1995

Curriculum design in creative writing

Lola De Julio De Maci

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CURRICULUM DESIGN IN CREATIVE WRITING

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Interdisciplinary Studies

by
Lola De Julio De Maci

December 1995
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A Project
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Lola De Julio De Maci
December 1995
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Date
[aut-30-95]
ABSTRACT

This handbook of short stories, fables, poetry, and language arts activities was written and prepared for children of elementary school age. Preceding each category is a brief history and description of the genre, with teacher directions and student instructions accompanying the poetry and language arts activities' sections.

Following the writing examples in each genre, I have included sections entitled, "In Other Words," "A Reading List," and "The Creative Corner." "In Other Words" lists the more difficult words and phrases I thought could best be defined in another way. By using them in a sentence, I hope the meaning of that word or phrase becomes clearer and more understandable for the student. "A Reading List" provides additional books in each genre written by various authors of children's literature. "The Creative Corner" lets the students try their hand at writing. I tell them that a good author is responsible for creating a good word, phrase, or sentence. A great author puts them together in a special way.
DEDICATION

To Maria, Christopher, and Angela  ~

Three children

who have made my life complete

now and for eternity

and

To Genuino Di Giulio, my father  ~

Whose dream I fulfilled

Ti amo

Lola Di Giulio De Maci

December 1995
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INTRODUCTION

To the young writer,

This handbook of creative writing activities is for you. It contains short stories, fables, poems of all kinds, essays, and language arts activities designed especially with you in mind. Before each written text, I have presented a brief history and description telling you about that work's origins and makeup. Writing examples in each genre follow, after which I have included sections entitled, "In Other Words," "A Reading List," and "The Creative Corner."

"In Other Words" lists the more difficult words and phrases that I thought could best be defined in another way. By using them in a sentence, I hope the meaning of that word or phrase becomes clearer and more understandable for you.

"A Reading List" provides you with additional books in each genre written by various authors of children's literature. You can get these books by checking them out at the school or city library, purchasing them at a bookstore, or borrowing them from a friend.

"The Creative Corner" lets you, the writer, have fun trying your own hand at becoming the world's greatest author. Remember, a good author is responsible for creating a good word, phrase, or sentence. A great author puts them together in a special way.

Writing is a unique expression of who you are. I hope you enjoy opening new vistas and creating new worlds with
your writing as much as I did. Putting your thoughts and ideas down on paper allows everyone to share in your adventure and enter the realm of magic you created from your imagination.

L.D.D.
A note to teachers:

The short stories and fables in this handbook feature animals as the main characters for several reasons. First, children love animals and have a real relationship with them. They often enter the world of imaginary characters, and animals are a part of it. They can not only delight in their antics and escapades but can also identify with their failures and shortcomings, assuring themselves that the feelings they sometimes have are valid, real, and "not so bad."

Secondly, all children can relate to the animals in the stories no matter what ethnic background they come from. Animals are a part of all cultures.

Finally, animals are good messengers for children. They can present a moral or lesson to be learned, and children will accept the message because it comes from a source that doesn't scold, or preach, or get angry.

At the conclusion of the short story and fable sections of the handbook, a bibliography is compiled with additional reading sources featuring animals as the main characters. It contains selections by notable authors of children's literature and includes material for all reading levels.
verse

words
tumbling
cautiously
over
one another
scattering
forms
freely
onto the page
turning
imagined
thoughts
into pictures
THE SHORT STORY
THE SHORT STORY

presented by

Mr. Green, the Hare and Mr. Oliver Clay, the Owl

"What are you reading?" Mr. Green asked Mr. Oliver Clay, as he approached the front porch of Mr. Clay’s white cottage.

"I’m reading a story," replied Mr. Oliver Clay. "A short story," he added promptly. Mr. Clay loved to read. He borrowed books from his sister, Mrs. Bookworth, who taught school in Quail Hollow. When he returned them, he would borrow more.

Mr. Green, on the other hand, didn’t have much time for reading. He ran the corner grocery store on Main Street in Quail Hollow and worked very hard day and night ordering food items, stocking the shelves, and waiting on customers. He found little time for anything else.

"What exactly is a short story?" Mr. Green inquired curiously.

"Let’s look in this brown leather book over here," Mr. Clay said, as he made his way to a pine wood bookcase along the south wall. "It will tell us just what a short story is. Everyone loves a good story," he continued as he took the brown leather book from the shelf. Pointing to the middle of Page 7, Mr. Clay read from the brown book as if he was discovering something wonderful for the first time. "It
says here that a short story is usually 10,000 words or less and tells the tale of a character in a particular place at a particular time, trying to solve a problem."

Mr. Green was impressed. "Ten thousand words or less! A lot can happen in ten thousand words."

Mr. Clay continued reading from the brown book. "Short stories have appeared in one form or another throughout history. They can be found in the Old Testament of the Bible written more than two thousand years ago. A story can be read in a book, a magazine, or a newspaper. Or you can enjoy listening to a story told by a storyteller."

Mr. Clay sat down in his plaid armchair, motioning for Mr. Green to sit in the rocking chair beside him. Adjusting his reading glasses, Mr. Clay began reading from Chapter 2. "A story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. All three of these parts have an important job to do. They can be as long or as short as the author wishes.

The BEGINNING of the story must present:

THE MAIN CHARACTERS
- They can be people or animals.
- Their dialogue and actions reveal their personalities.

THE SETTING
- Place: Where the story takes place
- Time: When the story takes place

THE MOOD
- A feeling you get from reading the story:
sad, mysterious, humorous, pensive, gloomy, etc.

THE PROBLEM OR CONFLICT TO BE SOLVED BY THE END OF THE STORY

- The main character has to solve a problem.

In the beginning of a story," Mr. Clay continued, "a writer has to think of special ways to capture the reader’s attention and interest. To do this, the writer might create interesting or fascinating characters, an unusual setting such as a castle or jungle, or write the story from a different point of view." 

"Wait a minute!" cried Mr. Green excitedly, the first button on his blue-knitted vest popping open. "I bet I can come up with an example on how to do that. I could write about a mouse who lives in an old castle, and he could be telling the story from the way he sees it." Mr. Green was so thrilled with his contribution to the discussion that he slid off his rocking chair.

Mr. Clay helped his friend back into the rocking chair, cleared his voice, and began reading again as if nothing had interrupted him.

"In the MIDDLE of the story:

THE CHARACTERS ARE DEVELOPED

- The reader gets to know a character’s personality by what he says and what he does.

THE STORY’S DETAILS AND MEANING DEVELOP

- The reader must know certain things about the story in order to understand what is going on in the story.
Because conversation between the characters helps the reader know what is going on in the story, dialogue becomes important.

THE CONFLICT DEVELOPS

- The reader becomes interested in the story, thereby becoming involved in the story’s events.
- The problem or conflict the main character faces leads to the climax or turning point of the story.

Mr. Green rocked back and forth in his chair, wondering which part of the story seemed most important so far. "I guess all parts of the story are important," he thought pensively out loud. "Just like you said a little while ago, 'All three of these parts have an important job to do.'"

"Well, let's see what the ending has to offer," Mr. Clay stated anxiously, wanting to see what the brown book said about a story's ending.

"The ENDING of the story presents:

THE CLIMAX AND THE CONCLUSION

- At the end of the story, all the parts of the story fall into place and the conclusion follows.
- The problem or conflict the main character had to face is solved.

And that's what a short story is all about," Mr. Clay declared as he returned the brown leather book to its place on the bookshelf. "Now we know what goes into the beginning, middle, and ending of a short story. Maybe we can try to write one of our own someday. What do you think?"

"Oh, I think it would be fun," Mr. Green exclaimed
enthusiastically. "And challenging," he added quickly. "We can always refer to the brown book if we get stuck."

Mr. Oliver Clay once again picked up the short story he was reading when Mr. Green came over to visit him. "If you would like, I could read this short story out loud so you can enjoy it, too."

"I would like that very much," replied Mr. Green appreciatively. "Please, read it out loud."

Mr. Oliver Clay and Mr. Green settled back in their chairs, reading several short stories that afternoon from the books Mr. Clay borrowed from his sister, Mrs. Bookworth.
SHORT STORIES

ILLUSTRATIONS WITH FAMILIAR SAYINGS
THE TALES OF QUAIL HOLLOW

by

LOLA De JULIO De MACI
CAST OF CHARACTERS

Barrett
Mr. Maurice
Mrs. Bookworth
Mr. Green
Cassandra
Eliott
Sir Pembroke
Newton
Sofia
Madam Allegra
Mr. Oliver Clay
Emilia Hensen
Cora
Mr. Stillbird

the bear, reader
the blue jay, tutor
the owl, teacher
the hare, grocer
the chicken, good friend
the lion, searcher
the fox, circus entertainer
the rabbit, philosopher
the squirrel, country girl
the wolf, fortune teller
the owl, brother to Mrs. Bookworth
the chicken, the star
the chicken, the agent
the goose, the movie director
THE READING LESSONS

THE BEAR AND THE BLUE JAY
Barrett had lived in Quail Hollow most of his life. His family had moved there while he was still a young cub. Quail Hollow is a quiet, little village nestled comfortably in the Moccasin Mountains; and Barrett couldn’t imagine living anywhere else. It was his home.

Quail Hollow didn’t boast much excitement other than an occasional tortoise and hare race, so the residents were content to entertain themselves with activities offered generously by nature. A lazy Sunday afternoon would usually consist of a swim in the lake, an acorn hunt, a tree-climbing festival, and a welcomed conversation under the shade of a pine tree. Things were easy and serene here in Quail Hollow. And that’s the way they liked it.

Consequently, when the town herald, Mr. Maurice, a precocious blue jay, announced the imminent arrival of a supermarket, everyone in the village had something new to talk about. A supermarket! With shelves and shelves of food you could choose from for making hundreds of different good things to eat! It would undoubtedly replace Mr. Green’s small grocery store on the corner of Market Street and Pumpkin Patch Lane. Mr. Green had adequately furnished the town with their food supplies for the last 25 years. He was envied by all his fellow grocers as having the best corner grocery store in the village. Yes, Quail Hollow’s
population was definitely growing by leaps and bounds and, whether they liked it or not, the village was experiencing some new happenings.

Barrett, with his love for cooking and eating, couldn't wait for the new market’s arrival; he was overwhelmed with eagerness and anticipation. It seemed as if each minute was an hour long. Nevertheless, he would try to be patient. Right now, however, the only thing he wanted to do was talk to his best friend, Mr. Maurice.

Mr. Maurice was the most respected blue jay in the village. He was noted for his intelligence and wisdom and for always giving good advice when someone needed it. He lived in an old cedar tree down by the lake where he and Barrett, his very best bear friend, spent hours talking and laughing about little things that made sense to no one but themselves. "What do you think about the new supermarket coming to our town?" Barrett asked excitedly as he searched Mr. Maurice’s eyes for an answer.

"It’s great!" Mr. Maurice declared enthusiastically as he perched himself lightly on Barrett’s ear. "Now we can make all those fantastic recipes we’ve collected over the years. I can’t wait to try the orange-flavored chocolate mousse. The new supermarket is sure to have all the unusual ingredients we need. Mr Green’s store doesn’t stock the fancy stuff." Feeling good about the day and all that it promised, Mr. Maurice, still sitting comfortably on Barr-
rett’s ear, suggested they go for a walk down Mountain Meadow Road, so they could enjoy the beautiful day and dream of the amazing supermarket coming soon to Quail Hollow. The meadows were alive with color, and the yellow and orange buttercups had never looked more beautiful. It looked as if they were dancing on a stage of green velvet. Mountain Meadow Road was, indeed, a good choice for an enjoyable walk.

A few months went by, and the supermarket’s grand opening was finally announced. Mr. Maurice flew out of his nest, across the lake, and right into Barrett’s den. "Let’s go! Let’s go!" he shouted impatiently. "The market is open! Let’s go shopping!" So, with Mr. Maurice poised confidently on Barrett’s ear, they made their way down Main Street to the grand opening celebration.

They proceeded up one aisle and down the other. There were so many cans and boxes to choose from. Which one should they buy?...The cereal with or without the cinnamon? The yogurt with or without the peaches? The vegetable soup? Or the cream of broccoli soup? Mr. Maurice, who was the shopping duo’s tour guide, read the names and labels on all the items that appealed to them. Mr. Maurice was an excellent reader. He had gotten all A’s in reading when he attended Mrs. Bookworth’s Animal School. Barrett was proud of him, and Mr. Maurice was proud of himself.

That evening, as Barrett and Mr. Maurice shared a
blueberry muffin and a cup of tea sweetened with honey, Barrett began to cry. "What's the matter? Why are you crying?" Mr. Maurice asked sympathetically. He hated to see his friend unhappy.

"I was just thinking about our trip to the supermarket today. If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't have been able to go," Barrett sighed breathlessly as his tears fell slowly down his furry cheeks.

"Why do you say that, Barrett? I don't mind going with you. You're my best friend." Taking a sip of tea and then gently putting his cup down, Mr. Maurice tried to assure his friend that he didn't mind accompanying him to the store; it was his pleasure. But Barrett wasn't listening to him.

"That's not the point!" Barrett said sharply, wiping his tears with the green linen napkin that was lying next to his teacup. "I can't read! When I would go to Mr. Green's store by myself, I didn't have to know how to read. I would just tell him what I wanted, and he would get it for me. I can't do that in the big market; everyone's too busy. What am I going to do?"

"You're going to learn to read," Mr. Maurice replied sharply, his voice showing authority and determination. "Tomorrow we are going to sign up at Mrs. Bookworth's Animal School, and you are going to learn to read."

Mrs. Bookworth was an excellent teacher. She had graduated with honors from Brighton Hill Teachers' College
and was admired and respected by her colleagues as being the most outstanding owl in the graduating class.

Morning came, and the freshness of the day brought new hope and promise to Quail Hollow. Barrett and Mr. Maurice got to the school bright and early, and Mr. Maurice enrolled his friend in the reading class.

"How hard can it be?" Mr. Maurice said assuredly, trying to convince Barrett and himself that this would work. "The bulletin board on the classroom wall states: 'You can successfully learn to read in Mrs. Bookworth’s reading class.' In no time, we’ll be shopping for the groceries, and you’ll be reading the labels to me."

Lesson No. 1 didn’t come easy to Barrett. Learning about vowels and consonants was difficult for him. "A, E, I, O, U. A, E, I, O, U," he repeated persistently to himself. He thought he was finally learning all the vowels when Mrs. Bookworth interjected a new one.

"A, E, I, O, U and sometimes Y," she said emphatically, tapping the pointer on the chalkboard several times where the Y was printed.

"How did anyone ever learn to read at all?" Barrett thought confusedly to himself. "This is not an easy job." That evening, he confided to Mr. Maurice that he did not want to go to Mrs. Bookworth’s tomorrow, or ever again. School was too hard; he didn’t like it.

"You’re going to school tomorrow, and that’s that. You
can't quit. I won't let you."

Mr. Maurice was firm in his instructions to Barrett. He didn't want to see his friend give up.

The next two reading lessons were no easier for Barrett. All that talk about phonics, sounds, letters, and commas made his head spin. What was all this about anyway? A 'ph' could sound like an 'f'? A 'c' could sound like a 'k'? But Barrett was determined to learn all these rules; he wasn't going to let the ph's and f's get him down. Consequently, with a lot of hard work and Mr. Maurice's tutoring, Barrett passed each session.

Just when he thought learning his ABC's wasn't so bad after all, Lesson No. 4 was introduced, and Barrett once again felt overwhelmed with frustration and uncertainty. Putting sounds together to make words was no easy feat. Long words. Short words. Medium-sized words. Words following one another in a sentence. A sentence? What on earth was a sentence? Again, he wanted to quit. It was just too hard for him to learn how to read.

"Oh, no, you don't," said Mr. Maurice firmly. "You can't quit now. You can't give up. I know that all the work you put into this will pay off. Everything will start to make sense, and you'll be able to read." Mr. Maurice took a deep breath and continued talking, hoping he was persuading Barrett to stay in school. "Think of the supermarket, the recipes we'll make together, and the fun we'll
have reading the labels and ingredients that you couldn’t read before."

Mr. Maurice was right. The next day at Mrs. Bookworth’s everything seemed to come together. Barrett was learning to read. He had a long way to go; but, with Mr. Maurice’s help and his own hard work, he was going to be a good reader. Most of all, he would be able to go to the supermarket all by himself and do his own grocery shopping if he wanted to. He would be able to buy the ingredients and follow the directions on a recipe. He could make his own homemade vegetable soup. And the best part, he would be able to share it with his best friend, Mr. Maurice.

