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## A handbook of genre-based literature activities for intermediate language arts

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A HANDBOOK OF GENRE-BASED LITERATURE ACTIVITIES  
FOR INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE ARTS

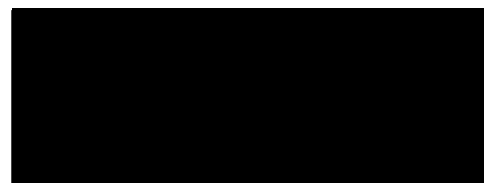
MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the School of Education  
University of Dayton, in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Education

by

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School of Education  
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July 1995

Approved by:



*[Handwritten signature]*  
Official Advisor

## DEDICATION

To my family for their patience and support during the writing of this project.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose for the Study

The teaching of language arts is in transition. The purpose of this study is to examine the changes taking place in language arts instruction, look at the role of literature in the elementary language arts program, and finally, design a handbook of literature activities that will ease the change for the intermediate language arts teacher.

Elementary educators are moving away from the traditional basal reading program; they are moving toward a literature-based, whole language approach. For years, language arts instruction was separated into isolated subject areas: reading, writing, English, and spelling. The basal reading program, with its focus on skill mastery, fragmented reading instruction (Cooper, 1990).

About twenty years ago, researchers began looking at the way that children learn to read and write. They discovered that children do not learn literacy skills in isolation, but simultaneously (Cooper, 1990). This finding caused researchers to examine the way in which language arts was taught, not only in the United States, but around the world. New Zealand, with the highest literacy rate in the world, became the focus of much of the research (Routman, 1988).

In New Zealand, children are taught to read and write the same way they develop oral language, by modeling

language. Impressed with the success experienced in New Zealand, American educators began to move toward an integrated literacy methodology called "whole language". The source of the whole language is quality children's literature (Routman, 1988).

The two most important goals in any reading program are teaching children to read and instilling in children a love of reading. The basal system of reading, while effective in teaching reading skills, falls short in creating a desire to read. Good literature provides the means by which both can be accomplished (Wood and Moss, 1992). Sloan (cited in Laughlin and Swisher, 1990) defines a literate person as one who who reads "fluently, responsively, critically, and because he wants to" (p.ix). Literature builds the cognitive background necessary for a student to understand what he (or she) reads and writes (Laughlin and Swisher, 1990; Wood and Moss, 1992). Literature provides meaningful connections with print and creates the desire to read (Routman, 1988).

The elementary years are critical in shaping a child's tastes in reading. The books read during this period have a lasting effect on lifetime reading habits (Cullinan, 1971). Therefore, the language arts teacher has the important job of providing children with well-rounded collections of literature from many different genres (Laughlin and Watt, 1986).

In the midst of this language transition, teachers find

themselves somewhere on a continuum between traditional basal instruction and whole language. It can be a frustrating process for the teacher who wants to put aside the basal manual, but who does not know where to begin with whole language. The Review of Literature in CHAPTER II will examine some of the disadvantages of teaching solely with a basal reader, discuss the importance of using literature, and look at the elements of a well-rounded literature program. The final project, a literature activities handbook, will give the intermediate language arts teacher a tool to supplement the literature program.

#### Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to design a teacher's handbook of genre-based literature activities to enrich an intermediate reading curriculum.

#### Assumptions

The author of this study assumes that the literature handbook will be used in an intermediate reading program that is either literature-based or whole language oriented.

#### Limitations

The books and activities in the literature handbook are designed for students who read at a fourth through sixth grade reading level. Students with reading levels above or



below these levels may require adapted assignments . While primary and junior high teachers may be able to adapt these activities for their use, the handbook is geared to the intermediate grade level student.

#### Definition of Terms

Basal reading series. This term refers to a coordinated, graded set of textbooks, teacher's guides, and supplementary materials.

Genre. A genre is a distinctive type or style of literature in which books have similarities.

Journal Writing. Journal writing is a written response to reading done in diary or letter form.

Literature-based Reading. A literature-based reading program contains selections from children's books along with teacher's manuals, workbooks, worksheets, and end-of-unit tests.

Schema. This term refers to a pre-existing knowledge structure developed about a thing, place, or idea.

Textset. A textset is a set of books with the same genre, theme, or title.

Whole Language. This term refers to a language arts curriculum that integrates the teaching of reading and writing across all academic areas.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Disadvantages of Teaching With a Basal Reader

Basal readers have long served as the basic reading textbooks in most schools. These commercially produced series present reading skills in a systematic scope and sequence from kindergarden level up through sixth grade. The stories in basal readers are either written by the textbook authors or they are adapted versions of children's literature. The vocabulary in the stories is controlled and the story length may be altered to keep it to a predetermined number of pages (Routman, 1988). While few would argue that the basal is a valuable tool for teaching phonics and basic vocabulary, there are disadvantages to its sole use in reading instruction.

One disadvantage of using the basal reader is that reading is taught separately from the other language arts, i.e., writing, English, and spelling (Cooper, 1990). According to Cooper (1990), researchers who studied how children learn to read and write found that children develop literacy skills simultaneously. Therefore, schools should be teaching language arts altogether as integrated literacy. Children need to hear stories, read stories, talk about their reactions to what they read; they need to write about their reading using proper English. To separate these aspects of language is counterproductive to the natural development of language.

A second disadvantage of using the basal text is that reading is taught with a "part-to-whole" approach. The instruction places primary emphasis on the fragments of language: letters, sounds, words, phrases, and sentences. So much time is spent on skill instruction of these language parts, that little time is left for actual reading (Huck, 1993). The basal student who masters the skills is rewarded with a story to read. However, the low reader who does not master the skills is destined to endure additional skill instruction and he (or she) may seldom get past this point (Goodman, 1986; Trelease, 1982). Furthermore, the emphasis on phonics skills, in place of actual reading, prevents these low readers from using more meaningful and natural decoding strategies, such as reading for meaning (Routman, 1988).

Another drawback to using the basal is that it does not use real language; the vocabulary is controlled. Basal authors begin the story-writing task with a vocabulary list. They write a story, or adapt an already written story, to accommodate the vocabulary list and meet a prescribed readability level (Routman, 1988). Goodman (cited in Tunnell and Jacobs, 1989) examined two leading basal series and found that only 20% of the stories were authentic. According to Fox (1993), children who are exposed only to basals find them to be dull and tedious. Fox feels basals aggravate the problems of the nonreader because they appear to have been written by nonreaders. According to Fox, " Basal readers are emotional deserts between two covers. Little children who struggle across the arid vocabulary toward an illusive

literacy often collapse along the way, thirsting for the language of life" (p.121). She goes on to remark that the dullness of the basal reader results in the reader's lack of desire to read.

In addition to controlled language, another problem with using the basal exclusively is controlled story length. Basal publishers provide teachers with material that can be taught in a short instructional time frame. The stories are kept to a predetermined length of approximately ten to twelve pages so that they can be completed in less than a week. As a result, important story elements such as setting, character development, and descriptive detail are sometimes altered or eliminated. What remains is a lifeless imitation of the former story (Routman, 1988). The original artwork may be sacrificed for stylized illustrations. Fox (1993) reacts to this by saying that "the eye is repulsed even before the heart and mind begin to be repelled" (p.121).

Low performing students in basal reading programs do not conceive reading to be a meaning-related activity. Researchers Rasinski and Ford (cited in Tunnell and Jacobs, 1989) studied student conceptions about reading. They interviewed primary students in three different reading programs: content-centered mastery learning, traditional basal, and literature-based. Their study concluded that low readers in the basal program saw reading as little more than a process of changing symbol to sound. Fox (1993) believes that the basal program's skills and worksheets are the "dead-end streets of literacy" (p.69). Students may

master the act of filling in workbook pages with correct answers, but they may not be able to understand or write a coherent paragraph due to the fact that they have not spent time interacting with real language (Fox, 1993).

Finally, students in basal programs tend to associate reading with work and not pleasure (Trelease, 1982; Routman, 1988; Fox, 1993). A typical basal lesson involves skill instruction, reading a story, and completion of several skill and comprehension workbook pages. According to Routman (1988), children cannot enjoy and appreciate a story when they are faced with the tedious task of completing pages of trivial questions, especially when each has only one right answer. The result of this type of instruction, says Routman (1988), is that our schools are turning out functional literates, children who read and write in school, but not in other contexts.

