

# **Phonemes! Come Get the Phone! Who's Calling?**

**Grace Hollaender**  
*Overbrook Elementary School*

## **Overview**

## **Rationale**

## **Objectives**

## **Strategies**

## **Classroom Activities/ Standards**

## **Annotated Bibliography**

## **Overview**

The intention of the unit, *Phonemes! Come Get the Phone!* is to present activities and books to read aloud that promote phonemic awareness development in kindergarten children. Under the overarching umbrella of phonological awareness, a child's firm understanding of the sounds of phonemes stands at the cornerstone of success for 50% of emergent readers by end of first grade (Adams, 1990). The heart of this unit is to provide experiences to facilitate more fluid attainment of the phonemic stages of literacy skills and while setting the stage, piquing a child's interest for more intrinsically motivating reading instruction. This unit is designed to provide literacy experiences that are personally relevant, meaningful and fun.

At the beginning of the school year, the use of each child's name presents an opportunity for the exploration of beginning, ending and medial sounds. A word analysis of each child's name can make a context for the phonemic awareness phase of the kindergarten literacy block. By using the child's name as a basis for beginning reading, students are able to focus on the phonemes and phones that make up their name. By doing the name activities outlined in the lesson plans during the first quarter of the school year's literacy block, it will engage students in understanding how learning to read is intimately linked to speaking. One's own name is a good starting place as it is one of the most relevant and meaning laden to the developing child.

The unit *Phonemes! Come Get the Phone!* focuses on developing the child's skills of hearing and saying individual phonemes in the English alphabetic system. These skills are taught throughout the kindergarten year in a pattern of increasing difficulty. While capitalizing on the egocentric nature of the 5 to 6 year old, a child can grasp the individual sounds uttered and heard in their name in a much easier way. By analysis of the children's names there are some, which contain small sight words embedded within (for example, Anthony has a, an, on within his name). Teacher-created rhymes using each child's full name replete with ego supportive phrases enhances a nurturing and positive emotional classroom climate. When a rhyme is created which incorporates unique

qualities of the individual child and his talents, we are rewarded by the child's unquenchable desire to be able to read, write and recite the rhyme. By incorporating Dr. Seuss books into the mix, children get the notion that rhyming works have been published along with vivid fanciful and realistic illustrations. The use of Bill Peet's book, *Chester the Worldly Pig* focuses on character development in a story. E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*, a perennial favorite, is chosen for the delightful story, characters as well as vocabulary enrichment.

The enhancement of self-respect and personal worth as a young reader is increased when a scrapbook is created to show the descriptive poetry and photographs of each child. As the child becomes more familiar with reading and writing, he can create his own rhymes and sentences to include in a classroom blog or book. Even at the tender age of six, there is a lot of satisfaction seeing one's name in print.

Initial sound fluency is presented early on in the Story Town literacy curriculum used at Overbrook Elementary. Story Town is a research based literacy curriculum; the notion that initial phonemes are the best starting place is reinforced in the literature reviewed for this unit. Dr. Seuss books are a natural segue way into the notion of rhyme and the exploration of the phonemes that end a word. Seuss is an ideal vehicle for students to hear as a read aloud throughout the school year. By March 2, which is Dr. Seuss' birthday, students who have attained skill in writing and reading can construct their own rhymes just like Dr. Seuss!

The theme explored in *Chester the Worldly Pig* by Bill Peet is one of never giving up hope in the face of adversity and ridicule. Chester demonstrates precocious problem solving skills all the while not recognizing that he was born with an extraordinary distinction. The markings on his skin reveal the map of the world in amazing detail. He is saved from the slaughterhouse by dint of his own skin's exceptional qualities.

As spring approaches and winter's dull days begin to fade in one's memory, E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* is an ideal read-aloud to offer to kindergarten students. The story is rife with animal characters that talk. White's writing style appeals to the listener as it makes the listener feel as though they are present along with the characters. There is a personal emotional response along with a mix of emotions as the characters go through their trials and tribulations. Although this is a book of fantasy, children feel like this country setting is a real place.