When the last day of school was finally over, Mr. Maurice invited all Barrett’s friends from Quail Hollow to a celebration party in his honor. Everyone was so happy and proud of Barrett’s accomplishments at Mrs. Bookworth’s Animal School. They knew how hard he had worked at his lessons and how much he wanted to learn how to read.

While everyone was busy congratulating him, Mr. Maurice casually disappeared into his cedar tree and, a few seconds later, emerged wearing a big smile and a chef’s hat made especially for blue jays. He was carrying an elegant lemon chiffon cake which he placed carefully and proudly in Barrett’s lap. Barrett was overwhelmed by all the attention his friends were giving him. Catching his breath, he read the cake’s inscription perfectly, which was written in
chocolate icing:

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED,
TRY, TRY AGAIN.

With shouts of joy, they all applauded Barrett and his ability to read. They commended him for not giving up when he wanted to and for completing all the reading lessons at Mrs. Bookworth's Animal School. When the applause and cheering finally died down, Barrett could only think of one thing to say, "Let's eat!"
IN OTHER WORDS

THE READING LESSONS

The blue jay generally hides his nest in dense trees.

The people on the beach commended the lifeguard for saving the drowning girl.

Because of his outstanding feats in the summer Olympics, he was awarded two bronze medals.

Because light travels faster than sound, once lightning strikes, thunder is imminent.

The inscription on the coin reads: In God We Trust.

The teacher interjected her own thoughts after each sentence she read.

The customer ordered a chocolate mousse from the dessert tray, thinking it was chocolate pudding.

Because the young child played the violin well at an early age, everyone said she was precocious.

Every time the little boy cried, his friend sympathetically cried along with him.
THE CIRCUS

THE LION, THE CHICKEN, AND THE FOX
THE CIRCUS

The circus was coming to town, and everyone in Quail Hollow was eagerly awaiting its arrival. Not since the grand opening of the supermarket several months ago had this little village seen so much excitement. The Moccasin Mountains were alive with laughter, unquenchable chatter, and anticipatory hubbub. Two of the village’s long-time residents were especially happy. Cassandra and Eliott had never been to a circus before, and they were looking forward to this spectacular event.

While having lunch one afternoon, Cassandra, the town’s most honorable chicken, confided to her friend, Eliott, that she had saved quite a few dollars since hearing about the circus. She knew there was an admittance charge, and she wanted to be sure she had enough money to get in the gate. Eliott, who was not having a good day so far, commended her on her economic venture and went on eating his hot-fudge sundae. He always saved room for dessert; lions were big eaters, and he was no exception.

"Why are you so unhappy today, Eliott?" Cassandra inquired sympathetically, searching her friend’s eyes for an answer.

"Oh, I don’t know," Eliott responded casually. "Nothing seems to make me happy. I guess happiness is just too hard to find. I can’t seem to find it anywhere."
Cassandra could vouch for that. She hadn't seen her friend happy in a long time, but she was sure he was looking for happiness in all the wrong places. Perhaps, when the circus came to town, it would brighten Eliott's world up a little. She could hope for that anyway.

Cassandra tried to see the bright side of life even on those days when nothing seemed to go right. She had a good outlook on life, and it was reflected in her attitude and walk. Chickens always walked with a dignified air about them, and Cassandra was no different. In fact she strutted confidence and contentment with each step she took. Everyone liked to be around her; she gave them assurance and a positive outlook on life. She showed them happiness could be found everyday, everywhere...in a flower, a blade of grass, the sunshine.

Eliott, on the other hand, saw life through gray-colored glasses. It took a lot to make him happy. No matter how hard his friends tried to help him find happiness, he just couldn't see things their way. He couldn't find pleasure in those things that usually brought the most happiness...those things that filled you with joy when you experienced them.

Evening was beginning to settle over the little village of Quail Hollow, and Cassandra and Eliott were engrossed in a hot game of checkers. "This is the last game I'm going to play today," Eliott said stubbornly, his mane drooping as if
it, too, felt defeated. "You won both games. Let's do something else. Let's go to a movie."

Having won two games, Cassandra felt triumphant but felt bad she could not go to the movie with her friend. She had no money for the movie. She was saving her money for the circus.

"I have plenty of money," Eliott roared. "I will buy the tickets. I'll also buy the popcorn and candy bars. I'm rich." And that he was. Eliott didn't have to save his money for the circus; he was one of the wealthiest residents in Quail Hollow.

After waiting what seemed like weeks, the circus finally arrived, and excitement filled the air. "The circus is here! The circus is here!" cried Cassandra as her buoyant strut became an exuberant run. "Let's go, Eliott. Let's go to the circus!"

Eliott wished he could be as enthusiastic about the circus as his best friend was, but he felt a little down in the dumps today. He didn't know exactly why; he just simply couldn't get excited about anything. With a little coaxing, Cassandra persuaded Eliott to put his new red tie on and head down Gopher Canyon Road to the fairgrounds.

As they approached the circus, Cassandra couldn't help but comment on the sea of color that lay before them... reds, blues, greens, yellows, oranges. The circus was a colorful place. The big tent was impressive with its mas-
sive size and its striped canvas. It looked like a giant, spinning top that could meld into a huge, green, upside-down mushroom if its blue-and-yellow stripes were rotated quickly and persistently.

"What do you think, Eliott? Isn’t this exciting? I can’t wait to get inside. This is going to be fun." Cassandra and Eliott walked through the main gate, Cassandra walking as if she owned the entire circus herself. She was glad she had saved her money; she was going to enjoy the sideshows, the circus acts, the clowns, and the cotton candy. She hoped her friend, Eliott, would, too.

Eliott tried to enjoy the afternoon. He watched the sideshows and the circus acts and ate two helpings of pink cotton candy but wished he could be happier. He sighed as if having fun was a chore and tagged along with Cassandra who constantly had to stop and wait for him to catch up.

Suddenly, Eliott’s face lit up like a Christmas tree; he spotted a booth a few feet in front of him that boasted a sign which read, "For just $7.50, Happiness can be yours."

"Only $7.50!" shouted Eliott to his skeptical friend. "Only $7.50 and you can be happy." This was the most excited Eliott had been in a long time about anything. Cassandra was shocked and surprised at Eliott’s response to this claim. She doubted if the sign really would do what it said it would, but she didn’t have to worry about it. She didn’t have $7.50 for such nonsense anyway.
Eliott hurriedly walked up to the stand, and Cassandra hesitantly followed. Placed on a table draped with a black-and-white-checkered tablecloth were three green jars, each labeled with a price tag. The first jar sold for $7.50; the second, $10.00; and the third, $15.00. Taking $7.50 out of his wallet, Eliott handed the money to the fox, Sir Pembroke by name, who was standing behind the table.

"You won't be sorry," the bifocalled fox stated boldly. "Happiness is all yours and for the mere price of $7.50." Sir Pembroke with his sly grin watched Eliott closely as the curious lion opened the jar. The jar was empty inside except for a note which read, "You have just bought 24 hours of happiness." Eliott was ecstatic and reread the note a second time. With a broad smile on his face and his friend, Cassandra, at his side, Eliott thanked the fox and headed for home. He could hardly believe that happiness was finally his. The next 24 hours would prove it.

Nighttime came, and Eliott waited for happiness to come to him. Cassandra gently but firmly cautioned Eliott that he was expecting too much from a note in a bottle. "You can't expect to buy happiness in a jar for $7.50, Eliott. You have to make your own happiness. You have to find your pleasures in the animals, places, and things around you." But Eliott wasn't listening. He was too busy waiting to get happy.

The next 24 hours came and went, and happiness did not
make an appearance. Eliott was furious; he wanted happiness or his money back. He hurried down Raspberry Lane to his friend’s house. He interrupted Cassandra as she was making her usual blueberry pancakes for breakfast and begged her to come with him to the circus grounds. He wanted to ask Sir Pembroke for his $7.50. He was angry.

When they arrived, Sir Pembroke was busy waiting on a customer. Eliott and Cassandra waited as patiently as they could until he was finished, and then Eliott blurted out in rage. "I want my money back! I wasn’t at all happy in these last 24 hours! I want my money back!"

Sir Pembroke listened halfheartedly and then cunningly responded, "Well, if you buy the $10.00 jar of happiness, you will double the happiness you were supposed to receive yesterday. For just $10.00, you will be much happier than you would have been for $7.50. This, I promise you." Sir Pembroke spoke with such sincerity and diplomacy that Eliott couldn’t help but take out a new ten-dollar bill from his wallet and hand it obligingly to the fox. Cassandra shook her head in dismay; she couldn’t believe what she had just witnessed.

On their way home, they took Mountain Meadow Road which was ablaze with yellow and purple wildflowers. "See, Eliott. This is what happiness is all about...we can enjoy the beautiful countryside with its beautiful flowers which nature so generously gave us for nothing. This is something
money can't buy. This is ours for free."

Evening came and nighttime followed, and Eliott waited optimistically for happiness to knock on his door. He fell asleep sitting up in his rocking chair and awoke to a brand new day and a brand new chance to experience happiness. When it didn't arrive, once again he went storming down to the fairgrounds in search of Sir Pembroke. He was going to demand his $10.00 back.

But Sir Pembroke was too cagey and deceitful for Eliott. With his shrewdness, he talked Eliott into the $15.00 jar assuring him that he would buy so much happiness that he wouldn't know what to do with it all. "This is the economy size jar. It holds gallons and gallons of happiness. You won't be able to use it all up in your lifetime," Sir Pembroke declared convincingly, his bifocals slipping down to the tip of his nose.

When he returned home, Cassandra was incensed. "How could you let him talk you into that, Eliott! How!" she screamed impatiently, as she searched his face for some kind of answer. "That charlatan is taking all your money, and you are giving it to him!" Cassandra was so angry she turned around indignantly and left the room, leaving Eliott all by himself with his thoughts.

Eliott felt ashamed and embarrassed. Cassandra was right. Just because he had plenty of money, he thought he could buy happiness. Outraged at his own actions, he quick-
ly added up the amount of money he gave to Sir Pembroke and came up with a grand total of $32.50. And what did he have to show for it? He had lost his money and his self-esteem and still hadn’t found happiness. He felt overwhelmed with humiliation and sadness and began to cry.

Wiping his tears with the new linen handkerchief Cassandra had given him for his last birthday, he picked himself up and headed toward the fairgrounds for the last time.

As he approached the area where the circus was held, he noticed immediately that the sea of color and excitement was gone...the blue-and-yellow-striped canvas tent, the circus acts and sideshows, the hot dogs and pink cotton candy, and Sir Pembroke. Eliott sat down on a tree stump next to where the circus tent had previously been pitched, took out his new linen handkerchief once again, and used it until there were no tears left to fall.

Feeling all alone now, he began recalling all the good times he and his best friend, Cassandra, had together; all the things that seemed so simple yet gave her so much pleasure...the checkers game, the movie, her blueberry pancakes, the yellow and purple wildflowers. That’s what made her happy. Well, his $32.50 was gone forever but not his friendship with his very best friend. He would try to find happiness in the things she found happiness in. It was worth a try.

He jumped up, dusted himself off, and started to run
frantically down Gopher Canyon Road toward Cassandra's house.

"Cassandra! Cassandra!" he shouted excitedly, as he approached her back door. "I finally know what makes me happy...you and the wildflowers and the things we do together. I know now money can't buy our friendship, and it certainly can't buy anyone's happiness."

Cassandra immediately appeared in the doorway wiping her hands on her freshly-pressed apron. She had just finished making some rice pudding and wanted to share it with her best friend.

She and Eliott spread a soft, woolen blanket out under the maple tree near the pond and sat down with a cup of hot chocolate, the warm rice pudding, and the promise that they would always be friends.

Evening came, and Eliott was left alone once again with his own thoughts. Still warm with the glow from spending a nice afternoon with his friend under the maple tree, Eliott reaffirmed in his mind the lesson he had learned in life that day...that money can't buy happiness. Happiness was a good cup of hot chocolate, a nice sunny afternoon, and a best friend named Cassandra.
IN OTHER WORDS

THE CIRCUS

Every time he thought about the math test he had to take in the morning, he got anticipatory jitters.

With his new bifocal eyeglasses, the man who had poor eyesight could finally see both near and far.

Cassandra’s buoyant walk revealed a cheerful, lighthearted side to her personality.

The swindler was such an expert at fooling people that no one knew this charlatan was taking them for all they had.

The people on the beach commended the lifeguard for saving the drowning girl.

The fox cunningly took advantage of the rabbit when he wasn’t looking and ate his food.

The diplomacy between the two feuding nations was handled so well that the fighting stopped.

The ball player was ecstatic that his team had won the tournament.

Because he was so engrossed in his own thoughts, he did not hear what his brother was saying to him.

Her exuberant enthusiasm for basketball made her an excellent player.

The hubbub created by the live concert made it difficult to hear the band.

The mother was incensed that someone would harm her child.

Since she saw everything in a positive way, she also saw this trying situation optimistically.

The Girl Scouts wanted to erect their tent in a secure place, so they pitched it on level ground away from the rocky cliff.

Every time the little boy cried, his friend sympathetically cried along with him.

Having spent most of their day in the hot desert sun, the campers’ thirst was unquenchable.
The sailor's venture on the rocky sea in a small boat proved to be dangerous and risky.
THE OTHER SIDE OF MOCCASIN MOUNTAIN

THE RABBIT, THE SQUIRREL, AND THE WOLF
THE OTHER SIDE OF MOCCASIN MOUNTAIN

It was a beautiful summer afternoon in Quail Hollow, and the Moccasin Mountains were alive with color and magic. Newton and Sofia had never seen such splendor in these hills before; the daffodils and daisies seemed to exchange yellows every time they moved in the breeze. It was magical.

"This must be the best place in the whole world to live," Sofia said emphatically, her straw bonnet bouncing as she walked alongside her friend, Newton. It was such a beautiful day; she didn’t want anything to spoil it. It was perfect.

Newton, a philosopher of sorts, tended to agree with Sofia but still wanted to see other parts of the world. "Quail Hollow is a nice place to live in, all right," Newton declared casually, "but I still want to see what is on the other side of Moccasin Mountain. I want to see for myself if it is as beautiful there as it is here."

Sometimes Newton annoyed Sofia. He was always investigating and examining everything; he just couldn’t accept anything for what it was. Ever since he had gone to The Institute of Philosophy and Psychology in Rainbow Valley, he thought he knew just about everything there was to know about life. He thought he was the most intelligent, well-versed rabbit in Quail Hollow. His personality was a mix of confidence and arrogance; and, when he put his reading
glasses on and carried his briefcase, he was respected and acknowledged as the town's most educated citizen.

Sofia, on the other hand, was just a country squirrel at heart. She liked taking long walks down Mountain Meadow Road, stopping occasionally to gather acorns for a new recipe she wanted to try. She was a good cook, and all her friends waited patiently to be invited to her house for dinner. She was sociable and lovable and had used those virtues to win the Most Outstanding Squirrel of the Year award last summer in Quail Hollow.

It was getting late, and the afternoon was fading into evening. "We better start heading for home," Sofia said pensively, nudging Newton as she spoke. He was always drifting off into another world, philosophizing on something he couldn't change anyway.

Gopher Canyon Road followed the creek that led back to the village. Sofia and Newton had taken this path dozens of times and had always enjoyed the wild dandelions, lavender violets, and tall sunflowers that kept them company on their way to and from home. On this particular journey, they noticed a small, wooden sign sitting boldly right in the middle of a dandelion patch.

As they approached the sign, they could see that it was freshly-painted white with large, green letters printed on it revealing a message. "THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE," Sofia read slowly as she pointed to each word.
carefully so as not to touch the wet paint. "What does that mean?...the other side of what?" She turned to her friend, who was standing beside her deep in thought, and waited for an answer.

"Well, I suppose it means on the other side of the fence, or the road, or the town...on the other side of somewhere," Newton replied philosophically, his hand adjusting his glasses as he spoke. Sofia wasn’t so sure that Newton’s explanation was correct but, for the time being, she would content herself with his response.

The next morning brought another beautiful day and the unanswered questions to the sign they had seen in the meadow by the dandelions. Sofia, no longer content with Newton’s answers, decided to find out for herself just what grass was greener on what side.