Given the many disadvantages of basal instruction, it is of little surprise that teachers are choosing to move away from the practice of using the basal exclusively. Whether it is an extreme shift to whole language or a partial move to literature-based instruction, one thing is clear: the use of quality children's literature is essential to the change.

## The Importance of Using Literature in the Reading Program

There are many ways to use literature in the reading program. Some teachers choose to use it to supplement the basal series, as an enrichment after skill instruction and basal text. Other teachers use a literature-based curriculum. This type of program is also a published series complete with teacher's manual, student text, and workbooks. However, instead of watered-down, altered stories, the reading selections are unchanged excerpts from original children's literature. This approach is a comfortable way for many traditional basal teachers to improve their programs. The quality literature is there, but so is the "comfort zone" of planned lessons and skill instruction. A third alternative is to eliminate the use of any published series and teach completely with literature. Atwell (1987) advocates this method. In her classroom, students read books of their own choosing. As they read they discuss their books in small groups and react to their reading in personal journals. Atwell manages to work in skill instruction through what she terms "mini-lessons," short skill lessons that occur as the need for that instruction arises. The most important thing about Atwell's "mini-lessons" is that they are brief, and they never take away from what is most important, time to read. There is no one right way to teach reading. Teachers need to find methods that work for their needs and the needs of their students. The change from basal text to literature is an evolving process. The important thing is for the teacher to bring

literature into the classroom and to allow its use to grow and evolve. Many books and journal articles have been written in the past ten years in support of using literature. The remainder of this section will discuss some of the reasons why literature is an important part of today's reading curriculum.

According to Laughlin and Swisher (1986), educators need to be concerned with the type of materials that children read. It's important for teachers to select stories that have high standards of form and that express ideas that are interesting to students at their level of experience and maturation. Reading good literature provides students with enjoyable experiences that help them to grow. Piaget (as cited in Wood and Moss, 1992) found that children must have background knowledge of a subject before they can understand what they have read about that subject. When children hear and read literature, their knowledge base, or schema, grows and their ability to comprehend increases.

In addition to broadening schema, using literature promotes vocabulary development. Routman (1988) writes that exposure to literary language increases the comprehension of language and the growth of the reader's vocabulary. A productive cycle of learning develops. The more a child reads (or is read to), the more vocabulary the child learns and the more fluent a reader the child becomes. As a result, the child is able to understand more challenging reading materials.

Another reason for using literature is that it uses language in wholes rather than in parts (Fox, 1993). The language in

literature is whole and real, the way the author wrote it. It is not controlled or simplified to fit a particular skill level.

Johnson and Louis (1987) write that through literature children can participate in the joy of discovering and playing with the world of language. Johnson and Louis believe that children increase their ability to use language when they are challenged to use vocabulary that is somewhat more mature than the vocabulary they are currently using. They write:

A child's world should include a wealth of the best language, and that language does not come from syllable counts, workbooks, reading programs, and instructional manuals. It comes from writers, dreamers and poets.  
(p.155)

Fox (1993) believes that meaningful reading is achieved when the reader uses the context of a story, not words in isolation. She writes:

...it is actually easier to read a story than it is to read a paragraph, easier to read a paragraph than a sentence, easier to read a sentence than a word, and easier to read a word than to recognize a letter.  
(p.65)

Fox (1993) concludes by saying that if teachers teach using this whole to part philosophy, they will not only do a better job of teaching reading, but they will create readers in the process.

Using literature also develops a child's creative and critical thinking skills (Laughlin and Watt, 1986). A creative person is open to new concepts and is able to generate unique and original ideas when confronted with a problem. A creative person is also willing to take risks. Knowing that the creative problem solvers that we teach today will become tomorrow's world leaders,



it is important to nurture students' creative and critical thinking. Literature is a valuable tool for accomplishing this task (Champlin and Kennedy, 1990).

Literature gives children a safe medium through which they can test their ideas against the ideas they find in books (Laughlin and Swisher, 1990). For instance, children can vicariously experience how a book character solves a problem and then compare it to their own problem solving ideas. Routman (1988) writes that when children are well-read they are continually thinking and evaluating real purposes in real-life situations. In addition, literature feeds their imaginations by drawing children into fictional and fantasy worlds of make-believe (Laughlin and Watt, 1986). Providing children with literature fills their imaginations with ideas about characters, places, themes and emotions. As a result, children have a wealth of creative material to draw on when they are asked to express their ideas (Fox, 1993). Also, as children acquire skills in understanding theme, appraising character development, and comparing authors' styles, their critical thinking skills are improved.

Literature enables readers to better understand themselves, other people and the world. Graves (1991) writes that through literature students can find situations that parallel and extend their own experiences. Chambers (as cited in Routman, 1988) states that literature provides a way that learners can come to terms with ideas about themselves and who they are. When a child

reads a book, the story is internalized. From that point on, in the child's life, the child's thinking is affected by that book.

Literature deals with human emotions. Through books children meet characters with personalities like their own. This validates who they are and promotes a positive self-concept (Routman, 1988). According to Huck (1993), literature is concerned with feelings and the quality of life. A book can instruct the heart as well as the mind. Through literature children develop insights and understandings; they also engender a sense of joy and wonder about living. Huck writes that great books "enable us to live many lives, good and bad, and to begin to see the universality of human experience" (p.13). Finally, Fox (1993) comments that in literature we can find an entire range of human emotions to think about and learn from. She writes:

The depth of affective engagement in a story well-told or a book well-read is one of the priceless seeds of literacy, which, once grown, can be pruned and guided to spread in different directions based on personal needs and the needs of society. But if the literature seed is dried up or diseased - as it is in basal readers - then the cultivation of literacy becomes a bruising, backbreaking business rather than a rewarding and heartfelt pleasure. (p.94)

Tunnell and Jacobs (1989) cite research indicating that the use of literature can affect student achievement and attitudes toward reading. In 1986, Tunnell used a literature-based reading program with a class of fifth graders. Eight of the twenty-eight students were reading disabled. Following seven months of treatment, the class was given a standardized test (SRA). The average gain in the overall reading score was a 1.1 grade

equivalent. The eight reading disabled students, who were stalled in their reading progress, gained an average of a 1.3 grade equivalent and a 2.0 grade equivalent in comprehension. The same class was given a reading attitude survey in August and again in April of the same school year. The results of the survey were that all negative attitudes towards reading disappeared as the students' self-concept with relation to literacy increased.

The last and most important reason for using literature is that it creates readers. According to Huck (1993), when a teacher uses literature, the focus is on reading instead of skill development. It is not that skill development does not occur in a literature program. The point is that the reading skills develop naturally through the acts of reading, writing, and discussing literature (Routman, 1988). Fader (as cited in Routman, 1988) writes that "if teachers would see themselves as purveyors of pleasure, rather than instructors in skill, they may find that skill will flourish where pleasure has been cultivated" (p.22).

Cullinan (1971) states that the elementary years are crucial in determining the lifelong reading habits and tastes of children. If children only think of reading as meaningless, boring skill drills and worksheets, the chances of them becoming life-long readers are minimal. However, if they've spent their elementary years immersed in great literature, and reading is an important, pleasureable act, chances are they will continue reading into adulthood because they are personally rewarded by

it.

### Elements of a Well-Rounded Literature Program

Making the decision to use literature in the reading program is an important first step for a teacher. Once that decision has been made, the teacher needs to consider how the program will operate. This section will review some important factors to include.

The first thing to do when implementing a literature-based program is to fill the classroom with books. Children need to be surrounded with literature (Fox, 1993). Atwell (1987) states that supplying books for students to choose and read needs to be a top priority of the reading teacher. The literature can come from the teacher's classroom library or collections from the local library. The books can be grouped by genre, theme, or not grouped at all. Norton (1983) and Cullinan (1971) believe that children should be exposed to books from many genres in order to balance their reading experiences. Stories from different genre expose students to a variety of story structures, themes, and styles of writing (Routman, 1988). Heine (1991) suggests using "textsets" of literature, which are groups of related books. He feels that when a class reads books that are related, the opportunities for open discussion and critical thinking are increased. Atwell (1987) believes that students should always be allowed to choose their own books. When students choose their own books, they are

more interested in what they are reading, which results in better fluency and improved comprehension.

