A Teacher's Travel Bag of Reading and Writing
Mini-Lessons

Presented by:
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"Children who haven't heard words sing,
who have not experienced words
that make them laugh and cry,
words that make them go suddenly quiet, even pensive,
are not going to be readers,
no matter how adept they are at decoding."

Susan Ohanian
One Size Fits Few

Bring a Collection of Books to Celebrate Reading...

Don’t Forget Your “Active Reading Wear”

Enhance Read Aloud with “Turn and Talk”

Teaching Tips:
Before you begin, model “turn and talk” with another adult or student.
Emphasize the importance of having a two-way conversation with one person speaking at a time.
Assign students a “turn and talk” partner or small group.

During read aloud, stop several times at natural breaking points and pose the following queries for students to “turn and talk” about:

**Fiction**
- What are you thinking right now?
- What do you think will happen next? What evidence have you seen or heard to prove your prediction? Does your prediction match the author’s idea?
- Have a conversation about what you are inferring right now?
- Why do you think the character is behaving in a certain way? How has the character changed over time?
- How might the story end? Why do you think that will happen?
- Talk with your partner about BIG IDEAS in this story?

**Nonfiction**
- Discuss one interesting way the author (and/or illustrator) presents information?
- Share with your partner something you have learned.
- What is the most important information on this page/in this section? How did the author help you figure that out?
- Discuss a question you have about the topic.

**Poetry**
- What images did you visualize during this poem?
- What words did the poet use that you especially liked?

Read like a Writer
- Where do you think this author got his/her ideas for this book?
- Listen to this! Let me reread the beginning of this book. Did the lead make you want to read the story?
- Did you hear any words that you want to remember and use in your writing?
- Notice the way the sentences flow. Talk about how the author did that.
- Does this writing have voice?

Source: Adapted from Routman, Regie. (2003). Reading Essentials: The Specifics You Need to Teach Reading Well. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. (Revised 4-18-08)

"Like writing, reading is an act of composition. When we write, we compose thoughts on paper. When we read, we compose meaning in our minds. Thoughtful, active readers use the text to stimulate their own thinking and engage with the mind of the writer" (Harvey, 2000, p. 14).


"Step into the Story" by Debbie Miller
Prepare an overhead of a key picture in the book or mark a key picture in the book. [See suggestions below.] Read aloud until you come to that page. Pause and show illustration or overhead. Invite students to “step into the story” and share what they imagine the character is thinking and feeling at this moment.


Focus on BIG IDEAS

Big Idea: Individuality


Tuck in a Few Quick Morning Message Mini-Lessons...

The Letter Stealer (Conventions)
While writing a message, leave out consonants, vowels, blends, digraphs, and other phonetic elements studied during your word study/spelling/phonics block. I tell my children that the "letter stealer" visited. Students enjoy filling in the missing letters.

EXAMPLE:
September 1, 2007
Monday 9-1-07

Good rainy __orning! So_ething is __issing in our __essage. What is it??

Word Exchange (Word Choice)
One important aspect of writing is choosing precise words to communicate ideas to your reader. Each time you teach a vocabulary lesson, you are teaching young children about word choice. In addition, you strengthen students' word choice as you read aloud and discuss key words in the text. A quick and easy way to broaden your students' writing vocabularies is to introduce them to different words in the morning message.

EXAMPLE:
Good morning smart students! (Possible responses: brainy, brilliant, clever, intelligent, sharp)
It is cold outside today! (Possible responses: chilly, freezing, icy, frosty, bitter, frozen, arctic)

October Ideas:
• Spooky Sound Words
• My Candy Tastes . . .
Other Ideas:
• Adjectives to describe a particular book character
• Words to describe emotions such as mad, sad, happy

Mentor Texts for Conventions:
The Vowel Family (Walker, 2008)

Mentor Texts for Word Choice:
Fancy Nancy's Favorite Fancy Words (O'Connor, 2008)
Theodorus Rex (Steinberg, 2003)


Thesaurus Thursday (Word Choice)
This year, after doing a word exchange lesson on a Thursday, my students suggested that we have "Thesaurus Thursdays." As always, the best ideas come from listening to your learners!

October Ideas:
- Spooky Sound Words
- My Candy Tastes . . .
Other Ideas:
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A Sketchy Story (Ideas/Elaboration)
Before the students arrive, write a sketchy story about your own experiences on the chalkboard, chart paper, or overhead. Share with students and encourage them to ask questions to help you add details to your own story. Jot the questions down on the side of your paper. Save the story and questions. The next morning, rewrite the story incorporating the students' ideas, and invite them to ask more questions. To elaborate further, repeat for a number of days.
Pack a Peck of Poetry...