Hoping he would be able to help her, Sofia ran over to Newton’s house and knocked on the front door. Without waiting for a response, she opened the door and walked in. Newton was busy clearing the breakfast dishes from the table while nibbling on a piece of leftover cinnamon toast. Almost as if he could read Sofia’s mind, he stopped what he was doing, grabbed her hand, and led her down the back porch steps onto the path that led to the outskirts of town.

"Where are we going?" inquired Sofia, her eyes opened wide with curiosity. "Where are you taking me?"

"You’ll see," replied her friend mysteriously as they
headed for Gopher Canyon Road.

At the end of the road, Sofia noticed a green-and-white striped tent echoing the colors of the sign they saw yesterday in the meadow. "Who lives there?" Sofia asked hesitantly. She was curious, all right, yet still a little bit fearful of what or who she was going to find in the tent.

"A fortune teller," responded Newton, quite pleased with his discovery. "I read about her in this morning’s newspaper. She’s new in town; she just put up her tent a few hours ago. She reads fortunes and interprets messages...at least that’s what the ad in the paper said."

Outside the tent, a little red easel displaying a blue notecard introduced its occupant as Madam Allegra, Fortune Teller. Newton and Sofia entered the tent with caution and apprehension. It was slightly dark inside. Madam Allegra and her crystal ball were silhouetted against the backdrop of a lighted blue curtain. The light danced off the crystal ball which was reflected a thousand times in the crystal earrings that dangled down Madam Allegra’s neck to her shoulders...blue, red, green, yellow, orange -- it was a symphony of colors. She was the most well-adorned wolf they had ever seen.

Pushing Newton closer and closer to Madam Allegra, Sofia opened her mouth to speak and surprised herself when only a whisper came out. "My friend, Newton, has something to ask you," she said shyly as she peeked over Newton’s
shoulder at the fortune teller.

"I was interested in the meaning of that sign that you have posted outside your tent. It reads: The grass is always greener on the other side!" Newton used his most professional voice when speaking to Madam Allegra. He wanted her to know that he was an intelligent rabbit with credentials; he had gone to college.

Madam Allegra leaned closer to her crystal ball, put her hands on it, and closed her eyes. Sofia and Newton were mesmerized by the dozens of bracelets that adorned her arms and the ten rings that enveloped each finger on each hand. Opening her eyes, Madam Allegra assured them that she did know what the sign meant and could interpret it for them for the mere charge of eighty-five cents. Sofia and Newton nervously put their hands in their pockets, and between them, came up with the correct change.

Madam Allegra once again put her decorated hands on the shiny crystal ball which was placed on a small, round table in front of her. The inside of the tent suddenly became silent, and the only thing Sofia could hear was the pounding of her heart. It was pounding so badly she thought it would jump right out of her chest. Newton didn’t move a hair; he was completely entranced with all that was going on.

"I see mountains in my crystal ball," Madam Allegra said quietly but intensely. "I see tall mountains with beautiful green grass and colorful flowers on the other side
of them. This is where the grass is greener and the colors of the flowers more beautiful." Madam Allegra stopped speaking, closed her eyes, and threw back her head. Everything remained still until Newton broke the silence.

"You mentioned that the grass is greener on the other side of the mountain. Which mountain?" Newton took a deep breath and waited for Madam Allegra to speak.

The fortune teller opened her eyes and gazed intently at Sofia and Newton as if she was about to give them an important revelation. "On the other side of Moccasin Mountain." She spoke slowly and distinctly so as to get her message across.

"Thank you," Sofia and Newton said in unison. They left the tent as quietly as they had entered it so as not to break the spell Madam Allegra had created in her green-and-white striped world. In a trance-like daze, they followed Gopher Canyon Road back to the village. Neither one spoke a word, letting the fortune teller's words settle in their minds. It had been a long day.

The next morning the sun's brightness and the sounds of birds singing awakened the community of Quail Hollow. Sofia was an early riser so she had already been up a couple of hours when Newton burst through her front door as if he was on a mission. "Let's go! Let's pack a few belongings and go see what's on the other side of Moccasin Mountain. Imagine the grass being greener and the flowers being more
beautiful over there! Let’s go see for ourselves."

Sofia never thought Newton would take Madam Allegra that seriously as to actually travel to the other side of Moccasin Mountain. "Are you sure we should go, Newton? It’s a long journey, and I don’t know if we can make it. And maybe we won’t be happy once we get there." Sofia could think of a dozen reasons why they should not go. But secretly, she was just as eager to make the trip as Newton was.

"We will be happy; and we can travel slowly, resting when we get too tired." Newton had a philosophy on everything, and this was no exception. Sofia also wanted to see what was on the other side of the mountain. Was it really greener? They would find out for themselves.

So Sofia and Newton each packed a knapsack and headed for the other side of Moccasin Mountain where the proverb on the freshly-painted, small, wooden sign would soon become a reality. They turned down Raspberry Lane toward Gopher Canyon Road and never looked back. They had embarked on their journey.

As they passed Cassandra’s house, she was busy hanging clothes in the backyard. "Hi, Cassandra," Newton yelled from the road. "We’re going to the other side of Moccasin Mountain. We’ll see you when we get back."

Cassandra hurried toward them, her apron flapping in the breeze. She hugged them both, wished them luck, and
quickly went back to hanging her clothes. She didn't want them to see her crying. She would miss them very much.

Heading down Market Street, they stopped at Mr. Green’s corner grocery store to say good-bye. He was busy waiting on a customer but took time to wish them a safe journey and happy findings. He lovingly handed them each a ripened peach to eat along the way. They had been customers of his for a long time; he had known them since they were children.

A few blocks away, Mrs. Bookworth was conducting a reading lesson under the pine trees in back of Quail Hollow’s grade school. Both Newton and Sofia had graduated from Mrs. Bookworth’s Animal School and had enjoyed their school days in her classroom.

Seeing Newton and Sofia carrying knapsacks and walking with a determined gait, Mrs. Bookworth instructed her class to go on reading independently for a few minutes while she talked to her former students. "Are you two off to see the world?" she joked warmheartedly. She remembered Sofia and Newton fondly as being two of her best pupils. Newton had won the award for the best reader in Grade 4, and she recalled with pleasure how excited and proud he was of himself that day. And Sofia had won the math award, reciting all the multiplication tables perfectly.

Newton and Sofia relayed their intended voyage to Mrs. Bookworth, who thought it was a marvelous idea but cautioned them not to expect too much on the other side of that moun-
tain. "Life is just about the same everywhere," she stated, using the familiar tone that a teacher uses with her students. She encouraged them to look up her brother who lived in Frog Hollow, a small village on the other side of Moccasin Mountain. "Stop in and say 'hi' and tell him I send my love and best wishes." Mrs. Bookworth’s eyes twinkled with pride as she shook their hands and wished them a safe trip. She quickly turned around and went back to her reading class. She had left her students alone long enough.

The creek that ran alongside Gopher Canyon Road was especially clear and transparent today. Afternoon brought the sun shining brightly on its waters. The creek captured the sun’s rays as they twinkled and danced on its surface. "Oh, it is a gorgeous day," Newton declared as he strutted alongside the creek and breathed in the fresh afternoon air.

It was an especially pretty day. The grass was so lush and green, each blade glistening in the sun’s warmth. It looked like a green velvet blanket. And the flowers...the wild dandelions had never seemed so yellow and buttery. The lavender violets bordered patches of dandelions, making the meadow look like yellow pictures in purple frames. As Newton passed the tall sunflowers, he saluted them like an army captain would salute his troops. "Yes, this is a gorgeous day," Sofia nodded affirmatively, smiling at her best friend’s gestures.

Evening came and Sofia and Newton had travelled enough
for one day. They had reached the top of Moccasin Mountain and were ready to rest for the night. Curling up under a cedar tree near a ridge, they fell sound asleep.

The sounds of birds chirping and a deer nibbling at their knapsacks awakened Sofia and Newton from a deep night’s sleep. It was a beautiful morning and time to continue their journey. Sofia confessed to Newton that she was still a little tired from yesterday’s excursion, but thought the freshness of the morning would give her new energy.

They crossed over Moccasin Mountain and started their descent into the valley below. As they neared the bottom of the mountain, they could see a clear, fresh-water creek with its sparkling waters; green, lush grass that looked like a green velvet blanket; and beautiful flowers...the yellow dandelions, lavender violets, and tall, soldier-like sunflowers. It was a beautiful sight.

"Frog Hollow is a beautiful place," Sofia commented with a hint of surprise in her voice, "but Quail Hollow is just as beautiful." She sat down on the bank by the creek and put her head in her hands. "This side of Moccasin Mountain is just as beautiful as the other side."

Putting his knapsack down first, Newton sat down beside her. "You’re right, Sofia. Frog Hollow is a very pretty place but no prettier than Quail Hollow. They’re both nice places to live in. Now that we’ve seen the other side of
Moccasin Mountain, tomorrow we will go back home."

Sofia’s eyes welled up with tears. "We can’t go back home tomorrow. Our knapsacks are almost empty. Our trip took longer than we thought it would, and we’ve used up most of our supplies. What are we going to do?"

"Well, we’ll have to stay here until we replenish our supplies and then head for home. It shouldn’t take too long." Newton tried to be sympathetic in talking to his friend. "In no time at all, we’ll be on our way."

"But I don’t want to stay here any longer. I want to go back to Quail Hollow now," Sofia stated emphatically.

Located along the bank next to them was a row of mailboxes belonging to the residents of Frog Hollow. From where Newton was sitting, he could see the name on the first mailbox...Mr. Oliver Clay, brother to Mrs. Bookworth of Quail Hollow.

Newton jumped up. "Come on, Sofia!" He helped her up, grabbed her hand, and ran up the path leading to Oliver Clay’s house. It was a white cottage with blue and white shutters nestled comfortably in a cluster of tall oak trees. Through the front window, they could see the elderly owl sitting in his armchair reading the newspaper.

They excitedly knocked on the door. It seemed like an eternity before he came to the door. The neatly-dressed owl opened the door, and Sofia and Newton introduced themselves and delivered his sister’s messages to him. They explained
their unfortunate circumstances...they wanted to go back home again as soon as possible; could he help them with food and supplies?

Oliver Clay was both wise and generous. He helped them refill their knapsacks with the necessary items they would need for their journey and also gave them some sound advice. "The grass is never greener somewhere else. It is the greenest right in your own backyard." In this case Quail Hollow was their backyard, and they were ready to go home.

They thanked Oliver Clay for his help and guidance and quickly followed the road that would take them out of Frog Hollow and back to Moccasin Mountain. Once they got to Moccasin Mountain, Quail Hollow would seem just hours away.

Their voyage back to the other side of the mountain didn’t seem quite as long as it did when they travelled to it. They were going home, and that felt good. Resting and eating along the way, Sofia and Newton shared their daydreams about what they would do first when they got home.

Gopher Canyon Road never looked so good to them. They hadn’t realized how homesick they were. The creek seemed to accompany them in song as they walked happily beside it. The wild dandelion patch was alive with magic and color and seemed to take on the lavenders and golds of the violets and sunflowers.

As they neared Quail Hollow, they noticed that Madam Allegra’s green-and-white striped tent was gone. But still
located there in the middle of the wild dandelion patch was the small white wooden sign with its bold green letters still shouting its message: THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE. Taking a bright red crayon out of her knapsack, Sofia approached the sign, crossed out the words "THE OTHER," and wrote in the word "EITHER." Now the sign read: THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER ON EITHER SIDE. Sofia and Newton liked this side of Moccasin Mountain best. They were home at last.
THE OTHER SIDE OF MOCCASIN MOUNTAIN

Since all the fifth grade students voted affirmatively for the class picnic, it would take place as soon as possible.

Because of his arrogance and superior attitude, no one in his class liked him.

Having already embarked on their journey, it was too late to turn back now.

Entranced by the magician’s tricks, the audience wished the magic show could go on all night.

Joseph Smith’s excursion from Missouri to California took place on foot alongside covered wagons.

The Cub Scout put everything he needed for his overnight camping trip in his new blue knapsack.

The hypnotist mesmerized his audience with his ability to put them under his spell.

"I wonder who’s going to win the World Series?" the baseball fan thought pensively, as he sat anxiously on the edge of his seat.

Every time the waitress passed their table, she would replenish their glasses with more water.

Standing at the edge of the mountain’s ridge, the hikers could see the entire valley below.

The light from the full moon silhouetted the trees’ shadows on the brick wall.

The choir members sang in unison, singing the same note at the same time.
ONCE UPON A STAR

THE CHICKEN AND THE GOOSE
She was so excited this morning. She jumped out of bed, put her favorite yellow polka-dot dress on with the lace collar and matching hat, grabbed her black patent leather purse, and headed out the front door at 7:20. Her feet barely touched the ground as she headed down Main Street toward the theater. Today, Emilia Hensen, Quail Hollow’s most likely-to-succeed chicken, was going to be a star.

When she arrived at the main entrance of the theater, Cassandra, her best friend from grade school, was waiting for her. Emilia and Cassandra had shared many good times in Mrs. Bookworth’s fifth grade class. They each had had a turn at being chosen Chicken of the Month and had remained good friends ever since.

"I’m so glad you read the Quail Hollow Gazette yesterday," Emilia blurted out excitedly, her lace collar flapping up and down as she spoke. "I would never have known about the movie audition if you hadn’t seen it in the newspaper. I might have missed my chance at becoming rich and famous." Emilia could hardly speak; she was already imagining the standing ovations she would receive from her audiences.

"You must calm down, Emilia," Cassandra said sharply, "or you’re going to blow the audition completely. Then you never will become a star."
Cassandra was right. Emilia took a deep breath and sat down on a bench to compose herself. Cassandra sat down beside her, grateful that she didn’t have to recite from a script in front of a half-dozen judges. She didn’t need fame or fortune, or the jitters that went along with being a star. She was happy just taking care of her home on Raspberry Lane.

"Emilia. Emilia Hensen," a voice boomed resoundingly over the loudspeaker. Cassandra and Emilia looked startled as they realized this was her call to appear on stage.

"This is it," exclaimed Emilia nervously. "This is my big chance." Wishing her luck, Cassandra followed her into the theater, taking a seat in the first row.

Emilia gracefully ascended the stairs to the stage, her yellow polka-dot hat bobbing up and down with each step. She read her lines perfectly, not missing a cue. She gave an excellent performance.

Everyone in the theater applauded thunderously. She had gotten the part in the movie. She was on her way. Tomorrow morning she would leave on the Moccasin Mountain Express for Hollyfield. She was going to be a big star.

Morning arrived, and Emilia, in her red-and-green plaid jumper and the most expensive shoes she owned, arrived at the Quail Hollow train station ready to embark on her new adventure. The Moccasin Mountain Express left Quail Hollow every morning for the neighboring villages of Hollyfield,
Lavender Grove, and other quaint towns nestled in the Moccasin Mountains.

Cassandra hugged Emilia and wished her a pleasant trip. "I'm going to miss you, Emilia," Cassandra said sadly, trying not to show too much disappointment at her friend's leaving. She didn't want to upset Emilia on her very special day. "Don't forget to send me a postcard telling me how everything is going."

Emilia assured Cassandra that she would keep in touch and that she would let her know all about her new life in Hollyfield. She boarded the train as the last whistle sounded for departure. As the train got farther and farther away from the Quail Hollow train station, Emilia could barely see Cassandra standing on the platform waving the blue-and-white linen handkerchief she had given her last Christmas. Soon the platform, the handkerchief, and Cassandra disappeared.

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"You must get an agent," said the voice from across the desk.

"An agent?" exclaimed Emilia hesitantly.

"Yes, an agent. And a manager, and someone to handle your publicity," responded the voice from across the desk.

"An agent? A manager? Someone to handle my publicity?" Emilia's head was spinning. "But I don't even have a place to live yet."
"First things first," said the voice from across the desk.

Emilia turned around and left the office. She felt a little dizzy and sick to her stomach. How was she ever going to find someone to help her with all these business matters that went along with being a star? The sun was going down, and she was getting hungry. Perhaps, after she had something to eat, she would feel better.

Across the street from the Sure-to-be-a-Star Agency, Emilia noticed a small cafe with bright orange flower pots on each side of the entrance. A rumbling noise in the bottom of her stomach reminded her of how hungry she was, and she found herself racing toward the cafe, dreaming of a delicious dinner of hot corn chowder, fresh, warm biscuits, and a piece of blueberry pie for dessert. For a moment, she could picture Cassandra baking a fresh blueberry pie in her kitchen on Raspberry Lane. Emilia could almost taste the pie fresh from the oven. She wished Cassandra could be here right now to join her, but Cassandra was far away on the other side of Moccasin Mountain in Quail Hollow, waiting to hear from her friend in Hollyfield.