The way that a teacher performs a read-aloud to children has an impact on the many forms of literature presented here. The kindergarten teacher's use of analytic talk during a read-aloud can enhance a child's vocabulary. Analytic talk is described as "low frequency words used and often repeated, words clarified through definition, picture clues, sentence context, story meaning and deep processing of word meanings by the interactive nature of discussion (Galda, L. 1991). Time taken for word analysis during a read-aloud is a powerful component of the literacy block.

Read-alouds are a natural time for the kindergarten teacher to provide feedback, demonstrate word meanings, ask predictive, reactive and recall questions about the reading and outside of the reading. Teachers have an opportunity to ask descriptive questions and help students to make connections between the story context, home and classroom experiences. These elements of reading stories like the ones featured in this unit assist the teacher in developing community that is collaborative in the classroom.

## **Rationale**

The benefits of using the works of Dr. Seuss are myriad in a kindergarten classroom dedicated to creating a comprehensive literacy classroom. The sound and speech production used during a read-aloud of any Dr. Seuss book is much more than mere entertainment for children. The ending sound rhyme that dominates Dr. Seuss' children's books helps students to become mindful of, hear, recognize and isolate underlying patterns that regulate rhyming word awareness. As students listen to the rhyme, they can examine what the differences and similarities are in the ending words of the sentences. Students will begin to discover that a word is a physical form that has meaning and a message (Adams, 1990). The vast supply of phonological rules that govern speech and sound production are ripe in Dr. Seuss. The unconscious phonological rules exercised repeatedly in speech and listening are the structure by which one can think of the big picture of reading. Phonological awareness is the ability to perceive the structure of the sounds in words by hearing and by orally producing the sounds in a word. Phonemic awareness comprises the small units of sound that make up a given word. When a child has developed awareness of phonemes, the sky is the limit as they have constructed a ship to get from here to there.

Phonemic awareness, word awareness, rhyming, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension are the essential skill base of best practice reading programs. Each of these components of reading instruction when taught in combination provides the essentials for effective reading competency. At the end of first grade, students need to be well versed in each part of the symphony of skills that is the reading coda. By the end of first grade, well developed phonemic awareness skills accounts for half of the distinction between proficient readers and those who are not proficient (Jeul, 1988; NICHD, 2000; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1988; Stanovich, 1986; Wagner, Torgeson & Rashotte, 1994). One of the vital issues for Kindergarten and first grade teachers is the development of phonemic awareness in students and how to enhance this awareness while developing the command of the knowledge of the phoneme and grapheme connection. Phonemic awareness is the manipulation of sounds in speech. Becoming aware of how these sounds coalesce into words lays a firm foundation for further development of literacy skills.

Learning how to read is dependent upon phonemic awareness (Perfetti, Beck, Bell, & Hughes, 1987). Listening to the sounds of the letters and being able to identify sounds and their corresponding letter is the essence of phonics instruction. Phonemic awareness is a much broader concept and one that has become the cornerstone of best practice for the teacher of emerging reading programs. Students must develop a fluid link between a series of several skills that comprise phonemic awareness, such as: sound recognition

brought about by aural identification; word consciousness; rhyming awareness; the knowledge of syllables; identification of individual sounds; and what these sounds are when combined, segmented, blended, substituted and or deleted ( Ellory, 2005).

Dr. Suess' books are constructed using simple language and vivid characters that are pencil drawn in a distinctive primitive style, colored with primary and secondary palettes. The characters in *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* are shown as fantastic and reflective of fantasy that is universal. A young boy sets off for points beyond his home. Although the reader is not told why the boy has left home it is assumed that he is ready for a journey and not propelled by anything other than a search for self-discovery. The boy has many choices to make along the way and is met with successful encounters in his first steps. He is faced with tricky problems that dominate his capacity for finding solutions. As the boy progresses, it becomes clear that this journey will end well thus assuring the reader that he is equipped to face life's trials. Suess is a perennial favorite for students who are in the early stages of reading skills. The stories are set to rhyme and hold a pattern that the kindergarten student can readily recognize.