In order for a literature program to be successful, children need time to read. Goodlad (1984) found that U.S. elementary school students spend only 6% of the school day actually reading. Trelease (1982) believes that by giving children extended periods of sustained silent reading (SSR), their attitudes toward reading become more positive. They view reading as recreation rather than work. Atwell (1987) writes that time for silent, uninterrupted, independent reading is the strongest experience that teachers can give to students to show the value of literacy. Reading needs to be the main activity of the literature program, rather than the homework or the follow-up activity.

Another vital element of a literature program is a teacher who is willing to take the time to read aloud to students every day. Trelease (1982) believes that this is especially important at the intermediate grade levels. He says that teachers mistakenly think that reading aloud to older children takes away their initiative to read on their own. In order for children to take an interest in reading, they need to be aware of the pleasures of reading. Reading aloud is a way for teachers to communicate that pleasure.

Fox (1993) writes that "literature that is heard resonates in one's memory" (p.68). She describes two "wells" that writers and speakers draw on in their work, the "well of rhythm" and the "well of vocabulary" (p.68). Fox contends that rhythm and

vocabulary are taught best when they are modeled for students by a teacher who reads aloud and often. Fox also believes that reading aloud can be an effective way to motivate the reluctant reader or writer.

An important part of any literature program is what occurs during and after reading. Children should be encouraged to make intelligent and thoughtful responses to literature (Johnson and Louis, 1987). Response activities are alternatives to traditional reading assessment (e.g., worksheets, book reports and comprehension tests). For example, one way for students to react to literature is through journal writing. Atwell's (1987) students keep a daily journal. After reading they correspond with Atwell and each other through letters about books. A journal letter is not a retelling of the story; it is a reaction reflecting the thoughts and feelings of the reader about the story. The letters are a way for students to compare ideas about books and a way for the teacher to communicate with students individually. Atwell finds that corresponding with her students allows her to get to know them better; it builds rapport and trust between teacher and student.

Routman (1988) uses literature extension activities as a way for students to interact with books and other students. Working alone, in small groups, or as a class, students are offered a variety of opportunities to share what they have read. Projects take the place of seatwork and are designed to reinforce reading, writing, and thinking skills. Routman (1988) notes that these

projects require only about 20% of the reading time, compared to 70% that was once allowed for worksheets.

Finally, in order for a literature program to be successful in the long term, it needs the support of the students' families. Teachers can provide the literature and the motivation in the classroom, but it is important that students see their families enjoy and reinforce positive reading practices and attitudes at home (Tunnell and Jacobs, 1989).

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

#### Review of Professional Textbooks

In order to establish a foundation for this study, textbooks by whole language educators such as Routman, Fox, Huck, and Atwell were reviewed. By examining the philosophy and the research behind the whole language movement, the author shows the need for exploring how and why literature should be used in the intermediate classroom. These texts also provided an outline of the necessary elements in a literature program.

#### Review of Journal Articles

The author of this study reviewed journal articles that cite research conducted in the area of literature-based instruction. Articles from Language Arts, The Reading Teacher, and Elementary School Journal provide persuasive support for the reading achievement and positive reading attitude changes that a literature program can produce. Other articles from Learning K-8, Instructor, and Language Arts offer support for teaching literature through genre and ideas for literature extension activities.

#### Activity Books and Workshops

The author examined selected activity books for ideas on handbook content and layout. Some of the ideas that are included in the handbook are ideas that the author has adapted from



professional workshops and activity books in the author's personal library. These ideas have been classroom tested and modified to fit the teaching style of the author and the needs of intermediate students.

#### Critique by Experts

Upon completion of the project rough draft, the author gave it to two peer teachers for review. They were asked to assess the handbook using the five-question survey below. Their comments and suggestions were evaluated and are summarized in Chapter V.

- Questions:
1. Is the handbook "user friendly"? Explain.
  2. Is the language easy to understand?  
Explain.
  3. Is the organization, by month and genre,  
helpful? Explain.
  4. Are the activities appropriate for  
intermediate students? Explain.
  5. Would this handbook be useful in your  
reading program? Explain.

CHAPTER IV

A HANDBOOK OF GENRE-BASED LITERATURE ACTIVITIES  
FOR INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS

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July 1995

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## INTRODUCTION

Literature has become a very important component of today's elementary language programs. There are so many wonderful children's books to choose from that the selection process can be overwhelming for the classroom teacher. The purpose of this handbook is to give the intermediate teacher a resource that organizes the literature program around books with similar themes and a nine-month school calendar.

In the following pages you will find a nine-month plan for intermediate grade level literature. The suggested books are grouped by genres. The elementary years are when children are forming life-long opinions and attitudes toward reading. The reason for presenting books grouped by genre is that it assures that students will be exposed to a wide variety of literature styles in the elementary grades. Also, by having everyone read different books from the same genre, students will gain a well-rounded appreciation for the characteristics of particular genres, and they will have a common theme for stimulating classroom discussions and extension activities.

Each monthly section contains suggestions for books that the teacher can read aloud to the class and a list of student books that the teacher can give to the library when requesting a book collection. There are also ideas for language activities that students can do after reading. The activities provide a creative way for students to share what they've learned and a way for the

teacher to bring closure to the genre before beginning a new collection.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

### Getting Ready:

At the start of the school year, each student will need a spiral notebook for daily journal writing, a "literature log" to keep track of books read through the year, and a progress chart to record successful completion of each genre. (See Appendices.)

One to two weeks prior to the beginning of a month, request your book collection from the library. When you receive the collection, choose and preview the read-aloud that you will use. (Occasionally you'll find a book that contains an instance of objectionable language and you'll want to decide ahead of time how you will deal with it.) I usually introduce a collection through the read-aloud book. If you can get them "hooked" on the read-aloud, it's easy to "sell" them on the rest of the collection.

Give the students time to look through the collection and make their selections. I always tell students that it's okay to put a book back if it doesn't grab their interest in the first chapter. However, by the following reading period, everyone should have chosen their first book and be ready to read.

### The Daily Routine:

Reading -It's important to allow ample time each day for sustained silent reading. At the beginning of the school year,

students may only be able to handle 20-30 minutes of reading before becoming restless. As they become accustomed to school routine, you'll find that they are able to read for longer periods of time. It's important for you to read, also. The ungraded papers and next week's lesson plans can wait. Your students need to see you become absorbed in a good book. There's no better way to communicate the value of reading.

Journals - In addition to time for reading, you'll need to provide time for journal writing. Journals are a way for students to respond and react to the books they read. Journal writing can be an unstructured "free-writing" exercise, or the teacher can provide writing prompts. (See Atwell, 1987, p.276-280.) The most important thing to communicate to your students is that journal writing is not a retelling of the story; it is a reaction to what they've read.

Group Discussion - Several times a week, the class should talk about their books to one another. This can be done in large or small groups. Oftentimes, I will have the students share their journal writing and then discuss their different viewpoints. These discussions are rewarding experiences for everyone. Each student gets to feel like a literary critic about his (or her) book, the students learn from each other, and the teacher gains insight into how well the students are understanding the reading.

Individual Student Conferences:

It's a good idea to meet with students individually to see how their reading is going. You can sometimes tell from class

discussion that Student A is not progressing with his (or her) reading or that Student B has missed an important point in the book. Classroom discussion time is not the appropriate time to address individual problems. Individual conferences allow you to ask a few key questions to assess understanding, as well as progress. Also, when students know that you will be meeting with them individually, they tend to be more responsible about keeping up with their reading. I keep a log of individual conferences and this becomes a part of the student's assessment at the end of the grading period.

#### Student Activities:

When I observe that half the students in the class are nearing the end of their books, I explain the activity that they'll be doing. This gives them some time to think about it before they actually begin work on it. (There are some activities that are done along with the reading, and these are explained to the students at the beginning of the month.) You'll find, also, that some of your students will have read two or three books before anyone else has completed their first book. I encourage students to read as much as they can and then tell them to choose one of the books for the project. The activities are varied; they encourage creative writing and oral presentation, as well as artistic expression.