Taking a seat by the window, Emilia noticed there was no hot corn chowder or warm biscuits on the menu, so she ordered a Hollyfield hamburger, without the tomatoes. She was ravenous. She barely took her eyes off her hamburger as she devoured the sandwich. She left only the pickle on her
plate. It wasn't until after the last delicious bite that Emilia stared lucidly at the poster pinned on the cafe's bright green walls. "Need a place to stay? Need a manager? an agent? Someone to take care of your publicity matters? Call Cora at HAVen 111-222." "Made to order," Emilia thought, blinking her eyes three times in disbelief.

Cora was a nice plump picture of professionalism. She reminded Emilia of her Aunt Hilda. She liked her instantly. "Life is good," Emilia thought. "Wait 'til I tell Cassandra of my good fortune. Surely she'll be happy for me." And Cassandra was.

Early the next morning, even before the sun peeked up over the Hollyfield skyline, Emilia bounced out of bed and headed for Sunrise Boulevard and Mr. Stillbird's office. Mr. Stillbird was a highly accomplished director in the theater arts and greatly respected by all his colleagues in the movie profession. He had won the Golden Goose award for excellence. Emilia was thrilled to finally be meeting him.

"You are perfect for the part," Mr. Stillbird said cordially as he greeted Emilia with a perusing look. "But before we begin production on Monday, you must work at making your lips a little redder and your cheeks a little rosier. The female lead in this movie must have big red lips and a circle of rouge on each cheek. And she must also be a few pounds thinner. You must trim down your body fat."

"He said I was perfect for the part," Emilia thought
quizzically, trying to remember all the things Mr. Stillbird said she must do before Monday. Mr. Stillbird handed her the script, Emilia thanked him, and then left the building in the direction of the nearest drug store. "Red lips, rosy cheeks, zero body fat," she murmured to herself as she returned home that night to Cora and her Hollyfield flat.

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The movie was a success, and Emilia was sensational. She had the perfect body in the perfect movie, and she was ecstatically happy. She was such a success that Mr. Stillbird cast her in his next movie as the heroine in a small town western.

"You are perfect for the part," Mr. Stillbird said cordially as he looked at Emilia with that perusing look. "But first you must put on some weight. Western-type characters always look plumply healthy. And the makeup will never do. You must get rid of those big red lips and that rosy color on your cheeks. Production begins on Monday." With that Mr. Stillbird exited the room, leaving Emilia a little bewildered and overwhelmed. She would do what she had to do to keep the part. After all, she was a big successful movie star.

And so with her new added poundage and her pale lips and cheeks, Emilia became the greatest western heroine Mr. Stillbird ever cast in such a role. She worked day and night, studying her lines and practicing her acting moves.
News of Emilia’s success made headlines weekly in the Quail Hollow Gazette. Cassandra was so proud of her best friend’s success, and Emilia was proud of herself.

After two big smash movies, Emilia had made many friends in Hollyfield but decided it was time to go back to Quail Hollow for a while for some rest and relaxation. It was wonderful being a big movie star, but it was also a little exhausting.

When she arrived in Quail Hollow on the 9:10 A.M. Moccasin Mountain Express, all of Quail Hollow’s finest citizens were there to greet her. Mrs. Bookworth stood in the foreground with a smile as wide as Mountain Meadow Road, her eyes resting proudly on her former student. Mr. Green, the grocer, was busily picking up the bag of lemons he had dropped when the excitement at seeing Emilia was too much for him. And Cassandra in her yellow-and-orange-checkered dress with the white pinafore was standing off to the side of the crowded platform, waiting for the first glimpse of her friend, who had left her not too long ago but what seemed like an eternity. With cheers and hugs and tears, everyone left the train station for Raspberry Lane and Cassandra’s front parlor where fresh blueberry tarts, delicately sculpted lemon curls, and hot orange-flavored tea awaited them in the pink-flowered cups and saucers Emilia had given Cassandra five years ago for her birthday.

"When are you going back to Hollyfield? "When will you
make another movie?" "Was it fun working with THE Mr. Stillbird?" "What was the nightlife like?" "How long are you staying here in Quail Hollow?" Question after question after question was hurled at Emilia. She had no time to answer the first question when the next one was tossed at her.

Cassandra took a gulp of tea, put down her cup, and cried, "Wait a minute! We’re not giving Emilia a chance to catch her breath. Let’s ask one question at a time."

Emilia had gotten used to the adoration of her fans. The attention in Quail Hollow seemed no different than the attention she received in Hollyfield. She loved it. But, as she took a bite of the delicious blueberry tart Cassandra had made for her homecoming, she realized that she liked her added poundage. And she didn’t miss her big red lips and rosy cheeks. Not for now anyway. For a change she liked being Emilia Hensen, Quail Hollow’s most likely-to-succeed chicken. And then, remembering the old saying her grandmother once told her,

Make new friends but keep the old;
one is silver, the other gold

Emilia answered the biggest and hardest question of all...
"Would she go back to Hollyfield and make another movie for Mr. Stillbird?" "Yes," she thought out loud to herself, "someday."
IN OTHER WORDS

ONCE UPON A STAR

A mother’s adoration for her children can be seen in the way she tenderly cares for them.

Bewildered, the rabbit hopped confusedly through the maze.

After the book fair, the librarian cordially invited all the children into her home for an ice cream sundae.

He was so ecstatically happy when he won the award for the best basketball player at the sports banquet that his joy filled the gymnasium.

The aspiring actress’ two-room flat consisted of a bedroom/bathroom and a living room/kitchen.

Because the student had gotten a good night’s sleep, she was lucid and alert for the exam.

The professor was in the process of perusing the student’s final exam, looking very carefully for any errors.

The teacher quizzically peered over her glasses, trying to figure out which students were causing the commotion.

The football player was so ravenously hungry after the big game that he had two hamburgers, two orders of french fries, and a giant milkshake before he went to bed.

The rouge on the clown’s cheeks was so red it matched the color of his nose.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Everyday take a new word and put it in your pocket.

Soon you will have a pocketful of miracles
for creating a new world.

THE SHORT STORY

1. Thinking back on the four stories you have read, which character did you like best? Would you like to be this character? Tell why.

2. Which character would you like as a best friend? Tell why.

3. Select a story and create a new ending for it, using a different familiar saying if you wish.

4. Using a different character from each story, write a story of your own.

5. Select a story. Keeping the same story line, change the characters and write a new story. Be sure to describe your characters fully so that your reader will get a good idea of what they are like.

6. Choose one of the preceding stories and make it into a play. Be sure to include the setting (time and place), the props (things used by the characters in the play), and the dialogue (what the characters would say).

7. Choose a story and summarize it in your own words. Write your summary in such a way that your friend will want to read the entire story.

8. Choosing a moral from the "Fable Table" in the section on FABLES or selecting a moral of your own, write a short story with a familiar saying.
SHORT STORIES
A READING LIST


Lawson, Robert. Ben and Me. Little, 1939.

____. Rabbitt Hill. Viking, 1944.


FABLES
Aesop, who lived in the sixth century B.C., is credited as the inventor of the fable. Whether he was an actual person or a legendary figure, many authors have tried to capture the essence of his fables in their own writing. The Indian fabulist Bidpai, the French fabulist Jean De La Fontaine, and the Russian fabulist Krylov are just a few of Aesop’s descendants eager to leave their literary contributions to the world of fables and fable writing. Two of our modern-day fabulists, James Thurber and Arnold Lobel, help keep Aesop’s tradition alive for today’s audiences with their distinctive, contemporary approach to fabling.

Even though the fable is a brief narrative, it has a beginning, middle, and end. Its main characters are animals, people, or objects, but animals are featured the most. These characters have only one side to their personalities, making them strong or weak, wise or foolish, deceitful or honest, loyal or unfaithful. Little or no background is used as the setting for their actions.

A fable is an easy story to follow, and its main purpose is to present a moral or lesson to be learned. Sometimes this moral or lesson is hidden within the story, and sometimes it is stated at the end of the story. The reader must look for this message. The message attempts to show people how they can live wisely and happily with themselves.
and with others.
THE SQUIRREL AND THE RABBIT

A Squirrel and a Rabbit decided to go fishing one day down by the lake at the end of an oak tree forest. Since fishing was one of their favorite things to do, they had been looking forward to this day for a long time.

On their way to the lake, the Rabbit and the Squirrel began talking about their past fishing trips and the fabulous catches they had brought home for dinner. But the Squirrel had a tendency to tell tall tales. "The last fish I caught was at least four feet long," boasted the Squirrel unashamedly to his friend, the Rabbit. "And I usually catch so many fish I can feed an army," he continued. When they reached the lake, the Rabbit and the Squirrel each took a boat out on the water. Squirrel was certain one boat would not be enough for all the fish they were going to catch that day.

As the sun was beginning to disappear behind the trees, Rabbit approached the shore in his boat. He had caught three trout and two catfish that afternoon, and he was proud of his catch. Rabbit looked around and noticed Squirrel’s boat docked in the bay, but Squirrel was nowhere in sight and the boat was empty. Posted on a tree by the dock was a note with Rabbit’s name on it. It read, "Dear Rabbit, I have caught so many fish that I could hardly bring my boat in from the water, it was so heavy. I went on home to start
supper. Come on by for a real treat. I don’t mind if you
bring a friend or two with you. Love, Squirrel." Squirrel
felt confident with the invitation he made. Rabbit would
surely be too tired to come for dinner and, consequently,
wouldn’t invite anyone else.

Rabbit folded the note and put it in his pocket.

Rabbit was not jealous of Squirrel’s "big" catch. Squirrel
was his friend. He was happy for him. And besides he was
going to Squirrel’s house for a delicious fish dinner.

On his way home, Rabbit stopped by the Post Office to
see if he had received any mail that day. Four of Rabbit’s
and Squirrel’s friends were also there, busily gathering
their mail from their mailboxes. "It wouldn’t be right to
invite only two of these friends to Squirrel’s house for
dinner, leaving the other two out," Rabbit thought pensively
to himself. Suddenly, he remembered Squirrel saying he
usually caught enough fish to feed an army, and so Rabbit
felt comfortable inviting all four of their friends to
dinner at Squirrel’s house instead of just two. He knew
Squirrel wouldn’t mind, and he also knew how Squirrel loved
to boast about his fishing trips. He would have a captive
audience.

"I’m on my way to Squirrel’s house for dinner. Why
don’t you join me? I’m sure there’s plenty of food to go
around. He caught a lot of fish today," Rabbit said confi-
dently, anticipating Squirrel’s pleasure at seeing his
additional dinner guests. Everyone was thrilled with the invitation.

By the time Rabbit and his friends reached Squirrel's front door, their mouths were watering. It had been a long day, and everyone was very hungry. Upon opening the door, Squirrel was astonished and surprised to see that Rabbit was not the only one to arrive for supper and that he had brought four friends home with him instead of just a couple. Squirrel was very embarrassed when they sat down to the extravagant dinner he had boasted about. His "big" catch of the day was one catfish and one salmon.

Moral: Be careful what you say. You might have to eat your words.
THE ROOSTER AND THE PEACOCK

The Rooster had thought more than once about becoming a peacock. If he could become a peacock, he would be able to strut around the barnyard and all the other roosters would admire him and think he was the greatest rooster at the farm.

So, one morning, bright and early, he anxiously approached the Peacock's coop. "May I have the plumes that have fallen off the peacocks' tails and are lying on the ground?" he asked eagerly.

"What on earth do you want them for?" inquired the Peacock.

"I want to paste them on my own feathers so that I will be as elegant and colorful as you are. Then all the other roosters in my barnyard will look at me and think I am the most handsome and superb rooster they have ever seen."

The Peacock agreeably helped the Rooster paste the discarded plumes on his body. Delighted with the iridescent color of his newly-acquired plumage, the Rooster strutted back to the barnyard with a haughty, arrogant attitude, convinced the other roosters would admire him and envy his beauty.

As he approached the farm, however, his strut became more and more intense, shaking the peacocks' plumes loose. Consequently, by the time he reached the barnyard, the few
iridescent plumes he had left were hanging loosely from his body, dragging along the ground gathering dirt. When the other roosters saw him, they pointed their wings at him, making fun of him and his ridiculous plumage.

Moral: Don’t pretend to be someone you’re not. Always be yourself.
THE BEETLE AND THE ANT

It was a brisk fall morning, and the Beetle and the Ant were on their way to the village to get some supplies for the cold winter weather that would soon arrive. Since the village was located on the other side of the lake, the Beetle and the Ant had to cross two bridges in order to get the things they needed for winter. They were new to this neighborhood and crossing bridges would be a new experience for them. Their old neighborhood didn’t have a lake, so their supplies had been easier to get last winter.

As they approached the first bridge, the Beetle took one look at the bridge and cried out, "Oh, no! This bridge is too long and too high. We are so small, and our legs are too short. How will we ever get to the other side to get what we need for winter?"

"Don’t worry about crossing the bridge until we get there," replied the Ant. "It might not be so hard to cross once we get there. Let’s just wait and see what happens."

When the Beetle and the Ant got to the bridge, they began their journey to the other side of it. They walked slowly and persistently, climbing up and over the bridge. It wasn’t too long before they had reached the other side.

"Well, that wasn’t so bad after all," said the Beetle. The Ant was grateful and happy, too, that they had made it.

As they neared the second bridge, the Beetle cried out
again, "Oh, no! This bridge is too long and too high. We are so small, and our legs are too short. How will we ever get to the other side to get what we need for winter?"

"Well, we made it over the first bridge," said the Ant, proud of himself and the Beetle for their accomplishment. "Let's just wait and see what happens when we get there."

When they got to the second bridge, the Beetle and the Ant walked slowly and persistently across the bridge to the other side.

"We made it!" cried the Beetle excitedly. "We made it over the bridges to the village! Now, we will be nice and warm for the winter."

Moral: Don't worry about your problems until they happen.
THE MOUSE AND THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

One rainy, Sunday afternoon, the Mouse and the Hippopotamus decided to go to a restaurant for lunch.

"I'm so glad we're finally here," said the Hippopotamus, trying desperately to squeeze into the chair at the table. "I'm really very hungry."

"They say the seaweed soup is excellent here," said the Mouse, who could barely see over the top of the table.

"Sometimes I wish I was as big as you are," said the Mouse to the Hippopotamus, "then I wouldn't have to stretch my neck so much to see what is on the table."

"Sometimes I wish I was as small as you are," said the Hippopotamus to the Mouse, "then I would be more comfortable in this chair and would have more room to move around in."

Just then, a bolt of lightning came thundering through the restaurant's window and struck the Mouse and the Hippopotamus. In an instant, the Hippopotamus was as small as the Mouse, and the Mouse was as big as the Hippopotamus.

"Now we will be happy," said the Mouse. "We got our wish."

But the Mouse and the Hippopotamus weren't happy at all. The Mouse's arms were too short to reach his food on the table. He had a terrible time. The table seemed miles away. And the Hippopotamus, who was always very hungry, had a hard time getting the food off the table fast enough to
satisfy his ferocious appetite. The table was too high. He was very frustrated.

After lunch, they both hurried home in the rain not wanting to miss their supper. They were very hungry.

Moral: Be careful what you wish for; it might come true.
THE CAT AND THE ANT AND THE DOG

It was a beautiful, sunny afternoon, and the weather contributed generously to laziness. The Cat took full advantage of the luxurious ambience the setting had to offer and viewed the world from her fully-cushioned patio lounge. "Ah, this is the life," she sighed dreamily as her chin lay contentedly on her front paws.

Meanwhile, just a few feet away from her in the backyard, the Ant worked diligently carrying and storing his family’s food for the winter. His friends tirelessly accompanied him up the mountainous ant hill. They were ambitious and industrious and would be ready for the cold weather when it arrived.

The Cat had a nice view of the yard all right, but the trees and flowers were one-dimensional. She had no idea how many apples were waiting to be eaten on the apple tree; she could only see six. And the red rose could barely be seen, for it was in the shadow of the yellow one.