The works of Bill Peet are not set to rhyme, for the most part, but contain characters that are delightfully engaging. Peet worked for Walt Disney for 30 years as one of the lead animators and a storymen for many of the classic Disney movies. Bill Peet was the sole artist to create the characters and script for the movie *101 Dalmatians* (Peet, 1989). Peet worked on *Fantasia*, *The Sword and the Stone*, *Jungle Book*, and many other of Disney's biggest hits. While he was animating he began to write and illustrate books for children using his prodigious skills with paper, pencil and words. These stories have universal appeal in that the themes are ones that kindergarten children can relate to readily.

The main character of *Chester the Worldly Pig* is quite young at the beginning of the story. Chester yearns to make a difference in the world and narrowly escapes becoming ham or bacon. He decides that in order to realize his dream he must attempt to join the circus. Chester strives to perfect a trick that he hopes will be good enough to perform under the big top. Many of the sight words that are covered in the first half of kindergarten are featured in this book. Chester goes through many trials and tribulations, faces dangers of many kinds, and at the end succeeds in attaining his freedom from the slaughter house. Hope springs forth while reading this book aloud, as in all of Mr. Peet's 30 books. His illustrations are enchanting and the animal characters have remarkably human characteristics and emotions. *Chester the Worldly Pig* is chosen as a part of the unit to extend the child's understanding of characters in a story. As Chester works toward mastery of his trick, young children relate to the feeling of inferiority that Chester expresses. Children are striving to learn the tools of the trade by developing their abilities in reading, writing and understanding their place in the world. Stories that offer encouragement and acknowledging the effort it takes to work through difficulties inspire many youngsters to persevere.

E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* is a rather long chapter book for kindergarten children. The timing of the spring quarter choice for introducing *Charlotte's Web* for this unit is

based on the evolving concentration span of the kindergarten student by this time of literacy skill development. The words used in *Charlotte's Web* are more complex than the previous authors. Inclusion into this unit comes from the idea of scaffolding the read-aloud so that students can stretch their listening skills. Students are rewarded in many ways by listening to this great story. Exposure to *Charlotte's Web* provides deep meaning about family, relationships, and friendship. From a literature standpoint, *Charlotte's Web* has the whole package.

## **Objectives**

The objective of the unit, *Phonemes! Come Get the Phone!* is to provide a cross curriculum perspective to a full day kindergarten class. The unit has a literacy base touching upon phonemic awareness, oral and listening skill development, a writing component, an earth science activity and finally a lesson on place value. The underlying thread of this unit is using each child's name as a departure point for the academic lessons.

The unit is in alignment with the PA academic standards and the Philadelphia core curriculum for literacy, earth science, and math. Making connections between subject areas helps children to connect the dots and derive meaning from disparate subjects. Culminating activities include making a map of the Earth that is tied into a literature based program.

Kindergarten children will write their own poetry with the help of the teacher that includes their name and personal characteristics. When focusing on the setting of the stories the children will develop their idea of geographic place by making a map of the world and the oceans. Focusing on the phonemic qualities of the literature read during read-aloud and shared reading, the children will exercise their phonemic awareness.

By unit's end the students will have a better understanding of the idea embedded in the math concept of place value. Using their own name, students will get the idea that where you put letters has inherent value. Scrambled letters with one capital letter can be unscrambled to reveal the name of any of the children in the class. The capital letter holds the key. From this jumping off point, the idea of where the number is held in place shows the value of the number. This lesson demystifies place value in a hurry.

