

Setting up a Writing Centre



Kindergarten through Grade 3

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Paper

Colorful

All Sizes

Shapes

Borders

Backgrounds

Construction

Lined

Unlined

Transparent

Thin/sheer

Invisible

Letterhead

Cards

Business

Loose Leaf



Writing Implements

Holiday

Fancy

Named

Colorful

Variety

Flowered

All colors

All shapes

All sizes

Crayons

PencilCrayon

Erasable

Pencils

Pens

Markers



Books

- Journals
- Note books
- Duotangs
- Binders
- Shape
- Diaries
- Booklets
- Hard Cover
- Dictionary
- Pictionary
- Thesaurus
- Encyclopedia
- Story Starters
- Word Games
- Books with Photos
- Class Theme

Webs

- 
- farm
 - castles
 - lakes
 - skating
 - forest
 - winter
 - pigs
 - beach
 - fishing
 - St. Patricks
 - friendship
 - Canada
 - Edmonton
 - cars
 - pioneers
 - dinosaurs



Beginnings

- Once upon a time
- One summer day
- Hi! My name is Emily Elizabeth
- I was never afraid of anything
- As usual
- A long time ago
- One night
- Only yesterday



Middles

- getting lost
- afraid of something scary
- getting hurt
- losing something important
- being different
- disobedience
- doing something new for the first time
- friendships need give and take



Endings

- Solved problem on own: used clear thinking, trial and error, changed behavior
- Someone helped: friend, parent, teacher, police officer
- Could not solve problem: learned to cope, gave it up as a lost cause, made a different plan



Characters

Old

Giant

Silly

Kind

Clumsy

Wit ch

Wise

Magical

Friend

Settings

- 
- Lake
 - Mall
 - Store
 - School
 - Playground
 - Home
 - Farm
 - Campsite
 - Street
 - Back yard
 - Basement
 - Bus
 - Car
 - Haunted house
 - Castle
 - Beach

Settings in Alberta

- 
- lake
 - mall
 - store
 - playground
 - home
 - farm
 - camping
 - hospital
 - reservation
 - dentist
 - wildlife sanctuaries
 - mountains
 - forests
 - street/sidewalks
 - backyards
 - swimming pools
 - doctor
 - ranch
 - oil sands
 - school
 - stampede
 - hockey game



Titles

- The Three
- There is a in my
- Clifford and the
- A for
- and the
- Best friends
- I Was So
- The



Set-Up for Author Study

- Collect books - personal, libraries
- Gather props – toys & artifacts portraying characters, topics, symbols, and motifs
- Prepare Bulletin Board - photos, biography, awards of author, titles, symbols, characters, topics, or setting ideas
- Class adds to display with word posters, book jackets, story maps, themes, or story ecology of beginning, middle, and end
- Keep records of authors' studied during the year: Scrapbook, photographs, author tree, or world map



Author Study Clusters

- Theme Cluster: one topic
- Setting Cluster: compare similar places and times
- Genre Cluster: technique
- Mood Cluster: explore emotions - the spark
- Character Cluster: bully, wise old woman, helper, a bossy, victim, foolish, messy



Themes in Writing

- pain of being different
- penalties of disobedience
- sibling rivalry
- disorientation in new situation
- everybody needs a friend
- friendships require give and take
- good friendships require patience
- the greatest gift is freedom
- bravery and courage can solve problems
- people are unique



Children Need:

- to feel safe and loved
- to know about life, work and the world
- to accept and give love
- to belong
- beauty
- order
- harmony
- to cope with stress
- to achieve and feel self-esteem



Learn about the World

- cleverness
- sly
- underdog
- bravery
- courage
- death/loss
- anxiety
- perseverance
- success
- helping
- give and take
- selfishness
- foolishness
- wisdom



Family Stories

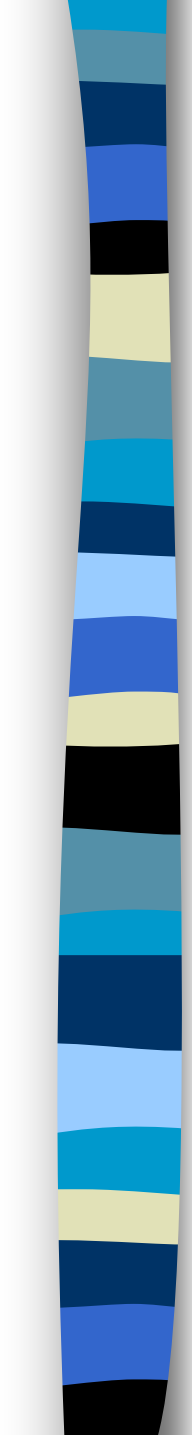
- safety and protection
- interdependence
- comforts
- sibling rivalry: new baby, middle child, oldest, youngest
- grandparents



