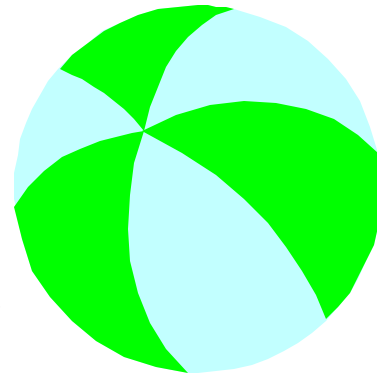


End-of-School and Summer May, June, & July, 2010

Dear Teachers,

We're almost there! Hard to believe that this school year is drawing to a close, isn't it? But, the kids know, don't they?!!!

Seriously, this is an especially rewarding time of the year because we can see all of the improvement each student has made. We remember something about each child that happened early in the year...and then, we look at each one now and KNOW progress, maturity, and learning have occurred. Exciting, isn't it? What great profession!



To help you over the end-of-the-year hump, I have included some FUN ideas to use during your centers and/or work time. I've included cinco de Mayo activities, spring planting ideas, summer fun songs, and great strategies for reading fluency useful across all grade levels.

This site extends through the summer months, since most of us are on summer vacation in June and July. REMEMBER TO LOG ON IN AUGUST for back-to-school ideas and product offers.

HAPPY END-OF-SCHOOL and JOYOUS SUMMER. You have worked hard this year. Take a break. ENJOY EVERY MINUTE left this year and every moment of summer renewal. YOU DESERVE IT!

Oh, don't forget about summer workshops and conferences, however. They can be just the "shot -in the-arm" needed to inspire you for next year!

Thanks for logging on!

Sincerely,

Dr. Maggie

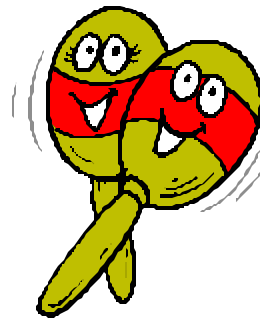
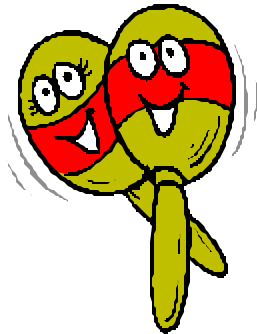


El Cinco de Mayo

By Dr. Maggie Allen



Cinco de
Mayo,
Cinco de Mayo.
It's a special holiday.
Cinco de Mayo,
Cinco de Mayo
Viva! Viva! Fiesta Day!



Cinco de Mayo
with a Mexican Flavor

Fiesta Time

Theme

El Cinco de Mayo

Purpose

To listen for a repeated phrase and play instruments to accompany the rhythm of the words of a holiday poem.

Materials

- "El Cinco de Mayo" reproducible
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Maracas and other rhythm band instruments
- Large colorful paper flowers and streamers
- Piñata



Procedure

1. Place paper flowers, maracas, a piñata, and paper streamers in front of the class. Ask children to examine the articles and talk about what the items may represent (a party, a celebration).
2. Tell children that the Spanish word for a party or a celebration is a *fiesta*. El Cinco de Mayo, the fifth of May, is a fiesta day for many Mexican -Americans. (It is the anniversary date of an important victory leading to Mexican independence from France.)
3. Write the lyrics of El Cinco de Mayo on a chart, or use the reproducible to make an overhead transparency. Read and track the words with the children. Point out that some of the words are not English: they are Spanish.
4. Distribute rhythm instruments to the children.
5. Read the poem again and have children play the instruments to the rhythm of the words.

Extension

Help students create a word bank of party words in English and/or Spanish (*celebration, balloons, favors, fiesta, viva, piñata*).

Seeds 'n Plants

By Dr. Maggie Allen

I plant a tiny seed,
Deep into the ground.
I pour some water on
And gently pat it down.

I watch it every day
And wait for it to grow.
I watch the sun shine on it,
But it grows so slow...ly!

The soil provides its food,
The sun provides its light.
I water every day
A little bit, just right.

I watch it every day,
And wait for it to grow.
And finally, it happens,
A sprout begins to show!