## **Strategies**

The reading strategies for the unit are supported by the Philadelphia School District's Core Curriculum guidelines. The teacher provides a background for the book by doing a picture walk to access prior knowledge and assess student awareness of concepts and vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to students. The phonemes that are featured in the unit are ones that the students have studied already. The choice of using the individual names of the children is to review the phonemic qualities of their names. Determining the voiced and unvoiced aspects of their name allows for particular cultural relevance of the unit.

Thinking about the text as it applies to geographical places brings home the idea of setting. Each of the works featured in the unit embed the idea of setting expressed quite clearly. Dr. Seuss does not reveal the places that one may go but he describes the emotional connection to place. Bill Peet has his main character, Chester, go through many experiences in various settings. Chester does not realize that all along he possesses attributes that make him a very special pig. The map of the world is emblazoned on his hide in such a way that he is saved from a fate worse than death, the slaughterhouse.

Making the map of the world as a culminating activity of this part of the unit provides the students with the opportunity to construct the continents and oceans that are on the planet. If Chester can do it, why not make one? The resulting piece of art wrought by kindergartener's developing fine motor control is truly beautiful. This task is not easy. It takes considerable concentration and attention to detail to create the borders of each of the continental land masses. The children take great pride in this work.

The understanding of place value in mathematical reasoning can be a daunting task for young children. Using their names as a vehicle, students are amused to find the ultimate importance of placement of the letters in their name. Without the notion of where the letters go, a name would be a scrambled series of letters. The departure point of seeing one's name in a scrambled sequence is to show them that if you use the idea of place value you will find something very meaningful. Introducing place value in this manner demystifies the numerical idea of place value. Kindergarten children can grasp that the place you put the number in a series will help you know how important it is and its name.

The use of *Charlotte's Web* in this unit is to foster a desire for what comes next for the characters in the story from chapter to chapter. The suspense that is built into the ending of each chapter holds the interest and the children beg for more. Many books read to young children are rather brief but replete with pictures that engage. E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* is a story of friendship, adventure, sincerity and caring. The characters are intimately accessible to young children. The story is the message not the illustrations. This is a departure from the usual kindergarten story. There are many directions an educator could go in using this classic: vocabulary enrichment, a better understanding of setting, listening skill development, and introduction to a novel are but a few benefits. The other thing to consider is whether viewing the movie will be of benefit and if it does justice to the richness of the text. After hearing *Charlotte's Web* read aloud, kindergarteners know the value of hearing the words that White put on paper. The animation, although very well done, pales by comparison.

## **Classroom Activities/ Standards**

### Lesson One

Unit introduction: What's in a name?

Objectives:

- Students will make a snake of play-doh then make the letters that shape their names.

- Students will say what the letters are that make up their names.
- Students will make their names with letters that are printed out. Students will cut out the letters on the dotted lines. Students will make their names using the letter cards as a guide.
- Students will use the letters to make other words using the letters in their names.
- Students will use the sight words they have studied so far with the words they can find in their names.

PA Standards:

Literacy

1.5 Quality of Writing

- A. Write words for a specific topic
- B. Use a variety of words in early forms of writing, dictation, or illustrations to express complete thoughts.
- C. Present written work to a small group.

1.8 Research

- B. Locate information using visual representation and key words.

1.3 Reading, analyzing and interpreting literature

- A. Responding to and discussing a variety of literature through read-alouds and shared reading.
- B. Describing characters, setting, and main idea of a story.

1.1 Learning to read independently

- A. Acquire basic reading vocabulary by identifying common words.
- F. Recall new vocabulary in listening and visual contexts.
- H. Demonstrate reading of key words and selecting sentences and recall key concepts of a text.

Materials:

You will need 1 cup of play-doh for each child. Provide a securely closing container for each child with his/her name labeled on the top of the container; this will insure that the play-doh will last for many uses. A commercially available alphabet can be used as a grid for making the names. Each child will also need a pair of scissors. Name cards on sentence strip paper will be made available to students so they can see their name in print.