The neighborhood bully, a large Dog, liked to wreak havoc on the backyard and its inhabitants. He was constantly hiding behind the rose bushes, waiting for the Ant to climb up the hill so that he could ambush his caravan and keep him from accumulating his food for the winter. Fortunately, the Ant could see behind and around the rose bushes, for he took many different routes up the hill and, there-
fore, could avoid the Dog and his mischievous antics. But the Cat, who never left the one-dimensional view from her lounge, could not see where the Dog was hiding. The Dog would wait for the Cat to perch on her throne and then craftfully upset her afternoon resting place, chasing her out of her soft-cushioned world and claiming the lounge for himself.

Day after day, the Dog would celebrate his prowess with his unrelenting behavior, but the Ant didn’t mind for he could see the Dog no matter where he hid. The Cat, however, lost her throne just about every day because she never left her patio cushion to join the world and all it had to offer. The afternoon adventures left her exhausted and hungry while the Ant had a place to rest and plenty to eat.

IN OTHER WORDS

THE SQUIRREL AND THE RABBIT

The actress’s extravagant lifestyle left her penniless within a year.

Because of always telling tall tales, no one believed the fisherman when he told the truth.

THE ROOSTER AND THE PEACOCK

The area of the Peacock’s coop was large enough to house twelve peacocks.

Because his haughty attitude revealed an arrogant air to his personality, few of his classmates liked to hang out with him.

The soap bubbles shine brightly in the warm sun, reflecting the iridescent colors of the rainbow.

THE BEETLE AND THE ANT

Jogging in brisk weather is more invigorating and enjoyable than jogging in warm weather.

My aunt persistently studied for her driver’s test and never gave up trying to pass it.

THE MOUSE AND THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

The hippopotamus’ ferocious appetite indicated that he had not eaten all day.

THE CAT AND THE ANT AND THE DOG

As I stood alone in the quiet gymnasium, I could feel the heightened ambience of exciting basketball games once played in this room a long time ago.

The playful antics of the clown captured the audience’s attention.

She diligently studied all week long in order to pass her SAT test on Saturday.

Looking at the building from across the street, the architect got a one-dimensional view of the structure.

The quarterback’s prowess on the football field gained him notoriety and induction into the Football Hall of Fame.
The burglars wreaked havoc on the apartment building, leaving only two rooms unrobbed.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Never underestimate your potential and brilliance as a writer.

Pick up your pen and write.

FABLES

1. Choose a fable from the preceding pages. Using the same story and the same characters in that story, rewrite the fable creating new dialogue for the characters. Using your own words, what would you have the characters say?

2. Select a character from one of the fables on the preceding pages and another character from a second fable. Using these two characters, write a fable of your own. You can choose a moral from the Fable Table or use one of your own.

3. Select a proverb from the Fable Table and write a fable of your own. You may use these characters or use your own.
THE FABLE TABLE

Some Ideas for Writing Fables

PROVERBS (MORALS)

"Little by little does the trick."
"The quickest way is not always the best way."
"He that has many friends has no friends."
"Honesty is the best policy."
"Life is worth fighting for."
"Money does not buy happiness."
"Do not trust flatterers."
"Do not count your chickens before they are hatched."
"The bigger they are, the harder they fall."
"Success requires work."
"You can’t judge a book by its cover."
"Be careful what you wish for; it might come true."
"It is better to walk one mile than run one foot."
"A stitch in time saves nine."
"A wise man knows his weaknesses."
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"Treat others as you want others to treat you."

"Slow and steady wins the race."

"Curiosity killed the cat."

"Make new friends but keep the old; one is silver, the other gold."
SOME ANIMAL CHARACTERS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIONS

A crow ................ foolishness or vanity
An owl ................ wisdom
A fox .................. cunningness and slyness
A lion .................. strength and courage
An eagle ................ courage
An elephant ............. memory
A mule .................. stubbornness
A dog .................. loyalty
A cat .................. laziness
An ant .................. diligence
A grasshopper .......... frivolity
FABLES
A READING LIST


—. The Lion and the Rat: A Fable by La Fontaine. Watts, 1963.

—. The Miller, the Boy and the Donkey. Adapted and illustrated by Brian Wildsmith. Watts, 1969.


I love splashing words on paper...
I can paint a million pictures
with my pen...
and call all of them
a masterpiece
POETRY IN THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM

And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name

- William Shakespeare,
Midsummer Night's Dream

TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Poetry emphasizes and encourages an inventive, creative use of language and thereby becomes an excellent medium for stretching the fabric of one's imagination. Children possess an uncanny brilliance when it comes to using their imaginations as a means of creative expression both in written and unwritten forms of the language arts. Poetry offers a ground, an opportunity for putting their thoughts and ideas on paper thus giving them the unlimited privilege of self-expression.

The elementary school classroom is an ideal setting for introducing children to the art of poetry. In its own contained community, the concepts of rhyme and verse can be born and nurtured.

Reading poetry is the source of much pleasure, and the experience of exploring this art form should definitely be made fun for children. The poems of Shel Silverstein, Myra Cohn Livingston, and John Ciardi are just a few good choices in children's poetry. A teacher should select poetry that appeals to a grade level in both content and interest.
Poetry can be introduced in preschool with the reading of nursery rhymes. It is never too early to present rhyme and rhythm to children. Their creative sense is developing and should be tapped into with poetic devices, allowing them to experience and nurture those qualities that eventually make excellent readers, writers, and thinkers.

In the elementary school classroom, poetry does not have to be introduced or presented only in the language arts curriculum; it can be enjoyed anytime throughout the day. As the teacher, you can make it a part of all areas of the curriculum, or you may want to read or write poetry at those times the students need a break in their routine. Don’t be afraid to use this genre for filling those odd moments that creep into every day. Poetry is always a plus for delivering and exploring something wonderful and creative that both teacher and students alike can enjoy. And above all, be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is contagious. Poetry is not an art form to shy away from with fear and trepidation. It is to be embraced and enjoyed.

Once the lesson is completed, a teacher can experience pleasure and satisfaction in the poetry s/he receives from her or his students. Sharing these poems with the class is a must, for this is the culmination of all those combined efforts finally presented in concrete forms.

In sharing the children’s poetry, I always include at least one poem from every student in the class...everyone
is a poet! One class period is set aside for this recitation; and after each poem is read aloud by me, I give proper credit to the author by recognizing each child by name and profession, e.g., "John Collins, poet." The children fill with pride, and their feeling of accomplishment gives them confidence and incentive not only to write poetry but to do well in other areas of their school work. No one shys away from a pat on the back.

In the following pages, I present exercises in poetry that I have used in my own classroom with incredible results. Young children are ready and receptive to what we have to offer them as educators. They are eager and anxious to explore new horizons and new feelings. Poetry can offer them one such beginning.
COLOR POEMS
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Poetry and Color

Red, Green, Yellow, Blue, Orange! One of the most imaginative experiences of all begins and ends here. In expressing the poetic sense, this is one of the most creative exercises for displaying individuality and talent. The students must use their creative intuition for exploring their five senses in colorful ways. They will learn that poetry combined with color is a powerful means of self-expression, allowing limitless avenues for using their imaginations.

In getting started, have the students close their eyes and feel and sense and live that color. Ask them: How does it feel? What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you taste? What do you associate with that color? If they are familiar with the parts of speech, tell them they can make their poems come alive with adjectives and adverbs and carefully chosen words and phrases. Remember, the teacher’s objective in this exercise is to encourage the students to use their imaginations in developing and exploring their five senses, using color as incentive for poetic accomplishment. And then have them paint their thoughts!
COLOR POEMS

Colorful imaginations allow us to think of anything in the world in any color we wish. Any person, animal, or thing can be described in a colorful way. For example, you can visualize the color "yellow" and picture a lemondrop, the sunshine, or the glow from a candle. You can create a poem of one line or a poem of many lines using the color "yellow."

yellow is a lemondrop that makes me pucker up when I eat it
yellow is the sunshine dancing on my best friend's blond hair
yellow is the glow from the lighted candles on my birthday cake

These three ideas can be used as three separate poems, or they can be used as one poem if you put them together without any spaces between the lines. It is your choice. Have fun with color.
COLOR POEMS

brown is a chocolate kiss unwrapped and ready to eat

red is the stop sign at the corner of my street
and Randall Avenue

green is a freeway sign without graffiti on it

yellow is a bumblebee with all its black stripes gone

white is a snowman eating a marshmallow

white is a snowflake nestled in Santa’s beard

blue is a wild blueberry sitting bravely
in a bowl of cherries

blue is me without you

green is the wet grass beneath my feet

purple is a violet, a plum, and a people eater

black is an empty feeling you have
when everyone you love is gone

yellow is a field of wild daisies dancing freely
in a meadow’s breeze

red is a cherry tree growing in Cherry Valley,
California

orange is a pumpkin in a pumpkin patch
waiting to be carved for Halloween

blue is having a coke without a friend
blue is jeans seldom washed

gray is an unmade decision

brown is the color of Christopher’s hair when it’s moussed

brown is chunky peanut butter piled high on a wheat cracker

brown is a chocolate cupcake without any icing on it

yellow is the sunflower on Maria’s hat

black is my shadow that tells me I am real

white is my soul after saying I’m sorry

orange is the orange juice I spilled all over the breakfast table

purple is the heather that grows on the moors in Ireland

red is the tomato sauce that hugs my spaghetti

brown is the haze that hangs heavily over the sleepy city at night

gray is the sidewalk I follow to school everyday

purple is my lips after I swim in the ocean

white is the moon when his face is happy and full

white is the miracle of morning
IN OTHER WORDS

COLOR POEMS

My mother visited the *moors* in Ireland which are a vast area of uncultivated wasteland.
COLOR POEMS

1. Think of a person in your life, perhaps someone in your family or your best friend. What color do you think of when you think of that person? Using that color, write a poem about them.

2. Think of a holiday or a season of the year. Using any color, describe that holiday or season.

3. Thinking about nature - birds, animals, flowers, trees - write a poem using colors to describe what you see, hear, feel, taste, and smell.

4. Think about your pet or the pet of someone you know. Write about that pet using as many different colors as you can think of.
FREE-FORM POEMS
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Free-form Poems

Poetic license! These are the key words in this writing venture. Students should be given the opportunity to say or do anything they wish using any form they wish. Let them know that the reins are in their hands and anything goes.

Initially, however, the students must learn that poetry takes on certain forms with rules and guidelines pertaining to each individual form. They must acquire the knowledge of these various styles and structures in order to acquire the freedom to break away from these guidelines and invent their own. You, the teacher, must help them do this. You must give them the opportunity to investigate the traditional poetic devices and forms and then give them the opportunity to "try their own wings."

Children write from their hearts with unblemished honesty and unbridled feelings. Their poetry is fresh, real, and sometimes extremely deep. If they are finding it difficult getting started, brainstorm a while with topics or forms that could be used. Then sit back and watch what happens. Let their brilliance overwhelm you.
FREE-FORM POEMS

In this section you get to develop your own form for poetry, much in the same way Adelaide Crapsey developed the cinquain. She created the form, counting syllables and deciding what each line should contain. This is what you are going to do now.

Knowing what you do about poetry and the rules that govern it, you are going to invent the form for the poems you are inspired to write. For example, you might want to combine a haiku and a limerick, calling it a limeraiku. Breaking away from what you know about them, you will create your own form. This might be one of the many forms your poetry will take.

A Limeraiku

The butterfly said to the mouse,
"Come over and see my new house.
It's made of pure silk
Threads of gold and bright yellow
Florescent brilliance
And bring your friend LeeRoy the louse."

Now, develop a set of rules that you would like to follow in writing your poetry. Remember, poems written in free verse do not have to rhyme, follow a particular rhythm, or have a set pattern. Because you are the creator, you can have as many lines in a poem as you wish. You can make the poem short or long, using many words or just a few words. You can write it on any topic or subject your imagination can come up with.
In the poems on the following pages, a variety of forms and approaches are used. Don’t block yourself in by using only one form or set of guidelines for your poems. Have fun experimenting. Let your imagination run wild.
FREE-FORM POEMS

crickets and bluebells

crickets
  butterscotch
muffins
  strawberry patches
love
  easter bunnies
chalkboards and
  raisins
potted plants
  sun-dried seaweed
books
shocking pink
  and
bluebells

what do all these things
  have in common?

absolutely
  nothing

100
buttered balloons
field-laden daffodils
sunshine unlimited
    --yellow

emerald oceans
blanketed grasses
dancing meadows
    --green

just-picked roses
anger untamed
polished apples
    --red

patches of sky
seldom-touched serenity
me without you
    --blue
buzz buzz buzz

zzz

zzz

zzz...

wha a a a k

cra a a a k

spl a a a t

spl a a a s!s

~onomatopeia.
every night
when I go to bed
I tuck a poem
under my head

and

I dream of peanuts
and bubble gum
and kalamazooos
of monkeys
and lizards
and green tennis shoes.

a pig waltzes by
in shorts made of plaid;
he twists and he
turns
his friends say he’s "bad".

a frog wearing sunglasses
does flips and high flops,
with his yellow sports jacket
he thinks he’s tops.

I open my eyes
put my feet on the ground,
the pig and the frog
are nowhere around.

I wonder for hours
what town I was in
’cause it’s the darndest place
that I’ve ever been.
I saw an alligator
in my swimming pool
last night.

I asked him
what he was doing there.

He answered, "Eating a pizza."
"Oh," I replied, "May I have a piece, too?"
little brown bird
sitting on the bare branch,
how do you like your winter home
without its leafy greenness?

don't worry.
when springtime comes,
your nest will be hidden
among boughs of berries.

in the shadow
of a metaphor
I can hold
a daisy
but in the shadow
of the daisy
I cannot hold
a metaphor
IN OTHER WORDS

FREE-FORM POEMS

As the sun rose over the hills, the valley was filled with a florescent beauty.

"I know what a metaphor is!" shouted the overanxious student to answer the question. "A metaphor is when the poet compares two objects or ideas as if they were the same thing." "Can you give me an example?" asked the teacher encouragingly. "The beach is the ocean's cape," the student replied proudly.

"A bee makes a buzzing sound," responded the student to the teacher's question. "If you say the word 'buzz' out loud and listen to the sound the 'z's' make, you can hear the bee buzzing. This word that sounds just like the sound a bee makes is called onomatopoeia."

The serenity of the church made me realize how noisy the world outside is.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Writing is turning imagined thoughts into pictures.

FREE-FORM POEMS

1. Try writing a limeraiku on your own (limerick + haiku = limeraiku). The first, second, and sixth lines are humorous and have eight syllables each (as in a limerick). The third, fourth, and fifth lines are a haiku (5, 7, 5 syllables) and reflect nature. It might be difficult at first to write a limeraiku, but don’t give up. If you wish, instead of using the prescribed format, make up one of your own. Once your poem is written, you will be so proud of your poetic ability.

2. Write a poem in any form you wish. Write it on any topic or subject you wish. Make it long or short. Use a lot of words or a few words. Place the poem anywhere on your page. You are the poet. Be creative!
ACROSTICS

(NAME POEMS)
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Acrostics

This is a fun exercise for students but sometimes difficult. If the students are unable to write a name poem starting each new line with a letter from their chosen word, they may need guidance in spotting words within a line of the poem that can be moved to the next line, using the beginning letter of that word. For example,

Redbreasted... sitting
On a maple tree
Branch
In May’s sunshine
Notifying his friends of
Spring’s arrival

Tell the students that free verse along with their imaginations result in cleverly written acrostics.
ACROSTICS

An acrostic is a word composition, usually a poem, vertically spelling out the name of a person, place, or thing. It is a very old way to write a poem, dating back to the scriptures in the bible. The first letter of the stanza from the 119th Psalm reveals the Hebrew alphabet. Greek, Roman, and Elizabethan writers also used this form for many of their works.

Today, when we work a crossword puzzle or form an acronym, we are using a variation of the acrostic principle. Examples of some acrostics are done for you on the following pages. They can be tricky to write but, once you have met the challenge, they can be a lot of fun.