## SEPTEMBER

### STORIES OF SURVIVAL - REALISTIC FICTION

These stories are an ideal way to start off a literature program in a new school year. In September, students are always fearful that they won't be able to "survive" the challenges of the upcoming year. This is a perfect opportunity to reassure them that, like the characters in the books, with resourcefulness, responsibility, and creativity, they, too, will have a story of survival to share in June.

#### READ-ALoud BOOKS:

de Felice, Cynthia. *Weasel*, Macmillan, 1980.  
Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay*, Doubleday, 1968.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS :

Anderson, Margaret J. *The Journey of the Shadow Bairns*, Knopf, 1980.  
deFelice, Cynthia. *Weasel*, Macmillan, 1980.  
Fife, Dale. *North of Danger*, Dutton, 1978.  
Fleischman, Paul. *The Half-A-Moon Inn*, Harper & Row, 1980.  
George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves*, Harper & Row, 1972.  
- *My Side of the Mountain*, Dutton, 1958.  
- *River Rats*, Dutton, 1979.  
Houston, James. *Long Claws: An Arctic Adventure*, Atheneum, 1981.  
Lasky, Kathryn. *The Night Journey*, Warne, 1981.  
Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*, Houghton, 1989.  
Moeri, Louise. *Save Queen of Sheba*, Dutton, 1981.  
O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, Houghton Mifflin, 1968.  
Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet*, Bradbury, 1987.  
Roth, Arthur. *Iceburg Hermit*, Scholastic, 1976.  
Ruckman, Ivy. *Night of the Twisters*, Harper, 1984.  
- *No Way Out*, Harper, 1988.  
Skurzynski, Gloria. *Lost in the Devil's Desert*, Lothrop, 1982.



Southall, Ivan. *Hills End*, Macmillan, 1962.  
Speare, Elizabeth George. *The Sign of the Beaver*, Houghton Mifflin, 1982.  
Sperry, Armstrong. *Call It Courage*, Macmillan, 1940.  
Steele, William. *The Magic Amulet*, HBJ, 1979.  
Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay*, Doubleday, 1969.  
Wyss, Johann David. *The Swiss Family Robinson*. Many versions.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Pretend you are the main character in the story and write a diary from that character's perspective. It's a good idea to write a diary entry after each chapter is completed. Design a cover for your diary using one of your favorite scenes from the story.
- \* Design and construct a shoebox diorama illustrating the setting of the story. Be sure to include the main character(s) and important objects and details from the story.
- \* Imagine you suddenly find yourself in an emergency survival situation and the only thing you have with you is your school backpack. Decide where you are when the emergency occurs, and then pack your backpack with ten items you would like to have with you to help you survive. Share your backpack and ideas with the class.
- \* Make a "Survival Skills" chart for your main character(s). On one side show the skills the main character already had that helped him/her to survive. On the other side show the new skills they had to learn.
- \* Work with a partner who read a different story. Compare the conflicts that the main characters experienced in each story. Which character required the greatest courage? Present a convincing argument to the class in defense of your characters.
- \* Prepare a map showing the route that the characters followed on their adventure.
- \* Create a poster with survival tips for the environment that was described in your story.

## OCTOBER

### GHOST STORIES - MODERN FANTASY

When the air turns cool and the leaves begin to fall, kids' minds turn to thoughts of ghosts, goblins and Halloween. Hair-raising tales of the supernatural are the perfect choice for this month's collection. The motivation is there - all the teacher has to do is supply the books.

#### READ-ALOUDS BOOKS:

Schwartz, Alvin. *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*, Harper, 1981.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS:

- Alcock, Vivian. *The Stonewalkers*, Delacorte, 1983.  
Arthur, Ruth. *Miss Ghost*, Atheneum, 1979.  
Boston, Lucy. *The Children of Green Knowe*, HBJ, 1955.  
    - *Treasure of Green Knowe*, HBJ, 1958.  
    - *The River at Green Knowe*, HBJ, 1959.  
    - *A Stranger at Green Knowe*, HBJ, 1961.  
    - *An Enemy at Green Knowe*, HBJ, 1964.  
    - *The Guardians of the House*, Atheneum, 1975.  
Briggs, K. M. *Hobberdy Dick*, Greenwillow, 1987.  
Brittain, Bill. *Who Knew There'd Be Ghosts?*, Harper, 1985.  
Bunting, Eve. *The Ghosts of Departure Point*, Lippincott, 1982.  
Clifford, Eth. *The Dastardly Murder of Dirty Pete*, Houghton, 1981.  
Cooper, Susan. *Jethro and the Jumbie*, Atheneum, 1973.  
Cresswell, Helen. *The Secret World of Polly Flint*, Macmillan, 1984.  
Dillon, Barbara. *What's Happened to Harry?*, Morrow, 1982.  
  
Garfield, Leon. *Mister Corbett's Ghost*, Viking, 1968.  
Hahn, Mary Downing. *Wait Till Helen Comes*, Clarion, 1986.  
Hearne, Betsy. *Eli's Ghost*, Atheneum, 1987.  
Hunter, Molly. *The Wicked One*, Harper & Row, 1977.  
Jones, Diane Wynne. *Charmed Life*, Greenwillow, 1977.  
Levitin, Sonia. *Beyond Another Door*, Atheneum, 1977.  
MacDonald, Reby Edmond. *The Ghosts of Austwick Manor*, Atheneum, 1982.

Mahy, Margaret. *The Haunting*, Atheneum, 1982.  
 Norton, Andre and Miller, Phyllis, *House of Shadows*,  
 Atheneum, 1984.  
 Peck, Richard. *The Ghost Belonged to Me*, Viking, 1975.  
 - *Voices After Midnight*, Delacorte, 1989.  
 Rodowsky, Colby F. *The Gathering Room*, Farrar, Straus &  
 Giroux, 1981.  
 Westall, Robert. *The Watch House*, Greenwillow, 1978.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Survey your friends and relatives to see how many believe in the supernatural. Are their beliefs influenced by age or religion? Make a chart showing the results.
- \* Have everyone in the class choose the spookiest passage in their book. Allow time for everyone to practice reading their selection. Gather the class together in a circle on the floor for a group read-aloud. An eery effect can be produced if the lights are turned out, spooky Halloween music is played in the background and a flashlight is passed around the circle to illuminate the faces of the readers. After the reading, discuss how the authors made you believe/disbelieve in ghosts or how they were able/unable to scare you.
- \* Brainstorm a list of "spooky words" under the categories of nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Use these words to help you write your own ghost story.
- \* Tape record the story you wrote and add your own "special effects" such as creaky doors, footsteps, and screams.
- \* Write a paragraph describing a haunted house in detail. Use as many sensory words as you can so that people can see, hear, smell and feel what the house is like. Draw a picture to go along with your description.
- \* Interview people in the community who know about the history of "spooky houses". Record the interviews and share them with the class.

## NOVEMBER

### PIONEER AMERICA - HISTORICAL FICTION

There is a wealth of historical fiction for intermediate readers. The characters in these stories can create interest in a period of history and make the dates, accomplishments, and people come alive. Westward expansion is one of many fascinating time periods in our history that students can relive through literature.

#### READ-ALOUD BOOKS:

- Conrad, Pam. *Prairie Songs*, Harper, 1985.  
Harvey, Brett. *Cassie's Journey: Going West in the 1860's*, Holiday, 1988.  
Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Little House in the Big Woods*, Harper, 1953.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS :

- Beatty, Patricia. *Eight Mules From Monterey*, Morrow, 1982.  
- *Wait For Me, Watch For Me, Eula Bee*, Morrow, 1978.  
Brenner, Barbara. *Wagon Wheels*, Harper & Row, 1978.  
Brink, Carol Ryrie. *Caddie Woodlawn*, Macmillan, 1973.  
Bulla, Clyde Robert. *Riding the Pony Express*, Crowell, 1948.  
Collier, James and Collier, Christopher. *The Bloody Country, Four Winds*, 1977.  
Conrad, Pam. *Prairie Songs*, Harper, 1985.  
Dalgliesh, Alice. *The Courage of Sarah Noble*, Scribner's, 1954.  
Field, Rachel. *Calico Bush*, Macmillan, 1931.  
Hancock, Sybil. *Old Blue*, Putnam, 1980.  
Hickman, Janet. *The Valley of the Shadow*, Macmillan, 1974.  
Kieth, Harold. *The Obstinate Land*, Crowell, 1977.  
Lampman, Evelyn Sibley. *White Captives*, Atheneum, 1975.  
Lenski, Lois. *Indian Captive; The Story of Mary Jemison*, Lippincott, 1941.  
Moeri, Louise. *Save Queen of Sheba*, Dutton, 1981.  
Morrow, Honore. *On To Oregon!*, Morrow, 1926.  
O'Dell, Scott. *Carlota*, Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