Activity:

The activity begins with the students looking at their names on their name cards. Students will name the letters in their names. The students will receive a copy of the alphabet and scissors. Students will cut out the letters that they see in the alphabet strips that are in their individual names. Students will construct their name in the sequence that is shown on their name card. When they have completed this phase of the activity, students will take out their play-doh and divide it into piles that are the same number of letters represented in their name. The students will then make snakes for each of the letters. They will then roll out, pinch, squeeze, and form the letters thus making a 3-D version of their name on their table.

Extensions:

Students will use their letters in their names to look for words that start with their letters in the picture dictionary. Students can make those words with play-doh, most notably the early sight words in the core curriculum. Students will write in their writing journals, the words and pictures of the words depicted in the picture dictionary.

### Lesson Two

Rhyming Simon a la Dr. Suess

Rhyme and Ryme

Objectives:

- Students will listen to the Dr. Suess book *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* Students will listen for the rhyming words at the sentence's end. Students will tell the teacher the pattern of the ending word rhyme.
- Students will use their name and find words that rhyme with the ending sounds that are voiced in their names.
- Students will make sentences that can fit the rhyming words in their names.
- Students will include characteristics that tell something about their personality or character or something that they are particularly talented in.
- Students will tell something about which they are skilled in.

PA Standards:

Literacy

1.1 Learning to Read Independently

D. Use of self monitoring comprehension strategies

E. Acquire basic reading vocabulary by identifying common words.

1.2 Reading Critically in all content Areas

Identifying different types of genres.

1.3 Reading, analyzing, and Interpreting Literature

Respond and discuss a variety of literature through Read-Alouds and Shared

Reading

1.4 Writing

Draw or write to inform.

1.5 Quality of Writing

Write or, draw or use pictures to depict experiences, stories, people, objects or events.

Write words appropriate for a specific topic.

Use a variety of words in early forms of writing, dictation, or illustrations to express complete thoughts.

Present written work in small groups

1.6 Speaking and Listening

Listen to a selection and share information and ideas.

1.8 Research

Locate information using visual representations and key words.

Identify important concepts related to the main idea.



#### Materials:

A copy of *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss should be available to the students to peruse prior to the presentation of the lessons. In a kindergarten classroom, a useful way to display a special book is by using a Lucite picture frame that stands on its own and can be placed in a prominent area in your literacy area. Children can become familiar with the art and text by looking it over casually. Many of the graphics and color choices in this book are pleasing to the eye and fantasy oriented. You will need chart paper and a photo of each child for the completion of the lesson.

#### Activity Part One:

The idea that you will go many places in the course of your life will be discussed. Students will tell where they have been, where they want to go, and where they want to go in the future and their responses will be listed in a graphic organizer. This part of the activity is to help the children to draw upon their own prior knowledge of place.

Teachers and students will go on a picture walk through the book, *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* The teacher will pause on the pages for the students to make comments and ask questions about the colors and pictures used to illustrate the idea of place and how the boy's character progresses in his development as a world traveler.

Once the picture walk has been completed students will settle in for listening to the words in the text. The teacher will read the words with expression as there are emotional components to the story as the boy encounters many obstacles in his journey. Picking a particular page that the students find very exciting, the teacher will write the words on the chart paper. Students will look closely at the ending rhyme of each sentence that makes up the text of the page. Students will help by circling the ending rhymes on the chart paper using different color markers to show that the ending rhyme is different or the same.

#### Activity Part Two:

The teacher will take one student's name and make up a short poem that is composed of two sentences. The first sentence will end with the child's name and the second sentence will end with a word that rhymes with his or her name. Or, in a limerick style, come up with one sentence that includes the child's name and a rhyming word that describes a characteristic of the child. For example: Zyaire Tansom is smart and handsome or Jayden Leary thinks up smart theory. The inspiration for these limericks and poems needs to be based upon the student's personalities, strengths, and talents to make it a meaningful experience.