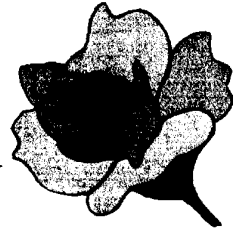
Explora-Center

Materials

Seed packets
Small trays
Sorting Pans (egg cartons or muffin tins may be used)
Seed mixtures
Variety of plants including ivy, cactus, and flowering plants
Magnifying glass
Drawing paper and crayons
Chart of a plant with parts labeled: roots, stem, leaves, flowers

Seeds and Plants

Place all of the materials in a center. Invite children to examine the seeds, their color, shape, size, and texture. Children may use the magnifying glass for a better look and then sort the seeds in an open sort. Next, have children observe each plant carefully. Do the plants have similar parts? Children may sketch the parts of each plant and label if able or copy from the chart.



Lesson Time: From Seeds to Plants

Get Ready!

After all children have had ample opportunity to observe and study the materials in the Explora-Center, call children together. Teach the song/chant "Seeds 'n Plants" and talk about what a plant needs to grow as described in the song. Plants need light, food, and water to grow.

Mini-Lesson

Display assorted fruits and vegetables brought from home. Cut open and have volunteers extract the seeds. Do the seeds look like the fruits and vegetables from which they came?

Next, display the seed packets and the seed mixtures. Place the mixture of seeds in small trays. Ask volunteers to sort them by size, color, and shape, and have other volunteers try to match the seeds with the fruit or vegetable packets from which they came. Remind children that some seeds (e.g., corn, beans) are easy to match because they look like the vegetable they become. Others (e.g., radish, melon, orange) are more difficult to match.

Extension: Learning Log Report

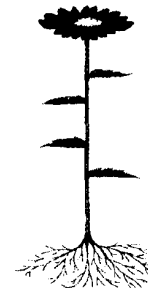
After the mini-lesson, the materials may be placed in a learning center for further examination. Children may record their findings on My Science Observation Form reproducible, p. 95, and place it in their Learning Log pocket folder to share with classmates and family members.

Learning Center Time with Investigation Stations

Title: Plant Roll-Ups

Materials

- Paper towels
- Clear plastic cups
- 2 bean seeds and 2 radish seeds per child
- Tablespoon
- Water
- Sunny spot or a shelf with a desk lamp



Directions

1. Tell the promise.

Remind children that this center will prove something exciting! Inside each seed is a promise of a new plant--a plant that has not yet started to grow. When a seed is watered regularly, the seed absorbs the water and starts to plump up. As it grows, the seed's protective skin pops off and the roots begin to grow.

2. Make seed roll-ups.

Have children make seed roll-ups using the following directions.

- * Take one paper towel sheet and place it flat on the table.
- * Roll the left side of the paper towel to the middle. Roll the right side of the paper towel to the middle. Gently crease into place.
- * Roll from the bottom to the top.
- * Place the roll-up in a clear plastic cup.
- * Sprinkle 2-3 tablespoons of water over the roll-up.
- * Place 2 radish seeds and 2 bean seeds in the cup between the paper towel and the cup. Push them down to about the middle of the cup, spacing the seeds around the cup, so you can see them.
- * Place the seed roll-ups in a sunny location or under a light.

3. Watch them grow.

Each day, add a tablespoon of water or spritz the paper towel until it is moist. Watch each day for sprouting. Which seed sprouted first? Which seed made a bigger root?

4. Learning Log

Record your findings using the Measure & Mark Graph on page 25.

My Science Observation Form

My Science Observation
by: _____



In the Summer

by Dr. Maggie Allen

I like picnics in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!
I like picnics in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!
With a picnic here, a picnic there,
Here and there and everywhere.
I like picnics in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!



I like beach balls in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!
I like beach balls in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!
With a beach ball here, a beach ball there,
Here and there and everywhere.
I like beach balls in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!



I like snow cones in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!
I like snow cones in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!
With a snow cone here, a snow cone there,
Here and there and everywhere.
I like snow cones in the summer,
Yes, oh, yes, I do!