- *Sing Down the Moon*, Houghton Mifflin, 1970.
- Phelan, Mary Kay. *The Story of the Louisiana Purchase*, Crowell, 1979.
- St. George, Judith. *The Halo Wind*, Putnam, 1978.
- Speare, Elizabeth George. *Calico Captive*, Houghton Mifflin, 1957.
- Talbot, Charlene Joy. *An Orphan for Nebraska*, Atheneum, 1979.
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. - *Little House in the Big Woods*, Harper, 1953.
- *Farmer Boy*, Harper & Row, 1933.
- *Little House on the Prairie*, Harper, 1935.
- *On the Banks of Plum Creek*, Harper, 1937.
- *By the Shores of Silver Lake*, Harper, 1939.
- *The Long Winter*, Harper, 1940.
- *Little Town on the Prairie*, Harper, 1941.
- *These Happy Golden Years*, Harper, 1943.
- *The First Four Years*, Harper, 1971.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Dress as one of the characters in the book. Give a summary of the book from that character's perspective.
- \* Find music, games, or toys representative of the time period and demonstrate for the class.
- \* Pretend you found a time capsule from that time period. Use a large oatmeal box to recreate the capsule complete with contents. Explain why the contents are significant.
- \* Write a class newspaper with articles showing what would have been newsworthy in that time. Be sure to include advertisements, political cartoons, and editorials.
- \* Make a mural showing the significant events in the story. Include information, names, and dates.
- \* Create a classroom "wax museum". Working in small groups, recreate scenes from your books in the style of a wax museum. You will need backdrops, props, costumes, and live models to pose as the wax figures. Invite other classes to tour your museum.
- \* Research the Homestead Act and what it did to open up new settlements. Write about how you would have felt leaving your home and friends to resettle in a new unknown, territory.

- \* Find out about the treaties that the United States had with the Indians. Did the U.S. honor these treaties? Write a report and react to what you find.
- \* Find out what happened to the Native American tribes who originally lived in your part of the country.

## DECEMBER

### CALDECOTT BOOKS - PICTURE BOOKS

December is always a short, hectic month. Instead of trying to accomplish another collection of chapter books, spend the month exploring these award-winning artworks of literature with your intermediate students. It's fun for older students to revisit their "old favorites" and discover new ones.

Tell students that they will be reviewing these books based on the illustrations. Provide them with background and examples of the techniques that the children's illustrators used. Then enjoy observing your students as they become "art experts" on this group of award-winning books.

**READ-ALOUD BOOKS:** (These titles were chosen based on the type of art medium or style that they represent. They are listed by illustrator's name, and they are not necessarily award winners.)

#### Collage:

Keats, Ezra Jack. *Peter's Chair*, Harper & Row, 1967.  
Lionni, Leo. *Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse*, Pantheon, 1969.

#### Woodcut:

Brown, Marcia. *Once a Mouse*, Scribner's, 1961.  
Emberley, Ed. *Drummer Hoff*, Prentice-Hall, 1967.

#### Color - watercolor, acrylic, pastel:

Dillon, Leo and Diane. *Ashanti to Zulu*, Dial, 1976  
Goble, Paul. *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*, Bradbury, 1978.

#### Black and White:

McCloskey, Robert. *Blueberries for Sal*, Viking, 1948.  
Van Allsburg, Chris. *Jumanji*, Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

#### Line:

Brown, Marcia. *Cinderella*, Scribner's, 1954.

Goble, Paul. *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*, Bradbury, 1978.

Cartoon:

Hoff, Syd. *Chester and Sammy the Seal*, Harper & Row, 1959.

Steig, William. *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble*, Simon & Schuster, 1969.

Repetition:

Burton, Virginia Lee. *The Little House*, Houghton Mifflin, 1942.

Gag, Wanda. *Millions of Cats*, Coward-McCann, 1928.

**CALDECOTT MEDAL BOOKS:**

- 1995 - *Smoky Night*, Eve Bunting
- 1994 - *Grandfather's Journey*, Allen Say
- 1993 - *Mirette on the High Wire*, Emily McCully
- 1992 - *Tuesday*, David Wiesner
- 1991 - *Black and White*, David Macauley
- 1990 - *Lon Po-Po*, Ed Young
- 1989 - *Song and Dance Man*, Karen Ackerman
- 1988 - *Owl Moon*, Jane Yolen, Illus. John Schoenherr
- 1987 - *Hey, Al*, Arthur Yorinks, Illus. Richard Egielski
- 1986 - *The Polar Express*, Chris Van Allsburg
- 1985 - *St. George and the Dragon: A Golden Legend*, Margaret Hodges, Illus. Trina Schart Hyman
- 1984 - *The Glorious Flight: Across the Channel With Louis Bleriot. July 25, 1909*, Alice Provensen and Martin Provensen
- 1983 - *Shadow*, Blaise Cendrars, Illus. Marcia Brown
- 1982 - *Jumanji*, Chris Van Allsburg
- 1981 - *Fables*, Arnold Lobel
- 1980 - *Ox-Cart Man*, Donald Hall, Illus. Barbara Cooney
- 1979 - *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*, Paul Goble
- 1978 - *Noah's Ark*, Peter Spier
- 1977 - *Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions*, Margaret Musgrove, Illus. Leo and Diane Dillon
- 1976 - *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears*, Verna Aardema, Illus. Leo and Diane Dillon
- 1975 - *Arrow to the Sun: A Pueblo Indian Tale*, Gerold McDermott
- 1974 - *Duffy and the Devil*, Harve Zemach, Illus. Margot Zemach
- 1973 - *The Funny Little Woman*, Arlene Mosel, Illus. Blair Lent
- 1972 - *One Fine Day*, Nonny Hogrogian
- 1971 - *A Story, A Story: An African Tale*, Gail E. Haley
- 1970 - *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble*, William Steig
- 1969 - *The Fool of the World and the Flying Ship*, Arthur Ransome, Illus. Uri Shulevitz



- 1968 - *Drummer Hoff*, Barbara Emberley, Illus. Ed Emberley  
 1967 - *Sam, Bangs, and Moonshine*, Evaline Ness  
 1966 - *Always Room for One More*, Sorche Nic Leodhas, Illus. Nonny Hogrogian  
 1965 - *May I Bring a Friend?*, Beatrice Schenk DeRegniers, Illus. Beni Montresor  
 1964 - *Where the Wild Things Are*, Maurice Sendak  
 1963 - *The Snowy Day*, Ezra Jack Keats  
 1962 - *Once a Mouse*, Marcia Brown  
 1961 - *Baboushka and the Three Kings*, Ruth Robbins, Illus. Nicholas Sidjakow  
 1960 - *Nine Days to Christmas*, Marie Hall Ets and Aurora Labastida, Illus. Marie Hall Ets  
 1959 - *Chanticleer and the Fox*, Geoffrey Chaucer, Illus. Barbara Cooney  
 1958 - *Time of Wonder*, Robert McCloskey  
 1957 - *A Tree is Nice*, Janice May Udry, Illus. Marc Simont  
 1956 - *Frog Went a Courtin'*, John Langstaff, Illus. Nicholas Mordvinoff  
 1955 - *Cinderella*, Charles Perrault, Illus. Marcia Brown  
 1954 - *Madeline's Rescue*, Ludwig Bemelman  
 1953 - *Biggest Bear*, Lynd Ward  
 1952 - *Finders Keepers*, William Lipkind and Nicholas Mordvinoff, Illus. Nicholas Mordvinoff  
 1951 - *The Egg Tree*, Katherine Milhous  
 1950 - *Song of the Swallows*, Leo Politi  
 1949 - *The Big Snow*, Berta Hader  
 1948 - *White Snow, Bright Snow*, Alvin Tresselt, Illus. Roger Duvoisin  
 1947 - *The Little Island*, Golden MacDonald, Illus. Leonard Weisgard  
 1946 - *The Rooster Crows*, Maud Petersham and Miska Petersham  
 1945 - *Prayer for a Child*, Rachel Field, Illus. Elizabeth Orton Jones  
 1944 - *Many Moons*, James Thurber, Illus. Louis Slobodkin  
 1943 - *The Little House*, Virginia Burton  
 1942 - *Make Way for Ducklings*, Robert McMloskey  
 1941 - *They Were Strong and Good*, Robert Lawson  
 1940 - *Abraham Lincoln*, Ingri D'Aulaire and Edgar P. D'Aulaire  
 1939 - *Mei Li*, Thomas Handforth  
 1938 - *Animals of the Bible*, Helen Dean Fish, Illus. Dorothy Lathrop

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Make your own woodcut-style illustration like the pictures in *Drummer Hoff*. You will need a styrofoam plate or tray. Draw a simple picture on the tray using a pencil and firm pressure. Roll ink or

paint over the design. Place a sheet of paper over the design to produce a print of your "woodcut".