As the students and teacher have developed these poems describing characteristics of their classmates, an inevitable sense of pride emerges. Using the computer to find a large bold print and typing the final edited version of each child's poem or limerick is advised. The print found on the computer is so crisp and looks like it might be on a real book. The children are great editors when you are talking about what is to be voiced about their name.

### Activity Part Three:

Finally, when the text is completed, add a photograph of each child to the text. This allows the child to see themselves and their poem mounted either in a classroom book or as a bulletin board display. By adding a *Cat in the Hat* to the display and an additional short poem to kick off the poetry theme, you have a memorable keepsake, a lot of fun and meaningful addition to the literacy curriculum.

### Lesson Three

#### *Chester the Worldly Pig*

Places you might go

#### Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Retell a story in sequence.
- Describe the characters in the story.
- Identify the main characters in the story.
- Compare and contrast *Chester the Worldly Pig* and *Oh! The Places You'll Go!*
- Compare and contrast the illustrations by Bill Peet and Dr. Seuss.

#### PA Standards:

##### Literacy

##### 1.4 Writing

Draw or write to inform.

##### 1.8 Research

Locate information using visual representation and key words.

Identify important concepts using the main idea.

##### 1.6 Speaking and Listening

Listen to a selection and share information and ideas.

#### Social Studies

##### Geography

##### 7.2 Physical Characteristics of Places and Regions

##### Civics and Government

##### 5.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship

#### Earth Science

3.5 KA: Know basic land forms and earth history.

3.5 KB: Recognize the Earth's different water resources.

#### Materials:

You will need shapes of the continents and two circles large enough to contain the continents and oceans. Your best bet is to copy these shapes onto card stock and laminate the shapes to insure that they will last. Cut carefully around the shapes in an exact way, as you will be using these shapes as a template for the borders of the continents. Each irregularity is a depiction of the geographical boundaries of the continents. If your

students have excellent fine motor control, they can make a tracing of the continent shapes themselves. Most kindergarten students would find that task vexing. You will need to make each continent a different color so you can color code the different continents. Place the name of the continent on the continent you have traced onto construction paper. Provide enough push pins and cork backing or a small swatch of carpet sample to place under the continent shape.

Activity:

The students will hear the stories, *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* and *Chester the Worldly Pig* a few times. They will be engaged in a discussion of the places that the characters of the boy and the pig went during the retelling of both stories. Dr. Suess used metaphors in his drawings whereas Peet used realistic pencil drawings depicting the locations he put Chester in. A compare and contrast activity will lead the students into a discussion of the unique picture of the world on Chester's hide.

Students will make the map of the continents of the world by using push pins to go around the border of each continent. The students will push the pins and make small dots into the outlines of the edges of the continent shapes. The students will continue to push their pins into the next dot to create a sense of the irregularities of the land masses. Students will make the shapes of the continent shapes and place them in the appropriate locations on the ocean shapes for the world. The teacher will help the students place the continents in the appropriate locations in relation to each other. The teacher will help the students by using glue sticks to make the continent pieces to stay on blue paper circles that will represent the oceans.

Lesson Four - Place value Introduction

What's in Your Name? (Place Value with names)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Order the letters of their name in correct sequence from a scrambled array.
- Understand that the place their letters go in their name has value.

PA Standards

Mathematics:

2.1 K1: Apply Place Value concepts and numeration to counting, ordering and grouping.

2:1 K1.1 Count, read, write whole numbers 0 to 10.

Materials:

Students will see their names scrambled written on the board with a rectangle drawn around the letters. There will be a line drawn under the scrambled letters. The teacher will use the white board or a chalkboard to demonstrate this activity.