Always try your best to
Create poems you are proud to
Read
Or you will not be
Satisfied with
The work you do
In other areas of
Creative endeavors
ACROSTICS

Clearly, I can see the shape of a
Lion floating lazily by
On his back
Usurping every good ray of sun
Dearly desired by those who
Sit patiently on the beach below

Windblown leaves
In swirls of reds and golds
Now rest in colorful heaps
Down on the ground in my back
Yard

Redbreasted... sitting
On a maple tree
Branch
In May’s sunshine
Notifying his friends of
Spring’s arrival

An apple for the teacher...
Presented with hopes of
Passing my
Literature
Exam
IN OTHER WORDS

ACROSTICS

The kings fought over the unsettled territory, usurping every piece of land that did not belong to them and calling it their own.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Every home should have

a dictionary and a thesaurus

ACROSTICS

Acrostics are a fun kind of poem, but you will have to use what you know about free verse and let your imaginations take over from there. You will choose a word and write about that word using all its letters vertically. If it is hard for you to start a new line with the letter of that word you have chosen, look within the last line you have written and see if there is a word in that line with the beginning letter you need for the next line. For example, if you want to write about robins, your poem might look like this:

Redbreasted... sitting
On a maple tree
Branch
In May's sunshine
Notifying his friends of
Spring's arrival

1. Think of a word that you like or that appeals to you. Using each letter from that word to start a new line, write a name poem. You might want to use the word RABBIT, SUNFLOWER, CHRISTMAS, GRAPEFRUIT, or YOUR NAME.

2. Try writing an acrostic of your full name (first, middle, and last). Or you might want to write a poem using your best friend’s name or your pet’s name.

3. Write an acrostic using the seasons of the year (summer, fall, winter, spring), a holiday of the year (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving), or a special event (valentine’s day, St. Patrick’s day, Fourth of July).
SYLLABLE- AND WORD-COUNT POEMS

~ Haiku, Cinquain, Limerick, Syllagram ~
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Counting Syllables

In the Creative Corner of the haiku section, I have discussed with the students what a syllable is. I state that the word "syllable" has three syllables which means it has three separate sounds. For example, "blueberry" has three syllables or three separate sounds: blue.ber.ry. "Bluebell" has two syllables or two sounds: blue.bell. "Blue" has one syllable or one sound: blue.

Perhaps you can elaborate on this concept by presenting additional words to the students, explaining how many syllables and sounds they contain. Then have the children introduce words and talk about how many syllables and sounds each one has. When you feel confident that the children understand the value of a syllable, present the lessons on haiku, cinquains, limericks, and syllagrams.
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Haiku

5-7-5! These are the magic numbers in writing haiku, and the magical tools are the fingers. This time using fingers to count is permissible and recommended.

A haiku is an unrhymed Japanese verse form of three lines containing 5, 7, and 5 syllables respectively usually pertaining to nature. The key concept of writing haiku in a classroom setting is to insist on precisely the 5-7-5 count. No deviations! To accomplish this end, group participation and cooperation is sometimes essential.

The students must learn that one syllable has one sound. (See explanation in "Counting Syllables.") They must learn to "play" with syllables and sounds to achieve preciseness in this kind of poem. As educators, it is our objective to assist the students in achieving this end. This assignment is beneficial because it not only helps students in writing other forms of poetry involving word and syllable counting (limericks, cinquains, syllagrams) but also helps in developing precision and clarity in other writing endeavors. Poets have been putting themselves in poetic boundaries for centuries, attaining unequalled acclaim for their efforts.

If the students have a difficult time getting started, help them come up with a syllabic solution by finding those words that can be shortened and those words that act as
glue. For example, "it is" can be reduced from two syllables to one..."it’s," or vice versa. A rose can be a rose, or it can be a red rose, a beautiful rose, a freshly-watered rose...2, 3, 5, 6 syllables, respectively.

When a student needs assistance, have the rest of the class help out. Read the line or the lines of the poem aloud that need working on and ask for assistance in coming up with a workable solution. The teamwork here is amazing. Sharing and working together not only begets beautiful poetry but also a real comradery among classmates. And, by all means, share the finished poem with everyone by reading it out loud to the class and giving proper credit and acknowledgement to the poet(s). It turns out to be a productive, pleasurable experience.
"What's a haiku?" Sofia asked Newton confusedly. "Is it a poem? Does it rhyme? What's it all about?"

Newton straightened his new striped tie and put on his glasses. He thought better when he had his glasses on. "A haiku is a Japanese verse form usually pertaining to nature. It doesn't rhyme and has three lines containing 5, 7, 5 syllables respectively," Newton professed intelligently, his brow furrowed in thought. "In other words, it's the way the Japanese write a particular kind of poem and the form they use when writing it. It has exactly seventeen syllables and can describe a bird, a sunflower, a raindrop, a moonbeam, the sun, or other things we find in nature..." Taking his glasses off and quickly putting them back on again, he continued. "A haiku portrays one brief moment and leaves an impression on our imaginations. It is written in the present tense, so we can experience what the poet was experiencing as he wrote it."

Sofia's head was spinning. "Why does Newton talk so uppity?" she wondered. "He should have been an English professor or a Shakespearean scholar," she thought pensively.

Impressed with his knowledge and his presentation on
the subject of haiku, Newton continued. "Haiku became popular in Japan in the seventeenth century, and today people still like to write and read them. Some poets even enter their haiku in contests," Newton exclaimed excitedly, assuring himself that he was going to do just that. "Two of the greatest haiku poets from Japan were Issa and Basho."

"Does a haiku have to be about summer or winter?" Sofia asked timidly, trying to recall everything Newton had said about a haiku so far. There was so much to remember.

"A haiku in some way always refers to a season of the year," Newton responded promptly, thinking about all the haiku he was going to write that day. "The Japanese feel that everyone in the world shares the seasons so they can share the haiku. But you can also write about other things if you wish."

"Did you say a haiku has to rhyme?" Sofia was not certain what Newton had said about rhyming. "And does it have a title?" Sofia sighed softly, wondering if Newton could teach her how to write a haiku.

With his hands in his pockets, Newton proceeded with his dissertation. He was so proud of himself. He was glad he had paid attention in Mrs. Bookworth’s fourth grade class. Poetry was one of his favorite subjects. "The Japanese haiku doesn’t rhyme, and it doesn’t have a title," he stated emphatically. "The important thing to remember is that the Japanese haiku has only seventeen syllables."
With that, Sofia and Newton sat down in the middle of a wild dandelion patch to read a book of haiku...
HAIKU

seven chocolate moons
lighting up a darkened world
melt in morning’s sun

anointed with dewdrops
polished petals shine brightly
like pieces of glass

mystically silver
soaring high above the ground
airplane or eagle?

robins in springtime
build their nests of roots and stems
waiting for summer

followed by sunlight
it steals brightness from the sky
the mute thief of night

soldier-like sconces
faces mirrored in bronzed dawn
golden sunflowers
pebble-pushing pawns
drawing detailed designs on
unblemished beaches

bathed in raindrops
the flowers drink their supper
longing for "seconds"

clumps of clustered clouds
deciding the day's events
float wistfully by

six seasick sailors
sailing on the seven seas
slipped off the ship. SPLASH!

the little white mouse
craving a piece of swiss cheese
climbed the Matterhorn

the man in the moon
showers the world with moonbeams
lighting the darkness
IN OTHER WORDS

HAIKU

When my grandfather was very ill, the priest anointed him with holy oil, praying for his recovery.

The student wrote all she knew about her chosen topic and then submitted her dissertation to the college board to obtain her doctorate.

The farmer furrowed the field, making many grooves in which to plant his corn.

The frightened janitor became mute, unable to speak, when he witnessed the crime.

The light from the angel’s halo glowed mystically in the dark night.

The chess player thoughtfully moved the pawns across the chessboard, hoping to checkmate his opponent’s king.

For my mother’s birthday, I bought her a gold-plated sconce which adds perfectly to her collection of candlesticks.

Soaring high above the ground, the silver kite looked like a small bird in flight.

Nobody left the arrogant waiter a tip because his attitude was so uppity.

Having fought a hard battle, the soldier wistfully longed for a world without war.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

One word can paint one hundred million pictures.

Count them.

HAIKU

5-7-5! These are the magic numbers in writing haiku, and the magical tools are your fingers. You can use your fingers to count out the right amount of syllables needed for each line. A haiku has three lines. The first line has five syllables, the second line has seven syllables, and the third line has five syllables. The word "syllable" has three syllables which means it has three separate sounds. For example, "blueberry" has three syllables or three separate sounds: blue.ber.ry. "Bluebell" has two syllables or two sounds: blue.bell. "Blue" has one syllable or one sound: blue.

This is the haiku form, with each blank representing a syllable:

_____  (5 syllables)
_____  (7 syllables)
_____  (5 syllables)

1. Put the words in each line in the correct order. Place them on the blanks provided, using each blank for one syllable.

- tall standing and straight
- sunlight faces with painted sunflowers yellow
- muffins blueberry
- jam with strawberry smothered
- my water mouth make

standing straight and tall
sunlight faces with painted sunflowers yellow
blue.ber.ry. muf.fins
blue.bell.
blue.
2. Rewrite this haiku substituting a word in the parenthesis for the underlined word in the poem. The changing of these two words can create a whole new poem. Or supply words of your own.

pebble-pushing pawns
drawing detailed designs on (drifting, dancing, distant)
unblemished beaches (white sandy, seaweed free)

3. Using an idea of your own, write a haiku. You may refer to the haiku form above if you need to.
CINQUAINS

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TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Cinquains

November Night

Listen...
With faint dry sound,
Like steps of passing ghosts
The leaves, frost-crisped, break from the trees
And fall.

Adelaide Crapsey

Adelaide Crapsey is the inventor of the cinquain. It has a set number of lines (5), containing 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables respectively. The cinquain takes a single detail, often from nature, and transforms it into an elaborate, five-line poem.

The cinquain is similar to a haiku in many ways, but students must learn that each has a unique style and form with its own set of guidelines. Both poems depend on syllable counting for achievement of poetic form, and students should remember that one syllable has one sound. A cinquain is usually more difficult for students to write than a haiku, therefore, it should be presented when they are ready for the concept.

Choosing words carefully is essential in this exercise. Since cinquains are poems composed of common, everyday occurrences and usually appeal to one of the five senses, exercises in seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching are helpful. Have the students think of words they would choose for each of the senses.
The teacher’s goal is to assist the students in achieving a unity in the content of the poem. With guidance and enthusiasm, we can help the young poet write five progressive lines about a single subject. This is sometimes difficult for them to do. Remember, trial and error rules an assignment such as this because the students will have to work with their words and lines to accommodate the form of the poem.

Again, class participation and the sharing of ideas with a partner, teacher, or small group works wonders. Children spark each other’s imaginations and are quite helpful to each other in a creative situation like this one. Children learn from children.
"Adelaide Crapsey. Born 1878, over one hundred years ago. Died 1914, when she was only thirty-six years old," read Cassandra from a pamphlet she had picked up at the Quail Hollow library.

"Who on earth is Adelaide Crapsey?" Eliott asked, wondering what all this had to do with the delicious ice cream sundae they were sharing on Cassandra’s front porch.

"She’s the inventor of the cinquain, a kind of poem. The name ‘cinquain’ comes from the French word ‘cinq’ which means ‘five’; but the cinquain doesn’t come from France, it comes from America," replied Cassandra, pausing to catch her breath as she turned to Page 2 in the pamphlet.

Eliott was more interested in his sundae than in a kind of poem, but he listened anyway as Cassandra continued talking. "A cinquain tells about a single, everyday event, but it can also tell a story. It has five lines with a certain number of syllables in each line, and it appeals to our five senses - taste, smell, touch, seeing, and hearing." Cassandra put the pamphlet down and scooped up a spoonful of vanilla ice cream with chocolate syrup on top of it.

"Do you think it would be hard to write one?" Eliott asked, not sure he really wanted to.
"I don't know," said Cassandra, putting her spoon down. "Let's read some cinquains they have printed in this pamphlet, and then maybe we can try to write one ourselves."

Picking the pamphlet up again, Cassandra opened it to the page where the cinquains were printed. She read the paragraph preceding the poems. It explained how many syllables needed to be in each line of the cinquain. "Five lines," she said out loud. "Five lines. Two syllables in the first line. Four syllables in the second line. Six syllables in the third line." Cassandra stopped talking and waited for Eliott to stop stuffing his face for a minute so that he could listen to what she was saying.

Eliott looked up. Stopped eating (for a minute). And tried to understand everything Cassandra was saying.

"Eight syllables in the fourth line," Cassandra continued as if there had been no interruption. "And back to two syllables in the fifth line."

Cassandra pointed to the first cinquain on the page. She read it out loud and, believe it or not, Eliott liked it. She and Eliott began reading the cinquains one after the other, forgetting all about their ice cream sundae that was softly turning to mush.
CINQUAINS

Listen...
Falling snowflakes yellow
Clouds brushing each other springtime flowers
eating cotton candy in June daisies and buttercups
Silence swaying softly in green meadows
dancing

Windy
Green kites flying
Looking down on children
Guiding their paths like wind-blown leaves
Drifting

ummm, good!
reaching
raspberry swirl catching rainbows
chocolate and vanilla bathed softly in sunlight
placed delicately on my cone reflecting images of earth
ice cream! and sky

branches
winglike beauty
boughs touching heaven’s door
with outstretched arms embracing me
in prayer
winter
barren fig trees
outlined in grey and brown
leafless branches cold and lifeless
sleeping

autumn
frenzied foliage
gold and red and yellow
tumbling over one another
falling

picnics
barefoot evenings
strawberry ice cream cones
uninvited thunder showers
summer

springtime
signs of new life
green leaves and peach blossoms
fill the air with perfumed madness
birth daze

Easter
carols
springtime’s birth day
tinseled tree boughs
lilies and white roses
holly and mistletoe
small bunnies hiding in baskets
a baby born in Bethlehem
new life
Christmas

softly
golden sunsets
hide behind dark oceans
waiting patiently for morning
and me
IN OTHER WORDS

CINQUAINS

The *boughs* of the Christmas tree were decorated with red and green ornaments.

The crowd’s *frenzied* reaction to the earthquake made it impossible for them to leave the auditorium.
Writing is dressing thought in written form.

CINQUAINS

Five lines! A cinquain has a set number of lines (5) and contains 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables respectively. It takes one thing, often from nature, and makes it into a five-line poem.

This is the cinquain form, with each blank representing a syllable:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\_ \_ \\
\_ \_ \_ \_ \\
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \\
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \\
\_ \_ \_ \\
\end{array}
\]

(2 syllables)

(4 syllables)

(6 syllables)

(8 syllables)

(2 syllables)

1. Write a cinquain telling how something feels. You might want to write about a kitten’s fur, swimming in the ocean, or a cactus plant.

2. Write a cinquain telling how something looks. You might want to write about a sunset, trees in a forest, or rolling hills covered with wildflowers.

3. Write a cinquain telling how something smells. You might want to write about a freshly-baked chocolate chip cookie, the clean air after it has rained, or a rose you have picked for a friend.

4. Write a cinquain telling how something tastes. You might want to write about a mint ‘n chip ice cream cone, a mouth full of sand after a tumble on the beach, or an herb picked from your grandfather’s garden.

5. Write a cinquain telling how something sounds. You might want to write about a jet breaking the sound barrier, a brook skipping over rocks in a mountain pass, or the
laughter of children watching the clowns in a circus.

6. Write a cinquain describing spring, summer, fall, and winter. Write about what you see, hear, feel, taste, and smell in those seasons.

7. Write a cinquain on anything you wish. Remember, nature is full of interesting things to write about.
LIMERICKS
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Limericks

Writing limericks is a fun-filled adventure. Once they are written, they are even more fun to read, especially out loud. They are short, catchy, and amusing.

There was an old man with a beard,  
Who said, "It's just as I feared!  
    Two owls and a hen,  
    Four larks and a wren,  
    Have all built their nests in my beard!"

Edward Lear

Students will learn that writing poetry can be a pleasurable experience. They will learn that poetry created by Edward Lear has poetic value just as that of William Shakespeare and Emily Dickinson. The teacher’s responsibility is to illuminate and broaden the students’ vision of poetry. Poetry can take many forms and be said in many ways, all of them being equal.

The teacher might want to begin by reading several limericks aloud so that the students get a good "feel" for the tone, subject matter, and "limerick rhythm." In the writing of limericks, a step-by-step procedure should be followed. Since limericks are intended to be humorous, have the students think of a funny subject and write two lines about that topic making sure the lines rhyme and contain eight syllables each. If students have a difficult time getting started, have them think of a person's name or the name of a city with which to end their first line. For
example, "I once knew a person named Bill," or "A man with a cane from New York."

Next, write the third and fourth lines in rhyme, making sure they have five syllables each. Finally, the last line should be written to rhyme with the first two lines and should equal them in length. The last line sometimes provides an unusual twist to the poem.