- \* Experiment with illustrations using only one color. after looking at *The Biggest Bear*. First, see what it is like to see the world in only one color by looking at objects through pieces of colored cellophane. Second, choose a colored pencil. Use the colored pencil to prepare a color chart that will serve as a guide in your monochromatic (one color) drawing. Here's what to do: using six squares on large grid paper, leave the first square blank, and then shade in the next five squares with each one getting progressively darker. Now, assemble a group of objects into a still-life and draw it, using your color chart as a guide for different tones and values. Make a class display of the still life and drawings.
- \* Write a story to go along with a wordless picture book such as Peter Spier's *Noah's Ark*. Read it to a child in a younger class.
- \* Choose an illustration from a Caldecott book. Redraw the picture using a different medium or style.
- \* Create a "sample book" of illustrator styles. Include examples from the following: collage, torn paper, pen/ink, woodcut, watercolor, pointillism.
- \* Write a story appropriate for a picture book. Then "tell" the story in pictures only, using one of the artist's styles that you have studied.
- \* Design and give an art award to a children's illustrator who has not won a Caldecott medal. Why do you believe this illustrator deserves to be honored?

## JANUARY

### BIOGRAPHIES AND AUTOBIOGRAPHIES - NON-FICTION

This collection of books will expose students to the lives and accomplishments of people from all walks of life. They can read about explorers, writers, political heroes and heroines, scientists, fine artists, sports figures, and individuals who showed courage and perseverance during their lifetimes. As they read about the lives of others, they'll see that even ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary things when they work hard and believe in their dreams.

#### READ-ALOUD BOOKS:

Cleary, Beverly. *A Girl from Yamhill*, William Morrow, 1988.  
Sandburg, Carl. *Abe Lincoln Grows Up*, HBJ, 1954.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS:

Aldis, Dorothy. *Nothing is Impossible: The Story of Beatrix Potter*, Atheneum, 1969.  
Blassingame, Wyatt. *Thor Heyerdahl: Viking Scientist*, Elsevier Dutton, 1979.  
Brenner, Barbara. *On the Frontier With Mr. Audubon*, Coward-McCann, 1977.  
Bulla, Clyde Robert. *A Grain of Wheat: A Writer Begins*, Godine, 1985.  
Collins, David R. *To the Point: A Story About E.B. White*, Carolrhoda, 1989.  
Collins, Michael. *Flying to the Moon and Other Strange Places*, Straus & Giroux, 1976.  
Davidson, Margaret. *The Golda Meir Story*, Scribner's, 1981.  
Fogel, Julianna A. *Wesley Paul, Marathon Runner*, Lippincott, 1979.  
Fritz, Jean. *Homesick: My Own Story*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1982.  
- *Stonewall*, Putnam, 1979.  
- *And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?*, Coward-McCann, 1973.  
- *Traitor. The Case of Benedict Arnold*, Putnam, 1981.

- *What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?*, Coward-McCann, 1978.
  - *Where Do You Think You're Going, Christopher Columbus?*, Putnam, 1980.
  - *Where Was Patrick Henry on The 29th of May?*, Coward-McCann, 1979.
  - *Why Don't You Get a Horse, Sam Adams?*, Coward-McCann, 1974.
  - *Will You Sign Here, John Hancock?*, Coward-McCann, 1976.
- Goodnough, David. *Christopher Columbus*, Troll Associates, 1979.
- Gutman, Bill. *Duke: The Musical Life of Duke Ellington*, Random House, 1977.
- Hyman, Trina Schart. *Self-Portrait: Trina Schart Hyman*, Addison-Wesley, 1981.
- Kamen, Gloria. *Kipling, Storyteller of East and West*, Atheneum, 1985.
- Lasker, Joe and Kasker, David. *The Boy Who Loved Music*, Viking, 1979.
- Lee, Betsy. *Charles Eastman, the Story of an American Indian*, Dillon, 1979.
- Liss, Howard. *Bobby Orr: Lightning on Ice*, Garrard, 1975.
- Little, Jean. *Little by Little: A Writer's Childhood*, Viking, 1988.
- Morgan, Helen L. *Maria Mitchell, First Lady of American Astronomy*, Westminster, 1977.
- Patterson, Lillie. *Sure Hands, Strong Heart, The Life of Daniel Hale Williams*, Abingdom, 1981.
- Rosen, Sidney. *Galileo and the Magic Numbers*, Little, Brown, 1958.
- Shapiro, Irwin. *Darwin and the Enchanted Isles*, Coward-McCann, 1977.
- Sharpe, Mitchell R. *It is I, Sea Gull: Valentina Tereshkova, First Woman in Space*, Crowell, 1975.
- Silberdick, Barbara. *Franklin D. Roosevelt, Gallant President*, Feinberg, 1981.
- Steele, William O. *The Wilderness Tattoo: A Narrative of Juan Oritz*, HBJ, 1972.
- Tobias, Tobi. *Arthur Mitchell*, Crowell, 1975.
- Veglahn, Nancy. *The Mysterious Rays: Marie Curie's World*, Coward-McCann, 1977.
- Yates, Elizabeth. *Amos Fortune, Free Man*, Dutton, 1950.
- Zemach, Margot. *Self-Portrait, Margot Zemach*, Addison-Wesley, 1978.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Brainstorm important facts about the main character. On posterboard, write the first and last name of the character down the left side in large letters (If the character has fewer than twelve letters in his/her name, include something about that person, such as their occupation.) Using the list of facts, write one fact for each letter in the person's name. The challenge is that the first word of each fact must begin with one of the letters in that person's name. Finish the poster by drawing items, around the edges of the report, that are characteristic only to this person.
- \* Create a soap bottle doll of your character. You will need an empty dishwashing detergent bottle for the body and a 2" styrofoam ball for the head. Now, get creative! Use yarn, buttons, fabric, trim, etc. to dress your doll to look like the character in the book.
- \* Draw and color a character from head-to-waist on a large posterboard. Carefully cut out an oval where the character's face would be. Present a first person account of that character's life as you look through the posterboard figure.
- \* Prepare a list of questions that an interviewer might want to ask your character. Dress up as the character and have a classmate introduce and interview you about your interesting life.
- \* Roll out a double thickness of brown paper and have a classmate trace around your body. Cut around the outline. Draw the hair, features, and clothing of your book character on the front of the top piece. Color or paint. On the outside of the back piece, record important facts about your character's life. After making sure that the edges of both pieces match, take a paper punch and punch holes every 4-5" around the edges of the body. Now get newspaper for stuffing (or paper from the recycling box) and yarn for sewing. Dip one end of the yarn in white glue and let it harden. When it's dry, begin sewing and stuffing your figure. When finished, these stuffed book characters can be hung in the windows, seated in chairs, or propped up against a wall.

## FEBRUARY

### MYSTERIES - REALISTIC FICTION

Imagine the sound of footsteps on a foggy night, disappearing characters, unanswered questions, and strange happenings, all brought together in one suspenseful tale, and you have the makings of a mystery. These stories are very appealing to older readers who enjoy the exciting suspenseful plots, and the challenge of discovering "whodunit".