“Shout” by Brod Bagert

Shout it! Shout it! POETRY!
Fun for you and fun for me.

Clap your hands! Stomp your feet!
Feel the rhythm! Feel the beat!

Chunky words all chopped in chips!
Silky sounds upon your lips.

Tell a story—happy, sad;
Silly, sorry; good or bad.

Leap a leap, hop a hop.
See the ocean in one drop.

Shout it! Shout it! POETRY!
Fun for you and fun for me.


Poetic Devices

• Comparison
• Alliteration
  Mentor Texts:
  “Batty” found in Laugh-eteria (Florian, 1999)
  Four Famished Foxes and Fosdyke (Edwards, 1995)
• Onomatopoeia
  Mentor Poems:
  “Clatter” by Joyce Armor found in Kids Pick the Funniest Poems (Lansky, 1991)
• Rhythm
• Rhyme
• Repetition
  Mentor Text:
  I Love Our Earth (Martin & Sampson, 2006)
• Sensory Images
• Shape
  Mentor Text:
  Come to My Party and Other Shape Poems (Roemer, 2004)
• Creative Conventions
  Mentor Text:
  Beetle Bop (Fleming, 2007)

Remember Your Camera to Create Mental Images...

Why Teach Mental Images?

• Good readers create mental images during and after reading. These images come from all five senses and the emotions and are anchored in the reader’s schema.
• Good readers understand how creating mental images enhances comprehension.
• Readers use images to draw conclusions, create unique interpretations of the text, and recall important details.
• Images from reading often become part of a student’s writing (Miller, 2002).

Day 1: Teacher Modeling/Think Aloud

• Listen to Shel Silverstein Where the Sidewalk Ends CD/Tape - #40 Long Haired Boy or #30 With His Mouth Fool of Food
• Model drawing your own mental image of the poem

Day 2:

• Read aloud the poem “My Elephant is Different” p. 9 in A Pizza the Size of the Sun (Prelutsky, 1994/1996)
• Give each student a small piece of paper to draw their image of the elephant
• Ask students share their mental images with the class and discuss why each image is different.
• Post on a chart entitled: Why are our mental images different? Our schema is different! (Reading with Meaning by Debbie Miller p. 81)

Day 3:

• Read Aloud: On a Hot, Hot Day by Nicki Weiss (Harcourt Big Book) WITHOUT SHOWING ANY PICTURES
• After reading invite students to draw their most vivid mental image from the book.
• You may choose to reread book while students are drawing.
• When drawings are complete, share and categorize them by season.
• Reread Big Book showing pictures so students can compare their images to those of the illustrator.

Day 4:
• Read aloud a book without showing illustrations. Good books for mental images include:

  * The Salamander Room by Anne Mazer
  * Hello Ocean by Pam Munoz Ryan

  As you are reading students can fill out sheet entitled “Good Readers Make Mental Images Using their Senses and Emotions”

Note: This lesson can be repeated during guided reading with other appropriate books.

Name _______________________

Two Column Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>These words . . .</th>
<th>created this mental image . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The Toaster” by William Jay Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A silver-scaled Dragon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with jaws flaming red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sits at my elbow and toasts my bread.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hand him fat slices,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and then, one by one,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He hands them back</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when he sees they are done.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fill Your Suitcase with Sensible Reading Response Ideas...

Fiction
• Write a riddle about your favorite character
• Write a book blurb
• Write a book review
• Use C. L. A. P. S. to summarize the story
• Write a letter to the author
• Compose a poem about the book

Nonfiction
• List the 10 most amazing facts you learned
• Write a book blurb
• Create a chart or poster of the facts you found most interesting
• Write a true-or-false quiz for your classmates
• Create an animal poster like the one below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Looks Like</th>
<th>Things They Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favorite Foods</td>
<td>Fun Facts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Biographies
• Create a time line of the person’s life using pictures and words
• Create a chart like the one below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Famous Person</th>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
<th>What I learned...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Resources:
Good Choice: Supporting Independent Reading and Response (Stead, 2009)
Month-by-Month Trait-Based Writing Instruction (Walther & Phillips, 2009)
The Professional Books That Have Shaped My Thinking...


If you enjoyed today's presentation, join Maria for *Marvelous Books and Lively Mini-Lessons that Teach the “Six Traits” of Good Writing K-2* in Rockford on July 22, 2009 or Chicago on July 23, 2009.

See SDR's website for more information: [www.sdrresources.org](http://www.sdrresources.org)