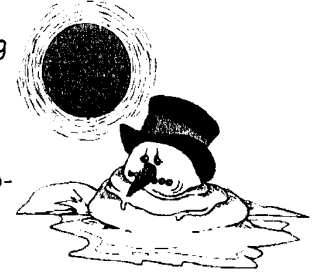
Explora-Center

Materials

Books about summer and the sun
Picture Cards with cut-outs of:
snow cone, ice cream, hot chocolate,
child in shorts, child in coat,
blankets, sun, snowman
Sorting T reproducible, p. 94

Hot and Cold

Place all items in the learning center. Invite children to read through the books about the sun and summer. Winter and summer are opposites; so are hot and cold. Sort the picture cards into two categories using the Sorting T. Talk about your sort with a partner.



Lesson Time: Solar Power Cooks

Get Ready!

After all children have participated in the Explora-Center, call everyone together. Introduce the song "In the Summer." After singing, ask children to tell what we learned about summer fun from this song.

Mini-Lesson

Remind children that even though summer is a fun time, we have to be careful of the sun's power. To prove the power of the sun, we will perform two experiments.

1. To demonstrate the power of the sun's rays as it shines onto objects, have students place small toys or objects on a piece of dark blue or black construction paper and set the paper in direct sunlight. At the end of the day, remove the objects to observe what has happened to the paper. Provide time for children to talk about why some spots of the paper are now lighter than others.

2. Take children outside. Create a solar cooker by lining a baking tray with aluminum foil and placing it in the sun. Place a piece of cheese, a blob of cold peanut butter, a block of chocolate, and an ice cube on the foil. Check the time.

Make predictions about which will melt faster. Record those predictions. Make periodic checks to follow each item's melting progress. Which melted first? Last?

Extension:

Children may draw pictures of each item in their Learning Logs, record their predictions as to melting order, and record their findings after the experiments.

"Reading Fun" Ideas

Clapping Strategies

Purpose

To internalize the structure of rhythmic, rhyming text by feeling a steady beat during the reading

Procedure

Choose a story, poem, or chant that can be read with a rhythm. Demonstrate an age-appropriate clapping rhythm for students. For example, have students place their hands on their knees and then clap for the "Hands-Knees Clap," or have them clap, cross their right hand over to touch their left shoulder, clap again, and then cross their left hand over to touch their right shoulder for the "Cross-Shoulder Clap." Read the story, poem, or chant one sentence or line at a time, and invite students to repeat the words and practice their clapping rhythm to the words. Have students practice the rhythm several times until they can perform it fluidly. Have students use the same strategy with a song, such as "This Old Man" or "A-Hunting We Will Go." Write the words on a piece of chart paper, and teach the song to the class. Have students reread the song using the rhythmic clapping strategy.



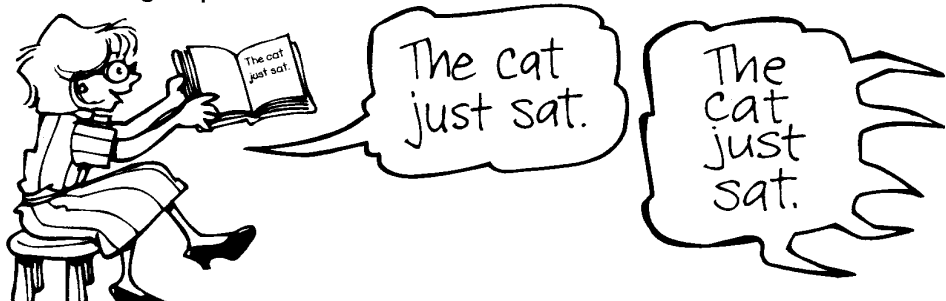
Echo Chant Reading

Purpose

To hear and echo fluent reading of text

Procedure

Expressively read a page of text from a book, a song, or a poem one sentence at a time. Have students mimic your expression. Continue this process with the rest of the book, song, or poem.



"Reading Fun" Ideas

Monster Reading

Purpose

To use a character voice during guided reading

Procedure

Select any short text with a monster theme. Read the story to the class. Ask students to think how a monster would sound. Invite them to imitate many different kinds of monsters. Then, have students use a selected monster voice and reread a page or the entire story.