#### READ-ALoud BOOKS:

Corcoran, Barbara. *You're Allegro Dead*, Atheneum, 1981.  
Snyder, Zilpha Keatley. *The Egypt Game*, Atheneum, 1967.  
Van Allsburg, Chris. *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick*,  
Houghton, 1984.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS:

Avi. *The Man Who Was Poe*, Orchard, 1989.  
Branscum, Robbie. *The Murder of Hound Dog Bates*, Viking, 1982.  
Clifford, Eth. *I Hate Your Guts, Ben Brooster*, Houghton, 1989.  
Corcoran, Barbara. *You're Allegro Dead*, Atheneum, 1981.  
- *The Person in the Potting Shed*, Atheneum, 1980.  
Dicks, Terrance. *The Baker Street Irregulars in: The Case of the Crooked Kids*, Elsevier/Nelson, 1981.  
- *The Case of the Ghost Grabbers*, Elsevier/Nelson, 1981.  
- *The Case of the Blackmail Boys*, Elsevier/Nelson, 1981.  
- *The Case of the Cinema Swindle*, Elsevier/Nelson, 1981.  
- *The Case of the Cop Catchers*, Dutton, 1982.  
Garfield, Leon. *The December Rose*, Viking, 1986.  
Hahn, Mary Downing. *The Dead Man of Indian Creek*, Houghton, 1990.  
- *Following the Mystery Man*, Avon, 1988.  
Hamilton, Virginia. *The House of Dies Drear*, MacMillan, 1968.  
Howe, James and Howe, Deborah. *Bunnicula*, Atheneum, 1979.

Konigsburg, E.L. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, Atheneum, 1967.

MacLeod, Charlotte. *We Dare Not Go A-Hunting*, Atheneum, 1980.

Masterman-Smith, Virginia. *The Great Egyptian Heist*, Four Winds, 1982.

McHargue, Georgess. *Funny Bananas: The Mystery at the Museum*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975.

Newman, Robert. *The Case of the Baker Street Irregular*, Atheneum, 1979.  
 - *The Case of the Vanishing Corpse*, Atheneum, 1980.

Raskin, Ellen. *The Mysterious Disappearance of Leon*, Dutton, 1971.

Roberts, Willo Davis. *The View from the Cherry Tree*, Aladdin, 1987.

Sachs, Marilyn. *At the Sound of the Beep*, Dutton, 1980.

Snyder, Zilpha Keatley. *The Famous Stanley Kidnapping Case*, Atheneum, 1979.

Sobol, Donald. *Encyclopedia Brown Sets the Pace*, Scholastic/Four Winds, 1982.  
 - *Encyclopedia Brown Tracks Them Down*, Crowell, 1971.

York, Carol Beach. *Once Upon a Dark November*, Holiday, 1989.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES :

- \* Write a "who-dunit" about a missing person or object at your school. Use the teachers, staff, and students as characters for your mystery. Make a map of the layout of your school building to help you explain the plot development.
- \* Create a board game using clues and information from your story for the questions/game cards.
- \* Draw and color a scene from your book on a 12x18 piece of paper. Cut the picture apart to make a puzzle. Write a clue to the mystery on the back of each puzzle piece. Give it to a classmate to assemble.
- \* Create a "secret door" poster about your book. On a 12x18 sheet of paper, illustrate a scene from the story. Color it completely. Carefully pencil in 6-8 "secret doors". Cut around the doors on three sides. Lay the picture on top of another 12x18 sheet of paper. Glue it down, being careful not to glue the doors. When dry, use the space behind the "secret doors" to conceal clues and the title of your mystery.
- \* "Link" the important events in your book together to solve the case. On 3"x12" paper strips, write or draw

important information that helped solve the mystery.  
Make a chain of your story links and hang it from the ceiling like a mobile.

- \* Conduct your own classroom version of *Unsolved Mysteries* using crimes from the books.
- \* Have a classroom discussion about what makes a good mystery.



## MARCH

### LITTLE CHARACTERS - MODERN FANTASY

Leprechauns are not the only little characters to read about this month. While traditional folktales and fairy tales have always had their share of elves, trolls and fairies, there are some wonderful modern works of fantasy involving little characters too. Students will discover characters who live in magical lands, and those who live in worlds much like our own. These stories are successful because the authors convince the reader to suspend disbelief and view the world from a new, "small" perspective.

#### READ-ALoud BOOKS:

White, E.B. *Stuart Little*, Harper, 1945.  
Winthrop, Elizabeth. *The Castle in the Attic*, Holiday, 1945.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS:

Banks, Lynn Reid. *The Indian in the Cupboard*, Doubleday, 1981.  
- *The Return of the Indian*, Doubleday, 1986.  
- *The Secret of the Indian*, Doubleday, 1988.  
Curry, Jane Louise. *Mindy's Mysterious Miniature*, HBJ, 1970.  
Kendall, Carol. *The Firelings*, Atheneum, 1982.  
- *The Gamage Cup*, HBJ, 1959.  
Norton, Mary. *The Borrowers*, HBJ, 1952.  
- *The Borrowers Afield*, HBJ, 1955.  
- *The Borrowers Afloat*, HBJ, 1959.  
- *The Borrowers Aloft*, HBJ, 1961.  
- *The Borrowers Avenged*, HBJ, 1982.  
Selden, George. *Chester Cricket's Pigeon Ride*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1981.  
- *The Cricket in Times Square*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1960.  
- *Tucker's Countryside*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1969.

Steig, William. *Abel's Island*, Farrar, Straus, 1976.

White, E.B. *Stuart Little*, Harper, 1945.

Winthrop, Elizabeth. *The Castle in the Attic*, Holiday, 1985.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Create a diorama of a scene from the story. Use everyday items that little characters might find to furnish their homes, such as thimbles, bottle caps, spools, paper clips, toothpicks, matchboxes, beads, etc.
- \* Imagine that your little character is in your desk right now. Draw a picture of what he/she sees.
- \* Make a puppet of your little character.
- \* Take a small object like a pencil eraser, a peanut, etc. and draw it from the perspective of the little character. Write a descriptive paragraph of what the object looks like to the little character.
- \* Write a one-page "short" story; incorporate as many words of size as you can.

## APRIL

### TIME TRAVEL - MODERN FANTASY

Who hasn't wondered what it would be like to be transported through time to another time and place? This collection of stories will take students on imaginative journeys back in history to see how events of the past have affected the present, or they might be thrust into the distant future to experience events to come. Regardless of the destination, stories based on time warp themes strongly appeal to the intermediate reader and these stories open up endless possibilities for creative expression.

#### READ-ALoud BOOKS:

- L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time*, Dell, 1976.  
Pearce, Phillipa. *Tom's Midnight Garden*, Lippincott, 1958.  
Sauer, Julia. *Fog Magic*, Viking, 1944.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS:

- Anderson, Margaret J. *To Nowhere and Back*, Knopf, 1975.  
- *In the Keep of Time*, Knopf, 1977.  
- *In the Circle of Time*, Knopf, 1979.  
- *The Druid's Gift*, Knopf, 1989.  
Buffie, Margaret. *The Haunting of Frances Rain*, Scholastic, 1989.  
Bond, Nancy. *A String in the Harp*, Atheneum, 1976.  
Cameron, Eleanor. *The Court of the Stone Children*, Dutton, 1973.  
Cresswell, Helen. *A Game of Catch*, Macmillan, 1977.  
Curry, Jane Louise. *The Birdstones*, Atheneum, 1977.  
- *The Magical Cupboard*, Atheneum, 1976.  
Duncan, Lois. *Locked in Time*, Little, 1985.  
Farmer, Penelope. *Charlotte Sometimes*, Dell, 1987.  
Hahn, Mary Downing. *The Doll in the Garden*, Clarion, 1989.  
Hamilton, Virginia. *Dustland*, Greenwillow, 1980.  
- *The Gathering*, Greenwillow, 1981.  
Hurmenca, Belinda. *A Girl Called Boy*, Clarion, 1982.  
Juster, Norton. *The Phantom Tollbooth*, Random House, 1961.