Activity:

Students will see their names with their letters scrambled and out of sequence. We will talk about how the place you put your letters has great significance. If you place the last

letter first in your name sequence you have a totally different word. This word will not make any sense. Students will hear the sounds of the letters in the scrambled way and then tell if this makes sense. The one capital letter will be obvious to kids as they construct the name out of the letters. The one capital letter will go on the line under the scrambled letter sequence. What place each letter belongs emerges as the children begin to see that this is a name that students are familiar with. This process will go on until all of the children's names have been treated this way.

Understanding this idea of place value, the children will now have more of a handle upon which to hang the notion that where a number is placed in a series has a value. Showing the children where the ones are and tens are in the number 15 will become much easier to understand. By referring back to the literacy lesson of scrambled names they will construct the place value concept more readily.

### Lesson Five - Charlotte's Web: Fictional or Non-Fictional Characters

#### Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Differentiate the fictional from the non-fictional characters in Charlotte's Web.
- Retell the story in sequence as it happens in each chapter.
- Tell what the story is about.
- Recognize high frequency words.

#### PA Standards:

1.1K.C Apply knowledge of the structural features of spoken and written language and the use of picture and context clues to derive meaning from a text.

1.1KC1: Recognize simple one syllable and high frequency words.

1.1KC2: Identify words with common beginning and ending sounds.

1.1KC4: Recognizing that sentences in print are composed of individual words that represent speech.

1.1KC5: Categorize words, pictures or objects based upon sound features.

1.1K.G: Differentiate between fiction and non-fiction text.

1.1KG1: Retell known story in sequence.

1.1KG2: Describe what a story is about.

1.1KG5: Revisit text and/or illustrations to clarify story.

#### Materials:

You will need a copy of *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White. You will also need a pack of chart paper to write Venn diagrams to assess whether a character is demonstrating the attributes of a fictional or non-fictional character. At times, characters that appear to be non-fictional transcend reality by listening to and talking with animals so from chapter to chapter reality is held in abeyance. A magic marker is also a necessity. A *Charlotte's Web* word wall is very useful as there are many descriptive and unfamiliar words used by White.

Activity:

*Charlotte's Web* is a rather long read-aloud that must be read over the span of several weeks. When kindergarten children return from recess or lunchtime in the school cafeteria, they return to class in a rambunctious mood most days. By reading this momentous tome at that time, teachers will be assured that the children will not only listen to the story with interest but be ready to find out what happens next in the story from day to day. It is an exciting tale equipped with suspense, a real page turner. As the story progresses, the teacher asks the students about the characters' fiction and non-fiction status and writes this information down on the Venn diagram. Word Wall words that are featured in the text are included by using index cards and placed under the appropriate alphabet letter. At each chapter's end, the students will retell the important parts in sequence of the action in the story. A student can be picked from the class to write on the board all of the high frequency words they heard while the story was repeated.

Lesson Six - Alphabet Books

Objective:

Students will be able to:

- Write simple sentences using their understanding of sight words and sentence structure.
- Use the pictures that are supplied for them for the subjects of each sentence.
- Use the word wall in the classroom to assist them in constructing their sentences.
- Ask for help from their teacher as they compose their sentences.

PA Standards:

1.1K.C Apply knowledge of the structural features of spoken and written language and the use of picture and context clues to derive meaning from a text.

1.5 Quality of Writing.

Write words appropriate for a specific topic.

Use of a variety of words in early forms of writing, dictation or illustrations to express complete thoughts.

Present written work in a small group.

Materials:

The teacher will supply pictures of objects that begin with each letter of the alphabet. How many pictures will depend upon the students' capacity for writing; these pictures can be mounted on one page. The page that will accompany the picture page should have lines that are drawn to suit the student's size of writing for sentences. At least two pencils that are sharpened daily and an eraser should be provided for writing. A three-hole binder and clear plastic covers for the writing page and picture page needs to be provided for each child.