Opera Reading

Purpose

To emphasize reading with expression and to have fun interpreting a story character's feelings

Procedure

Play a short opera selection for students, and describe how performers in an opera sing their characters' parts. Read aloud a story with numerous character parts. Then, select one character, and every time that character speaks have students sing the character's part to dramatize the feeling the character conveys.



"Reading Fun" Ideas

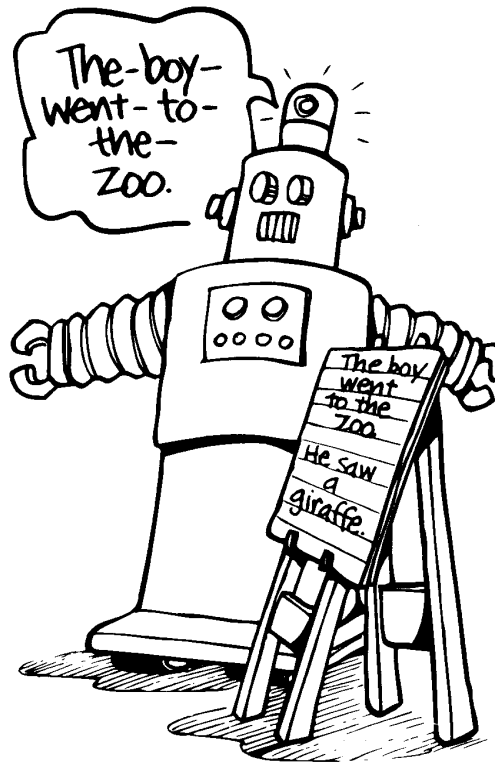
Robot Reading

Purpose

To help students who tend to read without pauses to read more fluently and naturally

Procedure

Write a short story, nursery rhyme, or poem on chart paper, and display it. Ask students to stand straight and move like a robot. Then, ask them to read the text "robot style" by using a robot-like voice and by taking a breath between each word in each sentence. Also, use this technique to help students understand that although it is fun to read like a robot once in a while to punctuate each word in the text, it is not fun to hear whole stories read robot style! Explain that "robot reading" is not fluent reading.



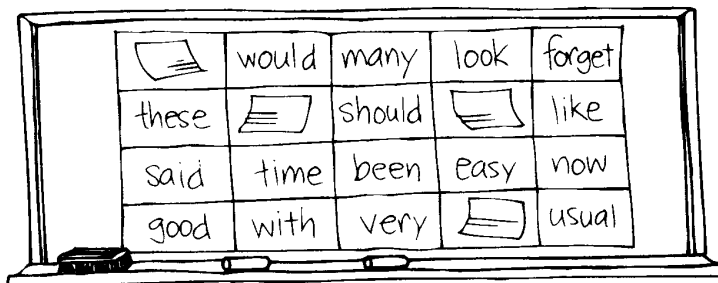
Select a Word

Purpose

To create awareness of high-frequency words and to increase automaticity with reading them

Procedure

Draw a large 4 x 5 square grid on the chalkboard. Write a high-frequency or vocabulary word in each square. Have a volunteer select a word and read it aloud. Invite the class to repeat the word. Cover the word with a sticky note. Continue the activity until all the words have been read. To extend the activity, erase a word after it has been read, and write a new word in the square.



More "Reading Fun" Ideas (3-5)

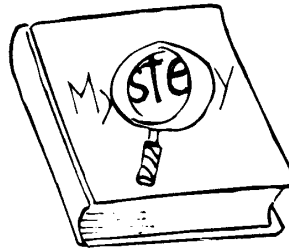
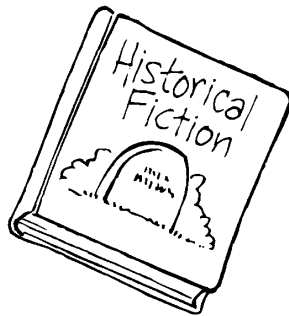
Finding Patterns

Purpose

Use this activity to help students recognize specific elements or characteristics of a story. When readers identify elements or characteristics of a story, they are able to locate information more quickly and understand the piece better.