- Langton, Jane. *The Astonishing Stereoscope*, Harper & Row, 1871.
- L'Engle. *A Wrinkle in Time*, Dell, 1976.
- *A Wind in the Door*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1973.
- *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*, Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux, 1978.
- Lunn, Janet. *The Root Cellar*, Scribner's, 1983.
- Mayne, William. *The Earthfasts*, Dutton, 1967.
- Norton, Andre. *Dragon Magic*, Crowell, 1972.
- *Lavender Green Magic*, Crowell, 1974.
- *Red Hart Magic*, Crowell, 1976.
- Norton, Mary. *Are All the Giants Dead?*, HBJ, 1975.
- Ormondroyd, Edward. *Time at the Top*, Parnassus, 1963.
- Park, Ruth. *Playing Beattie Bow*, Atheneum, 1982.
- Pearce, Phillipa. *Tom's Midnight Garden*, Harper, 1984.
- Pearson, Kit. *A Handful of Time*, Viking Penguin, 1988.
- Peck, Richard. *Voices After Midnight*, Delacorte, 1988.
- St. George, Judith. *The Mysterious Girl in the Garden*, Putnam, 1981.
- Taylor, Cora. *Yesterday's Doll*, Scholastic, 1980.
- Weldrick, Valerie. *Time Sweep*, Lothrop, 1978.
- Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*, Many versions.
- Westall, Robert. *The Wind Eye*, Greenwillow, 1977.
- Wiseman, David. *Jeremy Visick*, Houghton Mifflin, 1981.
- *Thimbles*, Houghton Mifflin, 1982.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Pretend you are a newspaper reporter who has been assigned to interview the main character when he first arrives. Write a front -page headline story about the "alien visitor" telling who , what, where, when, and why. Include reactions from the local residents.
- \* Draw a detailed picture of the the scene in the story when the character(s) was transported through time. Include a first person written account of the event.
- \* Pretend you are the main character who has just been transported. You know your parents have discovered you are gone and you want to reassure them that you are all right. Write them a letter explaining what happened to you, where you are, and when you hope to return.
- \* Write the beginning of your own time-travel fantasy. First, decide if you are traveling backward or forward in time. What has caused you to be transported to another time? What do you observe when you first arrive? Who do you meet? How do they react to you? How do you feel?

- \* Make a miniature model of your own time-travel machine using an assortment of cardboard boxes and tubes to create the basic shape. Then get creative with paint, foil paper, wire, straws, caps, etc. - any little details that would make it look like it could really work.

## MAY

### AMERICAN TALL TALES - TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

In May, the school year begins to wind down and students may be in the mood for reading books that are a little lighter in content. Tall tales are amusing stories, filled with outrageous exaggerations of the exploits of some of this country's early pioneers and cowboys. Students will enjoy learning about life on the frontier and they will gain an appreciation for exaggeration as a form of humor.

#### READ-ALoud BOOKS:

- Brooke, William J. *A Telling of the Tales: Five Stories*, Harper, 1980.  
Shephard, Esther. *Paul Bunyan*, Harcourt, 1924.

#### SUGGESTED BOOKS:

- Aliki. *The Story of Johnny Appleseed*, Prentice-Hall, 1987.  
Brooke, William J. *A Telling of the Tales: Five Stories*, Harper, 1980.  
Cohen, Caron Lee. *Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett*, Greenwillow, 1985.  
Dewey, Ariane. *Febold Feboldson*, Greenwillow, 1984.  
- *Gib Morgan, Oilman*, Greenwillow, 1987.  
- *The Narrow Escapes of Davy Crockett*, Greenwillow, 1990.  
- *Pecos Bill*, Greenwillow, 1983.  
Haviland, Virginia. *North American Legends*, Collins, 1979.  
Keats, Ezra Jack. *John Henry: An American Legend*, Pantheon, 1965.  
Kellogg, Steven. *Johnny Appleseed*, Morrow, 1988.  
- *Paul Bunyan*, Morrow, 1984.  
- *Pecos Bill*, Morrow, 1986.  
Lindbergh, Reeve. *Johnny Appleseed*, Little, Brown, 1980.  
Osborne, Mary Pope. *American Tall Tales*, Knopf, 1981.  
Quackenbush, Robert. *Quit Pulling My Leg! A Story of Davy Crockett*, Simon & Schuster, 1987.  
Rounds, Glen. *Ol' Paul, the Mighty Logger*, Holiday, 1948.

- *Mr. Yowder and the Giant Bull Snake*, Holiday House, 1978.
- Sanfield, Steve. *A Natural Man*, Godine, 1986.
- Schwartz, Alvin. *Whoppers: Tall Tales and Other Lies*, Lippincott, 1975.
- Shepherd, Esther. *Paul Bunyan*, Harcourt, 1924.
- Stoutenberg, Adrien. *American Tall Tales*, Penguin, 1976.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

- \* Create a paper mache' mask of the character; use exaggerated features.
- \* Rewrite a tall tale and eliminate all the similes. How important are similes to this kind of story?
- \* Make the tall tale into a comic book.
- \* Write and perform an "infomercial" with the tall tale character as the host. Decide what kind of product this character would want to sell; include examples of exaggeration in the "sales pitch".
- \* Add exaggerated similes to a realistic fiction picture book to turn it into a tall tale.
- \* Practice writing exaggerated statements, or hyperboles (examples: "I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!" or "I've told you a hundred times to clean up your room.")
- \* Present an oral retelling of your favorite tall tale.
- \* Make a stuffed paper model of the character. (See January activities for directions.)

## APPENDIX A

## LITERATURE LOG

[illegible]



APPENDIX B

SURVIVAL STORIES	GHOST STORIES	HISTORICAL FICTION
CALDECOTT BOOKS	BIOGRAPHIES	MYSTERIES
LITTLE CHARACTERS	TIME TRAVEL	TALL TALES

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS

#### SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to design a handbook for teachers containing genre-based literature activities. The handbook was written for use with students in the intermediate part of a literature-based reading curriculum.

The writer researched background information for the handbook by reviewing texts written by whole language educators such as Routman, Fox, Huck, and Atwell. The texts of these authors provided an outline of the necessary elements in a literature-based reading program. Many of the children's books listed in the handbook were recommended by these authors.

In addition to textbooks, the writer reviewed journal articles that reported on research in literature-based reading programs. These articles provided support for the reading achievement and positive reading attitude changes that occur when literature replaces the traditional basal reading program.

Selected activity books were examined for ideas on content and layout of the handbook. The writer also incorporated ideas from language workshops that she has attended. These ideas have been classroom-tested and modified to fit the style of the writer and the instructional level of most intermediate students.

The resulting handbook contains an introduction, a section on how to use the handbook, and a table of contents that outlines

the literature genres. The genres are planned around a nine-month school year and include: survival stories, ghost stories, historical fiction, biographies, mysteries, stories with little characters, time travel fantasies, and tall tales. Each genre contains recommended read-aloud books for the teacher, suggested student books, and ideas for literature extension activities. An appendices at the end of the handbook contains a master for a student progress chart and a literature log.

### EVALUATION

The writer gave the handbook to two peer teachers for review. The strengths and weaknesses of the handbook are listed below:

#### Strengths -

1. The handbook is easy to read and understand.
2. The bibliographies of suggested books are extensive.
3. The organization of the handbook makes it easy to find what you are looking for.
4. The activities are age-appropriate and could easily be modified for lower or gifted students.
5. New books and activities could easily be added to the genres.
6. The handbook would be a valuable resource in a literature-based classroom.
7. The Appendices are useful record-keeping resources.

#### Weaknesses -

1. Nine genres are somewhat limiting. Additional genres would give a teacher more choices throughout the year.
2. Titling the activities would make them easier to access.
3. An index for activity ideas is recommended because many of the ideas could be used in more than one genre.

Based on the reviewers' comments and the writer's own perspective, the recommendations in the following section appear appropriate.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer suggests that teachers periodically update the bibliographies of children's literature contained in the handbook. The nine genres contained in the handbook are a place to start; hopefully these genres and ideas will stimulate additional ideas for other genres and activities.

In order to assess how well the literature program is going, the writer suggests that the teacher observe students as they read, write and work on projects. The teacher should keep a written record of these observations for assessment, as well as future planning. It is also recommended that the teacher have students keep portfolios of their writing and art projects. Assessment of a literature-based program can be very subjective, and the teacher may want to consider using a rubric for evaluating student work.

The writer recommends surveying students at the end of the school year to find out which genres, books, and project ideas they liked or disliked. Their responses can provide the teacher with valuable feedback that can be helpful in adjusting the program and planning for the following year.

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