Activity:

Writing an alphabet book is a long process. Beginning this task by early February will insure you have the needed time to complete the book by the middle of May or at latest year's end. Writing sentences should be a process begun in November when student's have studied and learned many sight words. In daily guided reading, students have accomplished many reading tasks and are on their way as far as competency in decoding and encoding.

Each day a 20 minute time frame is put aside for alphabet book writing. In the beginning, the teacher can write a few sample sentences that children can copy in their book to assist them in getting started. Use of simple sentence starters can facilitate this process. By the "Dd" page most students are able to carry the task of composing the sentences on their own. Independent writing is the goal.

The teacher assists as she walks around the room, conferring with the students and writing on post it notes the words that the child is finding tricky. Teachers should gently remind the children as they are composing that the word wall is a useful tool they can use for writing and reading. When the children have finished their page for that day, they will confer with the teacher by reading the sentences they have written.

When each page has been edited in the edit conference they will put the picture page and the written page in a clear plastic cover to protect the work. The child will place these pages into their binders to hold this important work.

As the children gain confidence, the teacher can ask a child per day to take their alphabet book and read their sentences to a small group. This is a great opportunity for the other children to present feedback to their peers. Teachers need to create a format by modeling for this kind of peer review.

## Annotated Bibliography

Adams, M.J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Adams book is a fascinating and enjoyable book that gives the teacher of reading and writing a detailed way of viewing the enormity of skills that are required for student achievement. A must read for the kindergarten teacher.

Juel, C. (1988). "Learning to read and write: A longitudinal study of fifty-four children from first through fourth grades." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80.

This provides a format for teachers to review effective approaches to reading and writing instruction. It also provides a blueprint for the scaffolding required for student success.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). "Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction" (*NIH Publication No. 00-4769*). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

A thorough review of the many instructional programs used to instruct children; a kind of "what works" and what programs are lacking.

Snow, C.E., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.) (1998). "Preventing reading difficulties in young children." Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Reading difficulties are discussed at length. Some recommendations for resolving reading problems are discussed and evaluated.

Stanovich, K.E. (1986). "Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy." *Reading Research Quarterly*.

This is an excellent argument for differentiated instruction in reading and writing skill instruction.

Wagner, R., Torgesen, J.K., & Rashotte, C.A. (1994). "Development of reading-related phonological processing abilities: New evidence of bi-directional causality from the latent variable longitudinal study." *Developmental Psychology*.

A compelling argument that student' phonological processing and phonemic awareness are prerequisites for the emergence of reading and writing skills.

Perfetti, C.A., Beck, I., Bell, L. & Hughes, C. (1987). "Phonemic Knowledge and learning to read are reciprocal: A longitudinal study of first grade." *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*.

This is the results of a longitudinal study linking the idea that phonemic awareness and the development of these skills as the underpinning of reading acquisition for students by the end of the first grade.

Peet, Bill (1989). *Bill Peet, an Autobiography*. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, MA.

This generously illustrated book can be used as a picture book, depicting the author's life. Mr. Peet's pencil drawings are wrought in a realistic style that has a whimsical quality

reflecting his many years as an animator. The prose is engaging and funny. This is an excellent book for use as an author's study from K through third grade.

Peet, Bill (1965). *Chester the Worldly Pig*. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY. The trials and tribulations of Chester are not lost on any reader of this wonderful book. The search for life's meaning and eventual self-acceptance is brought to life in these pages. This is a treasure house of pictures and simple prose.

White, E.B. (1952). *Charlotte's Web*. Harpers Collins Publishers, New York, NY. *Charlotte's Web* is simply one of the best books written for children. The chapter book has many exciting story elements to intrigue children and enough complexity to keep their attention riveted to find out what happens next.

Seuss, Dr. (1990). *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* Random House, New York, NY. This was Dr. Seuss' final published tome. The boy is depicted as one who is on the precipice of beginning a journey. He takes this journey learning more than he expected about the world and his place in it.