Procedure

Select a short piece of fiction or nonfiction from a specific genre (e.g., mystery, fairy tale, historical fiction, biography, how-to, cause and effect). Brainstorm with students what they already know about the genre. For example, for a biography, students may say that it contains information about a person's life, including his or her accomplishments, contributions to society, early life, education, date of birth, and date of death (if deceased). Have students read the story and record the elements or characteristics that appear in their reading.



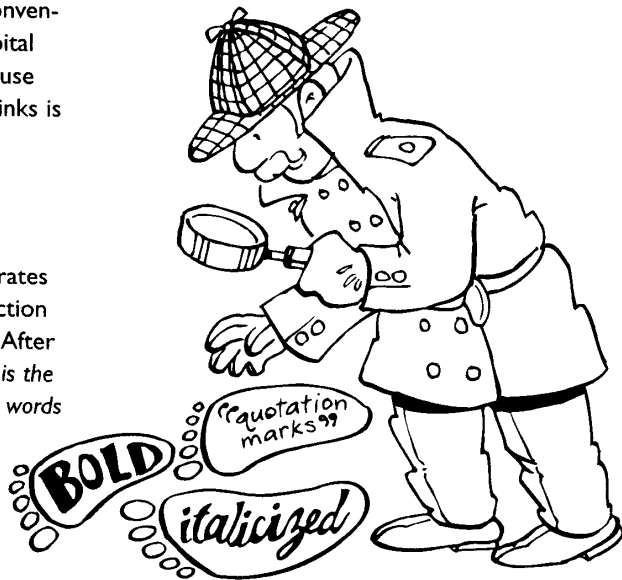
Go to Print!

Purpose

Authors convey intent through their use of print conventions such as key words, punctuation, bold print, capital letters, and italicized words. Show students how to use these "clues" to help determine what the author thinks is important and to improve their comprehension.

Procedure

Select a poem or a page from a book that demonstrates the use of print conventions. Read through the selection with the class, without discussing print conventions. After reading the selection once, ask students *What ideas is the author trying to convey? What were the most important words or phrases?* Point out the use of print conventions in the text, and explain why authors use them. Have students discuss in small groups why they feel the author used the conventions. Have groups share their findings with the class.



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More "Reading Fun" Ideas (3-5)

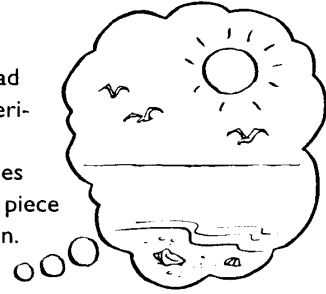
Picture This

Purpose

Good readers identify the meaning of a poem or piece of text and consciously create images in their mind. This process is called visualization. When students picture what is happening in the text and make connections with their own experiences, they improve their comprehension.

Procedure

Select a short poem or piece of text for students to read independently or in pairs. Ask students if they have experienced something similar to the events in the poem or reading selection or have seen television shows or movies that help them visualize the events. Give each student a piece of drawing paper. Have students sketch their visualization.



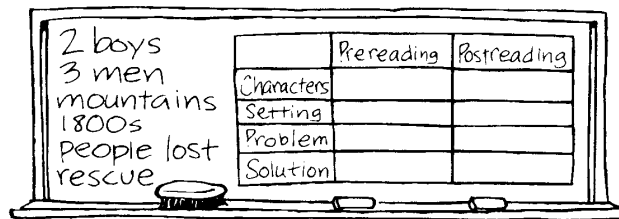
Prereading Predictor

Purpose

Use a prereading strategy to introduce a short story, poem, novel, or new unit of study. Prereading helps students anticipate what is coming next and actively engages them in the text.

Procedure

Select 15–20 key words or phrases from a reading selection. Write the words or phrases on the chalkboard, and review them with students. Discuss what it means to categorize words. Brainstorm with the class possible categories for the words or phrases. For example, categories might include characters, setting, problem, solution, or parts of speech. Draw a three-column chart on the board. List the categories in the first column. Title the second column *Prereading* and the third column *Postreading*. Ask students to predict which category each word or phrase goes in, and record their responses under "Prereading." Have students read the selection and then provide more specific information for each category based on their reading. Record their responses under "Postreading." Invite students to discuss the differences and similarities between their prereading and postreading answers.



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