Conclude by allowing as many students as time permits to share their poems with the class. This exercise in creating limericks is definitely a positive experience in creative writing and a consummate one in sharing. If there are students who are hesitant about sharing their poems aloud with the class, try giving them a choice for recitation. Possible options may be to recite the poem at their seats, to stand next to or in back of a friend while reading it, or, in extreme cases, having a friend or the teacher read the poem for them. By giving students these choices, reciting poetry in front of their peers becomes progressively easier. Occasionally, however, there are students who just can't participate; don't force them. Respect their reticence.
"I wonder what we are going to do in Mrs. Bookworth's class today?" Barrett asked pensively, waiting for Mr. Maurice to answer him.

"We're going to learn all about limericks," answered Mr. Maurice, who was perched comfortably on Barrett's right ear. "They are a kind of poetry."

"Well, I hope I like them," Barrett replied solemnly. "They'd better be fun."

Barrett and Mr. Maurice were on their way to Mrs. Bookworth's Animal School, wishing they could stay out in the spring sunshine a little while longer. When they arrived at the classroom door, Mrs. Bookworth greeted them, holding a book of limericks in her hand. Everyone took a seat, and Mrs. Bookworth proceeded with the lesson on limericks.

"A limerick has five lines," she stated emphatically. "Lines 1, 2, and 5 rhyme with each other, and lines 3 and 4 rhyme with each other and are shorter. Rhyme means words that sound the same. For example, bill-hill, eight-plate, pie-sky-high, blue-shoe-through. These poems are meant to be funny and often don't make sense, but they should be fun
to read and write. Rhyme, rhythm, and meter make a limerick important and special. The last line usually surprises us with a funny ending we didn’t expect." Mrs. Bookworth took a deep breath, sat on her teacher’s stool, and continued. "You can pick almost any subject in the world and write a limerick about it," she declared enthusiastically, her voice reaching a feverish pitch. Mrs. Bookworth paused to wipe her brow and collect her thoughts.

"Wow!" Barrett exclaimed out loud to his friend. "A poem can be fun! Maybe I’ll get to like poetry after all." Mr. Maurice smiled. Maybe he would like poetry more now, too.

Mrs. Bookworth folded her hands in her lap and proceeded with the lesson. "There are a lot of different stories on how the limerick came to be. It’s been said that early in the eighteenth century a troop of soldiers sang a song as they were returning to their home in Limerick, Ireland from France, and they decided to call this song a limerick after their hometown." Mrs. Bookworth unfolded her hands and cleared her throat, making herself more comfortable on her teacher’s stool. "It is also believed that limericks were popular things to talk about at banquets way back in Roman times. Between each course of the meal, the guests would sing a song with the name of the city of Limerick in it. "We’ll all come up, come up to Limerick..." Mrs. Bookworth could hardly carry a tune, but she nevertheless sang as if
she was the greatest singer in the world. "We’ll all come up to Limerick...," she warbled, her scarf flapping up and down around her neck every time she hit a high note.

"Do we have to know all this stuff?" Barrett whispered to Mr. Maurice, who was listening intently to what Mrs. Bookworth had to say. "I thought limericks were supposed to be fun."

"They are supposed to be fun," replied Mr. Maurice, annoyed at Barrett’s interruption. "Listen."

Mrs. Bookworth went over to the bookshelf by the window and took an old blue book off the shelf. "This book is called A Book of Nonsense," she stated. "It is also called The Complete Nonsense Book. It is by Edward Lear, who wrote it in 1846. That’s about 150 years ago. He wrote over 200 limericks, making the limerick famous. He used the limerick to entertain the Earl of Derby’s grandchildren. The Earl was his friend.

Poets have always loved to write limericks. A Greek play written many centuries ago has the limerick form in it. And," Mrs. Bookworth continued, her voice getting stronger as if she was about to make a very important announcement, "Shakespeare used a limerick in his play, ‘Othello!’ Even today poets love to write limericks. Now, we are going to read some limericks by a contemporary poet, and then we are going to write some of our own."

Taking another book from the shelf, they all headed out.
the door toward the shade of a pine tree where they could enjoy a beautiful spring day and a good book of limericks...
LIMERICKS

I once had a monkey named Max
Who stored his bananas in stacks;
Then just as he feared
They soon disappeared,
His friend, the baboon, leaving tracks.

The lady with all the red hats
Had dozens and dozens of cats;
She fed them quite well
While reading a tale
Of Mickey from Mouse-a-Meal Flats.

A pig and her piglets from Spain
Got caught in a horrendous rain.
It rained on their nose,
their ears, and their toes.
They never went outside again.

A student who called himself Pete
Could hardly sit still in his seat.
He'd rather play games
Than learn of the Thames.
Grade Five he now has to repeat.

My friend, the outrageous baboon,
For me sang a short birthday tune.
No talent had he,
So quite sheepishly,
Left town in a hot-air balloon.

Two chickens, one fox, and a hawk
Decided to learn double talk.
Said chicken to fox,
"What's in the blue box?"
"One cat cat, two dogs dogs, and hawk."
I once knew a person named Bill
Who lived in a barn on a hill.
Three horses had he,
A goose, and monkey.
He mentioned them all in his will.

A lobster named Mr. Burnett
Got caught in a fisherman's net.
"Oh, help!" he did cry.
"I'm too young to die!
I'd rather be somebody's pet!"

A hare and a bear both named Gus
Did always put up such a fuss.
"'Tis my name!" cried hare.
"'Tis my name!" cried bear.
(This problem they'll have to discuss.)

A turtle fell into my soup
Did twenty-five laps in a loop.
Still hungry am I
But only for pie;
My main course desire did droop.

A camel with thirty-one humps
Developed a bad case of mumps.
His mumps disappeared
And everyone cheered.
'cept camel who now has no bumps.

A chicken from Barnaby Bay
Hid birthday cakes inside her hay.
Then just as she feared,
They all disappeared,
'cept one that read, "Happy Birth___
IN OTHER WORDS

LIMERICKS

A baboon, who looks something like a monkey, is active during the day and sleeps in caves and large trees at night.

The butler's manners were so outrageous that he got fired.

The embarrassed child sheepishly put the candy back on the shelf when she got caught taking it.

In social studies, students learn about the Thames, which is a calm river in England.

The poor woman gasped in horror when she saw her horrendous tax bill.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

You need write only one good sentence, phrase, or word to be an author.

LIMERICKS

Remember that a limerick has five lines. The first line, the second line, and the fifth line are the longest lines and rhyme; the third and fourth lines are shorter and rhyme with each other.

This is the limerick form, with each blank representing a syllable:

___ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ ___ (8 syllables)

___ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ ___ (8 syllables)

___ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ (5 syllables)

___ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ (5 syllables)

___ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ (8 syllables)

1. Read the following limerick:

I once knew a person named Bill
Who lived in a barn on a hill.
Three horses had he,
A goose, and monkey.
(He mentioned them all in his will.)

Think of some words that rhyme with Bill and hill other than will. Now rewrite the last line of the poem using one of those words. Try to make the last line humorous if you can. Notice how the poem changes meaning.
2. Read the following limerick:

A lobster named Mr. Burnett
Got caught in a fisherman’s net.
("Oh, help!" he did cry.
I’m too young to die!
I’d rather be somebody’s pet!")

Take out the third and fourth lines of the poem and create two new lines of your own. Think of two words that rhyme; maybe that will help you think of something to write about. Remember these two lines are shorter than the others with five syllables in each line.

Note: The parentheses in the above poems are used only for pointing out which lines you are to rewrite. You need not put your lines in parentheses.

3. Try writing a limerick of your own. If you have a hard time getting started, try ending your first line with the name of a person, city, or country. Then think of words that rhyme with that name for the second and fifth lines. Now illustrate your limerick and share it with others.
SYLLAGRAMS
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Syllagrams

In the syllagram, students have the opportunity to explore poetic possibilities using their names. They can write one poem or many poems counting the number of letters and the equivalent amount of syllables in their first, middle, and last names. To get them started, have them come up with several possibilities using only their first names. When they are comfortable doing this, have them continue the poem using their middle and last names. Once again, the concept of syllable counting is important in this exercise.
SYLLAGRAMS

You can use your name to write a poem on any subject you wish. By counting the letters in your name and turning those letters into syllables, you can create an individual poem of your own.

For example:

1) Take your first name and count the letters in it.
   First name: Lola = Four letters.
   Use four syllables in the first line.

2) Count the letters in your middle name.
   Middle name: De Julio = Seven letters.
   Use seven syllables in the second line.

3) Count the letters in your last name.
   Last name: De Maci = Six letters.
   Use six syllables in the last line.

Example of a poem using the name Lola De Julio De Maci:

listen closely (4 syllables)   (Lola = 4 syllables)
leaves are falling on the ground (7) (De Julio = 7 syllables)
red and orange and yellow (6)   (De Maci = 6 syllables)

Note: If you do not have a middle name, your poem will only have two lines in it. If your name has more than a first, middle, and last name, then your poem will have as many lines in it as you have names.

The syllagram was created by Lola De Julio De Maci in August 1994.
SYLLAGRAMS

Christopher David De Maci

sometimes I wish I could fly like an eagle
over a mountain
and sit on a rainbow

Maria Rachele Chrisangela De Maci

across the meadow
I can see a white farmhouse
surrounded by marigolds and green grasses
calling me to its door

Angela Carina Colorinda De Maci

jumping green grasshoppers
hiding in the thicket
wait patiently for big, black beetles
so they can pounce on them

Elise Ficarra

quiet candlelight
lighting the world around us

Matthew Paul Ficarra

sliding down a sunshine’s ray
dewdrops hasten
to moisten a blade of grass

Melinda Elise Ficarra

jelly beans in a glass jar
red, green, and yellow
make a tasty mosaic
IN OTHER WORDS

SYLLAGRAMS

The church’s stained glass windows displayed a colorful mosaic of blue, green, yellow, and red pieces of glass.

The leopard would stealthily stand on the rock above the path, waiting to pounce on its prey below.

A thicket of bushes and plants surrounding the house made it almost impossible to see the windows and doors.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Whenever you write something - anything -

sign your name to it and date it.

These are your words. They are you. You are the author.

SYLLAGRAMS

1. Count the number of letters in your first name. The first line of your poem will have that many syllables in it. Do the same thing with your middle name and your last name for the second and third lines of your poem. Write a poem describing yourself.

2. Now write a poem about any subject you wish using the number of letters in your name or the name of someone you know.
POETRY

A READING LIST


Livingston, Myra Cohn. ed. How Pleasant to Know Mr. Lear! Holiday House, 1982.


LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES

APPROACHES TO IMAGINATIVE WRITING
unspoken words
are like
unborn thoughts
they will never be
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Stretching the Imagination with Lists, Creative Questions, Poetry and Art, Poetry and Music!

There are many exercises you can do in the classroom that spark and ignite the imaginations of children. The following activities can be woven into a daily lesson plan either in the language arts program or can be used to fill those odd moments that creep into the day.

Making a contest out of an assignment such as "Listing" is definitely a bonus for "putting on thinking caps."

Children really do like brainstorming, and the added attraction of a prize doesn't hurt. Everyone likes a reward. However, in shopping or planning rewards or prizes, don't go overboard. A sticker, a diploma, or a bookmark suffices nicely. But make sure to keep the competition healthy. There is no room for unhealthy competition in the classroom.
LISTS
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Lists

Making lists is an excellent way to stretch the imagination...lists are endless. Limiting a topic and zeroing in on a specific idea suggests lists should be narrowed to a single subject. In this way thoughts are curtailed and explored in a particular realm of the imagination.

Students must think, write, and eventually exhaust all the possibilities associated with the task at hand. They must search their thoughts, pulling out definitions and images of the word(s) to be listed. This will bring about an awareness of the endless possibilities they can come up with by using just a single word or phrase. If need be, the teacher should insist that at least ten or more words be listed in a given category, pushing the students to think beyond the word itself. Subsequently, students will learn to forge ahead in their writing, not stopping at the first image or picture that pops into their minds. The more students do this kind of assignment, the more they will realize that there is so much to explore and capture in their imaginations. They will be able to strengthen their writing assignments, thereby acquiring pride and confidence in their writing ventures. Writers start with a single thought, and that thought can grow into a masterpiece. Tell them this.

If making a contest out of listing, putting a time
limit on writing the list is important in that it gives each student the same opportunity for success. For example, the students might be given five minutes to write a list of blue things. At the end of five minutes, time is called, and everyone counts their items. The student with the most correct items is declared the winner. When handing out compliments, however, be sure to include everyone who has attempted the activity, as some students work faster than others. Focus on everyone’s accomplishments.

As children like a challenge and can be very competitive at times, healthy competition should be encouraged. Doing this exercise as a group project (designating two or more teams) fosters cooperation, collaboration, and team spirit. The competition should remain healthy and productive.

Before the listing actually begins, however, the teacher and students should brainstorm on some of the items that might actually fall into the chosen category. A blue thing, for instance, could be a blueberry, a smurf, or the Blue Grotto, but it couldn’t be a blue crayon, tennis shoe, or the sky because these things are not always considered blue. A blue thing must be identified and associated with blue through and through.

Other possible lists could include green things (shamrocks, broccoli, emeralds, etc.), Thanksgiving things (turkeys, pilgrims, pumpkin pie, etc.), Christmas things (Santa
Claus, Christmas trees, carols, etc.).
LISTS

Think. Think. Think. Making a list suggests we think all about something until we can no longer think of anything else to say about that thing.

Whether we realize it or not, we make lists everyday. We list things in our heads so that we won’t forget to do something. We make a grocery list when it is time to go to the supermarket. We make a list of friends we want to invite to our birthday party, or we make a list of friends we want to go to the mall with. We make a list of things we have to do before we can watch television or before we can go out to play. We make lists all the time.

We can have fun listing things. The following pages present a list of things that are quiet and a list of things that are purple. How many more items can you add to each list? After you have made your lists, you can write a poem from each of them, using the items as inspiration. An example of both lists is done for you.
A LIST OF QUIET THINGS

cotton balls
clouds
feathers
a baby sleeping
cotton candy
a whisper
slippers
a breeze
hands clapping with mittens on
a kitten's meow
a prayer
a butterfly flying
snow falling
TV with the sound turned off
a Brahms' lullaby
a calm sea
a library
a church
pillow fighting in slow motion
a marshmallow being eaten
ice cream melting
putting socks away in a drawer
felt-tip pens
Maria reading
erasers
Christopher combing his hair
a flute
a bird eating
an orchestra pit without its orchestra
Christmas eve
a spider building her web
the color pink
a tree
a flower growing
a parked car
a candle burning
a sailboat
nighttime
a deserted beach
earmuffs
falling leaves
a light left on
eating yogurt
thinking
sewing a button on a jacket
ironing a shirt
walking barefooted
my son at his computer
my CD player when it is not on
QUIET IS...

quiet is a library when everyone’s reading a book
quiet is the cloud that floats by in the shape of a lion
quiet is the bathroom when I’m combing my hair
    in the morning
quiet is a church with people praying by candlelight
quiet is the color pink
quiet is my CD player when the last song is over
A LIST OF PURPLE THINGS

lavender
plums
violets
the "royal" color
Lenten crosses
mulberries
amethysts
the color lilac
eggplant
The Purple Heart medal
heather
the color purple
a mixture of red and blue pigments
the helmet flower
purple is the amethyst shining in my mother's ring
purple is the sweet, cold plum that was in the icebox before I ate it
purple is the eggplant growing next to the violets in my grandfather's garden
purple is my mouth after I've eaten a handful of mulberries
purple is a mixture of red and blue pigments on the artist's palette

PURPLE IS...
nineteenth-century German composer and pianist.

The artist must have a palette on which to mix the colors for her painting.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Self-expression gives birth to creativity —

Creativity gives birth to genius

LISTS

1. Think of a color. Now make a list of things associated with that color. The thing that you list must always be that color — no exceptions. For example, if you are going to list blue things, you may list blueberries because a blueberry will always be a blue thing. You cannot list a tennis shoe because sometimes tennis shoes are blue and sometimes they are other colors like black, white, red, etc. When listing yellow things, you might list a lemon, the sunshine, or a daffodil, but you could not list a jelly bean because jelly beans are not always yellow. They come in other colors, too. Now, can you add even more items to the list of purple things?

2. Make a list of Thanksgiving things. Remember, these things must be associated with the holiday of Thanksgiving only. For example, you may list a pilgrim, pumpkin pie, etc.

