

Breathe a Spark into Their Writing



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in Early Childhood



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



Family Stories

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



Learn about the World

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



Surviving being Different

- wearing glasses/braces/appliances
- overweight/underweight/tall/short
- living in poverty/too rich
- family culture/family structure
- too talkative/too shy/too dramatic
- too smart/too challenged/too artistic
- athletic/clumsy/gymnast/wheelchair



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 Study Clusters

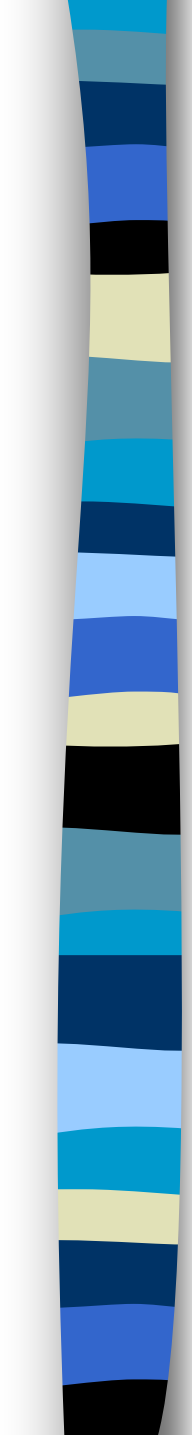
- Theme Cluster: one topic
- Setting Cluster: compare similar places and times
- Genre Cluster: technique
- Mood Cluster: explore emotions - the spark
- Character Cluster: bully, wise old woman, helper, a bossy, victim, foolish, messy



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

Author Strategies

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- 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

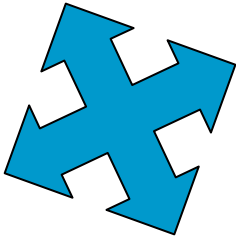


Ordinary

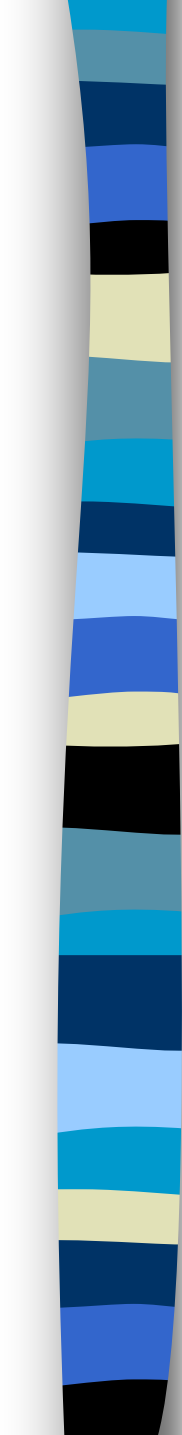


Interesting

Private



Public



Settings in Alberta

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- 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



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