Problems for Children:

- fears: dark, falling, monsters, pain
- complexity in world: stress, accelerated change, choices
- abandonment, splintering families
- rapid-fire stimulation, no time to assimilate
- exposure to: violence, abuse, terrorism
- expectations for young to be independent
- increased mobility
- chaotic life styles

Author Strategies

- 
- Animal characters instead of human
 - Character types: hero, helper, trickster, underdog, disobedient, silly, clever, sly
 - Characters influence plot: errors, adaptations, using wits
 - Story types: cumulative, why story, circular journey, repetitive sequence, concept books, problem centered, twists, main character
 - Story elements: illustration, contrasting images, conflict, cause and effect, actions



Sharing a Message

Using real author models as a guide

- How I learned to
- I believe kids should not swear in school
- About hitting others
- Doing what others do, just because
- Someone helped me
- I had to change a plan
- This was clear thinking



Writer's Workshop

Each student should have a writing folder or Journal to “catch ideas”

- not the best handwriter – artists, calligraphers or drafters
- not the one with the least grammatical or spelling errors – editors
- not the one with the best presentation of art and text - publisher
- a writer is the one who can access and imagine and work with ideas
- very few ideas get selected for publication



Characterization

- Students should also have a Character folder or Journal.
- Great characters patterned after author examples or real people in children's lives, or favorite animals.
- Add to year after year with new dialogue styles, phrases, descriptions, personality, behavior and potential.



Webs

- Individual webs for particular interests and experiences
- Copies of classroom webs



Creative Process

- Understand that children need waiting time... time to think.
- Surface and superficial ideas come first, then the creative juices start to work and the jewels or nuggets are discovered.
- Allow long blocks of time for creative writing.
- Writing is a discipline – the more time you spend writing, the better writer you become.



The Writing Conference

- “How can I make this better?” Refrain from personal statements and focus on the writing itself; being open to the ideas from group interaction for shared ideas.
- “What do you as an audience want – more setting, characterization, dialogue, action, detail?” A piece that is being worked for publication needs to be removed from the private domain to the public domain.



Editing

- Editing is a different skill than creating
- Self-editing
- Outside sources – removed from emotional attachment
- Create an editor team in your classroom, those with skill and inclination. Just like in the real world... Up to 3 errors or rejection
- Pass it by the publisher. Every writer has this kind of feedback



New Publishing Ideas

- inserting clip art, photos, or backgrounds from online sources.
- typing for final copy/publication using different fonts, colors of ink.
- make use scrapbooking paper and techniques.
- stickers and gel pens for effect.
- create a story scrapbooks/binders with removable for published stories – e.g.. Genre books; settings, types. Pages can be removed for student portfolios.

Cool Words

Z

- 
- zest
 - zany
 - Zorro
 - zipper
 - zombie
 - zigzag
 - zipper
 - zinc
 - zap
 - zero
 - zillion
 - zoo
 - zone
 - zonked
 - zip
 - zippy



Rimes like...

ack

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eat

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* 500 words can be made from a set of 37 rimes



Rhyming Words

Bat

Cat

Fat

Hat

Gnat

Mat

Flat

Splat

Rat

Sat

Vat

Brat



Computer

- Pattern stories - data base, or text file
- How to outline - first, then, next. Finally
- Selecting fonts
- Inserting pictures
- Word Art
- Internet research
- Internet writing groups



Extension Activities

- write to author
- interview character
- dramatize and improve dialogue
- read up to climax, write endings
- character as penpal
- story mural
- Wanted posters
- Was it real? Why?
- New version/problem
- social/science for topic or setting
- write own family into story situations
- write self into story
- border cues story
- create character masks- persona shift
- judge character



Imagination Prompts

- Word Button
- Idea Button
- Activity Books
- Brain stretchers
- New Ideas
- What if
- Answer Hat
- Magic Pen/Pencil
- Information Pencil
- Robot Pencil
- Pictures
- Talking Pencil
- Answering Pencil
- Flying Pencil
- Telephone
- Lamp
- Rubber stamps
- Quiet area
- Flowers
- Mirror
- Radio
- Music