3. Make a list of Christmas things, Easter things, valentine things, St. Patrick’s Day things, etc.

4. Make a list of sounds you might hear in a department store, an airport, a grocery store; at a baseball game, a basketball game, a bullfight.

5. Make a list of things you might see at a circus, a science fair, a bus depot.

6. Make a list of things you might smell in a bakery, at a hot dog stand, in a Christmas display.

7. Make a list of things you might taste at a Christmas dinner, in a bakery, a candy shop, a vegetable garden.

8. Make a list of things you might touch at a petting zoo, in a flower garden, at the park.

9. Make a list of quiet things, loud things, happy things, sad things, light things, dark things, big things, small things, etc.
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Additional Listing

Listing employed as a device for creating poetry gives students an excellent opportunity for exploring untapped images. A good way to begin this exercise is to pick a topic and have the students write several sentences about it. The topic should be a word that can bring about intense feeling or emotion. To this word, add the verb "is" and let the class take it from there. Love is..., hate is..., sweet is..., sour is..., joy is..., happiness is..., sadness is..., soft is..., etc. Each new idea should start on a fresh line.

After the students have had time to explore all their ideas and write them down in sentence form, they are then ready to put them into poetic form. (If you think the students can begin writing their poetry without putting their thoughts into sentences first, let them begin without this exercise.) The poem can consist of as many lines as the child has ideas for the topic. "sweet is..." can be one line long or four to five lines in length depending on the poet's desire and intention. However, each new line should begin "sweet is...". By beginning each new line with the same phrase, the students must focus their attention on that phrase, exploring the numerous possibilities those words can yield. As a result, each thought-filled line promises a poem in itself and a myriad of images the poet didn't have
before.

Use the chalkboard to display different lines of a poem a student might want to share. By doing so, imaginations are sparked and ideas are born.

Play with a line, making it exactly the way they want. They can write "sweet is a candy cane" on the board and you, the teacher, can express your genuine liking of the poem. Simplicity in word and form is and can be beautiful.

This is an ideal time for making use of the adjective. "sweet is a red-and-white spiraled candy cane" is also a beautiful poetic line. "sweet is a red-and-white spiraled Christmas candy cane" and so on and so on. Remember that the "poet" is the one who finally decides what the poem will be...what kind of a candy cane it will be.
MORE LISTS

You have experienced the fun and thoughtfulness that goes into listing items. Now you are ready to make more lists. Only this time you will choose a category and put those items directly into a poem.

On the following page, listing in SOUR IS... and SWEET IS... is put into a poetic form without actually listing the items first. This is your chance to try and do the same thing. Good luck.
SOUR IS...

sour is freshly-made lemonade without any sugar in it
sour is a baseball player who can’t stand losing a game
sour is an upside-down smile
sour is the grapefruit I eat every morning for breakfast
sour is the look I get on my face when recess has been cut short

SWEET IS...

sweet is the chocolate bar that melts in my mouth
sweet is the smell I smell when I hug my mom good-night
sweet is my caffeine free, calorie free, lemon-lime soda
sweet is the look my little sister gets on her face when I pat her on the head
sweet is a candy cane waiting for Christmas
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Writing is a "feel good" experience.

MORE LISTS

1. Using the words love is..., hate is..., sweet is..., sour is..., joy is..., happiness is..., sadness is..., soft is..., etc., write a poem of one line in length or of several lines. Five or six lines describing one of these phrases would be an excellent way to "show off." Go for it!

2. You may think of a category that you might want to use for listing things. Be creative!
CREATIVE QUESTIONS
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Creative Questions

Creative writing can also be an important aid in working with the imaginative student. Such titles as - Would you rather be a blanket or a taco shell?...a slipper or a shoe?...an orchid or an onion?...can produce very interesting results. In this case, however, you must set a limit on how much they are to write (say one to two pages; four or five paragraphs) in order to be wholly effective. Don’t settle for a one-or-two sentence answer to these questions. Questions such as these cannot and should not be answered in a couple of sentences. The idea of the project is to have the students continue their thought processes on the subject until they have thoroughly exhausted them. Push the students to explore every facet of the question, making them think beyond what is there in the words on the page.
CREATIVE QUESTIONS

Has anyone ever said to you "How are you?", and you answered "just fine" but wanted to say more than that? Perhaps you didn't feel fine at all, and you wanted to tell them exactly how you really felt.

In writing, sometimes we do the same thing. We write down the first thing that comes into our minds and then stop. We never search our other thoughts to see what else we could have said about a particular thing.

In the following exercises, challenge yourself to think a lot about the question you choose to answer. Don't stop with a sentence or two. Use your imaginations and the knowledge you have to write an interesting, thought-filled essay. If you want to, you can pretend you are a reporter presenting your essay to a TV audience. Once you have finished, your audience should feel they have learned all there is to know about that topic. An example is done for you.
I tried to think of the many ways I could be happy if I was a puddle. If I was a puddle, I could reflect the sunshine after the rain had past and moved eastward. And if someone was to look down at me, I could mirror the sunshine in their eyes and they could see the remaining white fluffy clouds left behind by the passing cloudburst. Children could take their shoes off and splash in me, screaming and laughing while having fun. Cars could drive through me, making the water ripple into bath water for the bugs, insects, and birds.

If I was a puddle, I could pretend I was a big lake and feel proud that I would be able to have boats sail on me and have people swim in me. I would be beautiful and blue and magnificent. People would enjoy me and my glass-like surfaces. They would say I was "a perfect puddle."

Could a cloud be happy? Let me see. If I was a cloud, I could float in the sky and make myself into as many shapes and sizes that I wished. I could be an elephant, a dragon, or a castle. I could look like cotton candy, good enough to eat. I could be as big as a whale or as small as a daisy. I would be a grand spectacle in the sky.

And planes could fly through me as if I was one big cotton ball. People would look out of the plane's windows and marvel at my lightness and my fog-filled demeanor. "How
"lovely!" they would exclaim. That would make me feel good, and I would be happy.

If I was a cloud, I could fill myself up with water and fall as rain on brown grass, tired flowers, and dried-up lakes. I could make everything fresh again. I would be happy if I was a cloud.

So...would I rather be a puddle or a cloud? All things considered, I would rather be a cloud because I could make a puddle with the rain I would let fall onto the earth. Then people would admire me for the power I add to the sky and for the puddles I make on earth. Being a cloud would be just fine with me. Being a cloud would make me happy.
IN OTHER WORDS

CREATIVE QUESTIONS

Because the kitten was abandoned by her owners, she had no place to live.

The builder was thrilled with the architect’s acceptance to design his building.

The new student’s pleasant demeanor was accepted by his classmates as being a welcomed change from the previous student’s disruptive behavior.

The waitress made a spectacle of herself by dropping a bowl of soup into the customer’s lap.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

You can write an ocean of words
on the word "puddle"

CREATIVE QUESTIONS

Select a topic to write about from the choices listed on the following pages. Don't stop with a written sentence or two. Stretch your imagination so that you fill up the page with your thoughts. Try it. Meet the challenge.

For example, you might want to answer this question: Would you rather be a puddle or a cloud? Tell why.
WRITE ALL ABOUT IT!

* Write a paragraph of five or six sentences describing an apple without using the words "red" or "delicious" in it.

* If you were a clown in a circus, would you paint on a happy face or a sad face? Tell why.

* Would you rather be a chocolate chip cookie or a peanut butter sandwich? Tell why.

* If you were an almond in a chocolate bar, how would you feel?

* If you were a ladybug, would you sit on a banana leaf or a maple leaf? Tell why.

* Would you rather be a kitten or a lion? Tell why.

* If you were a grasshopper who forgot how to jump, how would you feel? What would you do?

* Describe your favorite sport without mentioning the name of it.

* If you were a green crayon, what would you color green in your world?

* Would you rather be the sun or the moon? Describe what you would see from your place in the sky.

* If you were a camera in a shopping mall and could only take ten pictures, what would you take pictures of? Tell why.

* If you were sitting in a Mexican restaurant, what would you smell while waiting for your order?

* If you could be any object in your bedroom, what would you be? Tell why.

* Where would you like to be twenty years from now? What would you be doing?

* If you were going to a Halloween party, what costume would you wear? Describe it.

* If you could be a magazine, which one would you be? Tell why.
* Would you rather be a parakeet or a woodpecker? Tell why.

* Would you rather be a pumpkin or an octopus? Tell why.

* If you were a dolphin in the ocean, what would you say to the other fish?

* Would you rather be a kite or a helicopter? Tell why.
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Poetry and Art

Art and poetry marry beautifully. Verse and illustrations are especially effective in the primary and intermediate grades. The students' poems come alive, in person, before them. It gives students the opportunity for using their artistic imagination and, at the same time, incorporating their academic skills into a single assignment. In this exercise the students must learn to take their knowledge of creative writing and blend it with their knowledge of art. These two areas of artistic creativity allow the student to develop an appreciation for each form.

The teacher must help the students explore this arena. S/he must introduce the students to works of art that they can identify with, talk about the art's compositional make-up, and then have the students write down the thoughts that come to mind in viewing the painting or sculpture. You want your students to realize that art forms and writing go hand in hand, making an interesting, unique union. One compliments the other perfectly.

A poem can be written and illustrated on any size paper. The materials used may vary from exercise to exercise depending on the effect and lesson plan intended. Children like working with a variety of materials. It is a welcomed deviation from pen, pencil, and looseleaf paper. Construction paper, colored paper, or poster board are ideal.
for drawing and coloring. Crayons, markers, colored pencils, water colors, and paints offer a variety of media with which to color. Personal choice adds individuality, incentive, and ingenuity to the prescribed art form. It all adds up to excitement.

Holidays offer an excellent opportunity for combining poetry and art. Reproductions of Christmas trees, Easter bunnies, Valentine hearts, or shamrocks can be filled with poetic verse to go with the occasion; or the students can draw their own tree, heart, etc., and place their poem where they wish.

Children love listening to the reading of poetry. Poems can be read to children that give them the opportunity to use their imagination fully in painting the picture first in their minds and then on paper.
POETRY AND ART

Did you ever look at a tree or a rabbit or a helicopter and wish you could draw it? Well, you can. One of the ways to do this is by painting a picture with words. If you can create a picture in words, your audience (the ones who read it) will get the picture in their minds of what you are saying.

Poetry and art go especially well together. You can write a poem and illustrate it, or find a picture and write a poem about it. When you look at the poem or picture separately, you should be able to see a relationship between the two art forms.
barren fig tree
branches
silhouetted against
a darkened gray
sky
announce
the closing of
evening
and the beginning
of
winter
in the late afternoon
when the sun shines brightly
on the daffodils
placed perfectly
on the counter
by my kitchen sink window
near the fig tree
they radiate a beautiful yellow
that glows
and
I am their shadow
A kitten named Oliver Green
Fell into the washing machine.
The cycle said "spin"
And he couldn't swim.
So now he is frightfully clean.
IN OTHER WORDS

POETRY AND ART

Since the tree was labeled as barren, the farmer knew it would bear no fruit.

The city's dark skyline was dramatically silhouetted against the dawn's brightness.
POETRY AND ART

1. Write a poem and illustrate it. You may use crayons, markers, colored pencils, water colors, or paints on any kind of canvas you wish.

2. Draw a picture. Then write a poem about it.

3. Find a picture in a magazine, in a newspaper, or on a postcard and write a poem or short story about it.

4. Using your own camera, take a picture of something that interests you in your home, in your backyard, in your neighborhood, or use a picture of something you photographed while on vacation. Write a poem or short story about it.

5. Make a greeting card for a friend or a member of your family. It could be a birthday card, a get-well card, or just a "hello" card. You can draw the picture first and then write a verse to go with it, or you can write the verse first and then draw the picture. It is up to you.
POETRY AND MUSIC
TEACHER DIRECTIONS:

Exercise: Poetry and Music

Poetry or music? Which came first? It is hard to imagine one without the other.

Exercises in combining poetry and music fulfill many requirements in a language arts lesson plan. Once again, in this exercise the students will learn that creative writing and music complement each other beautifully. They will learn that there is a "feel good" connection between the two. Students can learn to release their emotions captured while listening to a song and put them into words on paper. Great catharsis.

Music can be introduced into the classroom over a period of time, presenting selections from the various fields of music. Children benefit from this kind of assignment because it is multi-sensory in nature, satisfying and rewarding many aspects of the human spirit. Feelings get in touch with thoughts and are expressed explicitly through writing. Emotions emerge and are manifested on paper leaving a psychological warmth and contentment. Children are often victims of a harried world and need an emotional and spiritual lift just as adults do.

Depending on the mood intended for the assignment, the teacher can choose a musical selection (from The Beatles to Beethoven or rap) and use it for the inspiration of the poem. The following assignment can be done in one session
or over a period of several days. If done in a single day, while the music is being played, the students write down any thought or thoughts that come to mind. When the musical composition is finished, they can immediately gather their thoughts and write a poem (or short story).

For a different approach, the papers with their random ideas can be collected and passed out the next day. The following day offers a new or different perspective on their written feelings. Have the students group their thoughts according to subject matter or feelings and write a poetic verse or story from them.

Both procedures produce remarkable results. And it all began with a record or tape and a pencil and paper.
When you listen to your favorite song, the words you hear are actually a short poem written to music. Music in this way becomes poetry, and poetry becomes music. We say many poetic things throughout the day that could be put to music. And sometimes we could add our own words to music when there are none.

Try listening to a musical selection without words and experiencing the many thoughts and pictures that come into your mind. Then, the next time, try writing these thoughts and images down because from them you can create an original poem of your own.
While listening to Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons," these thoughts came into my mind. I have written them down as they have occurred to me, unchanged and unaltered.

gilded mirrors
birds flying in a circle like a wreath in the sky
white doves holding pink ribbons
delicate slippers
a loss of freedom
wind-blown alleys
the moonlight on the ocean
small rippling waves on the ocean
a flight of bumblebees
happy people dancing and singing
a baby sleeping
whisper
tiptoe
meadows of daisies with a young woman running through the field holding her straw hat
apothecary jars full of colored gumdrops
duelers in white outfits fencing
red, white, blue, green, and yellow
silhouettes dancing on lighted walls
happiness and sadness
carefree
coffee houses in France
two friends toasting each other
a countryside in Europe
running breathless

From these thoughts, I have written the poems on the following pages.
seasons

happy people dancing and singing
a young woman running through a field of daisies
holding onto her straw hat
two friends toasting each other
in a coffee house in France

~ carefree

a baby sleeping
the moonlight on the ocean
white doves holding pink ribbons

~ whisper

apothecary jars filled with gumdrops
silhouettes dancing on lighted walls
meadows of daisies

~ red, white, blue, green, yellow

delicate slippers
small rippling waves on the ocean
a flight of bumblebees

~ tiptoe

wind-blown alleys
running breathless
gilded mirrors

~ a loss of freedom
running breathless
I follow the shadows
of the countryside
holding onto my yellow straw hat
while
white doves holding pink ribbons
whisper
of yesterday's
freedom
colorful images

gilded mirrors
in French coffee houses
reflect
glass jars
filled with cherry gumdrops

~ red

a wreath of birds
silhouetting the countryside
whisper to people dancing and singing
below

~ green

running breathless
through
fields of daisies
holding onto
my straw summer hat

~ yellow

shadows
dueling on lighted walls
shroud
two friends
in wind-blown alleyways

~ blue

delicate slippers
of moonlight
tiptoe
softly
on the ocean’s waves

~ white
IN OTHER WORDS

POETRY AND MUSIC

She is known as an *apothecary* because she prepares and sells drugs as medicine. Sometimes these drugs are put in a jar known as an *apothecary jar*.

The *duelers* raised their swords, took two steps forward, and started to fight.

Using a saber, the duelers practiced *fencing*, the art of attack and defense.

The mirror's frame was *gilded* with a thin covering of gold, giving it a very expensive look.

The motorist could barely see the road ahead of him, for it was *shrouded* in fog.
THE CREATIVE CORNER

Poetry is musical

and

Music is poetic

POETRY AND MUSIC

1. Pick a song without words to listen to. You can play a record, CD, tape, or listen to a song on the radio. While listening to the music, write down any thoughts that come to your mind. After the song is over, collect your written thoughts into a poem.

You may even want to write a short story from some of these thoughts.

2. You may also want to take just one of those thoughts and expand it into a poem or short story of its own.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Lear, Edward. "There was an old man with a beard." *Progress in English*. River Forest: Laidlaw Brothers, 1972. 98.


