Speare; *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, by J. K. Rowling; *Missing May*, by Cynthia Rylant; and *Tuck Everlasting*, by Natalie Babbitt.



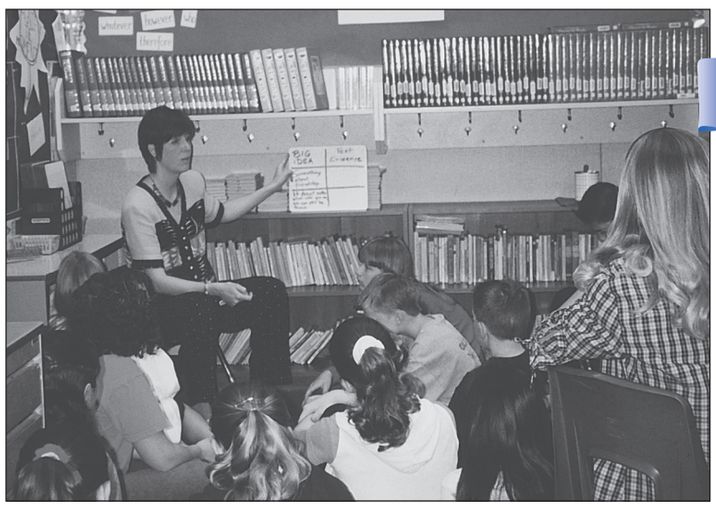
Students also respond to the books they're reading, and their response activities vary according to what Mrs. McClenaghan is teaching. This week's focus is on a reading strategy—forming interpretations. The students identify a big idea in the chapter they're reading and provide evidence from the text to support the idea on T-charts they've made.

Conferencing

As her students read and respond, Mrs. McClenaghan moves around the classroom, stopping to conference with students. She asks students to read a short excerpt and tell about their reading experience and the reading strategies they're using. They talk about the story so Mrs. McClenaghan can monitor their comprehension and clarify any misunderstandings. She carries a clipboard with her and writes notes about each student, including what book the student is reading and the progress he or she is making.

Reading Aloud

Mrs. McClenaghan is reading aloud Theodore Taylor's *The Cay*, a survival story about an elderly African American man and a Caucasian boy who are shipwrecked in the Caribbean and become friends through the experience. She reads aloud a chapter or two each day and the students talk about the story in a grand conversation. She also uses the book in the minilessons she's teaching.



Teaching Minilessons

These fifth and sixth graders have been examining the strategies that good readers use, such as asking questions, making connections, and visualizing, in a series of minilessons. Today, Mrs. McClenaghan focuses on making inferences. She explains that good readers read between the lines to figure out the author's message. She rereads a passage from *The Cay* and asks the students to identify the big idea in the passage. Then she makes a T-chart on a whiteboard and records their answers. In the first column, she writes the big idea, and in the second, a quote from the text to support the big idea. Then she reads another passage several pages later in the text, and they rephrase the big idea to clarify it and finish the chart.

BIG Idea	Text Evidence
It's about friendship.	p. 76 I said to Timothy, "I want to be your friend." He said softly, "Young bahss, you 'ave always been my friend."
It doesn't matter what colour you are, you can still be friends.	p. 79 "I don't like some white people my own self, but 'twould be outrageous if I didn't like any o' dem."

Writing

After spending 60 minutes in reading workshop, students begin writing workshop, which lasts for 45 minutes. Students usually write two- to four-page stories about events in their own lives—personal narratives—during writing workshop. They work at their own pace, moving through the stages of the writing process. Most students write three or four drafts as they develop and refine the content of their writing.

Really Hungry

One day, when it was close to dinner time, my big brother was so hungry he got there before any of us. He was waiting impatiently and when we were at the table with our food in front of us he already started devouring the vegetables and rice.

My mother looked at him, and he stopped stuffing himself. He waited very impatiently while she said grace. Mother's grace isn't short but it isn't very long either. He fidgeted and squirmed untill she finished. "You should make it shorter," he said.

He gobbled all of his rice, vegetables and chicken. We watched him in amazement. He asked for seconds and he started to swallow his food.

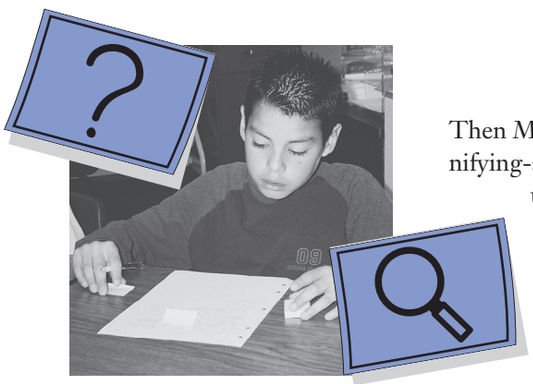
"Don't eat like that," snapped my mother. "Disgusting!" She bit her chicken wing and chewed.

Responding

Students meet with classmates and with Mrs. McClenaghan several times during the writing process to revise and edit their writing. The students provide useful feedback to classmates because they've learned about the qualities of a good piece of writing and they know how to identify problem spots.

Teaching Minilessons

In this writing minilesson, Mrs. McClenaghan shares an essay written by a student from another class. She asks the students to rate it using their district's 6-point writing rubric. They raise their hands and show with their fingers the score they'd give the paper. Most students rate it a 4, and Mrs. McClenaghan agrees. They talk about the strong points in the paper and the areas where improvement is needed.



Then Mrs. McClenaghan reviews the asking-questions and magnifying-a-sentence revision procedures and the symbols students use to represent them. Next, students reread the essay and attach small self-stick notes to the paper with the symbols written on them to indicate revision points. Students also underline the specific sentence each sticky note refers to.

Sharing

During the last 5 minutes of writing workshop, one student sits in the author's chair and shares a newly published composition. The classmates clap and offer compliments after the student finishes reading. They are an appreciative audience because Mrs. McClenaghan and her students have developed a supportive classroom community.