



A Plan for the Improvement of Reading Skills and for the Development of Personal Images through Art

Curriculum Unit 79.04.04
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Content Objectives and Strategies

My goal in this unit is to formulate a plan that will improve the reading abilities of seriously deficient sixth grade students who have proceeded thus far in an urban school situation without having achieved much success, and the positive feelings of accomplishment and self-worth that are deemed valuable for further growth. Many of these students have had remedial services since their early years in school and still seem to remain in the position of repeated academic failure. Since so many of these students appear to have untapped potential for success I desire to delve into some of the learning possibilities that might unlock the stagnation I sense in their learning processes. My aim is to organize a plan that will combine art and reading activities in the belief that the learning process is one which relates both hemispheres of the brain in the pursuit of knowledge.

This belief is based upon the research that has been conducted in the field of hemispheric learning. From this research has come the evidence of two brain hemispheres that affect our learning processes, which may alter the ways in which all of us function productively or otherwise. Our knowledge of the workings of the left and right brain hemispheres presents a reasonable case for the relatedness of art and reading in wholistic learning. The left hemisphere of the brain is used mainly for those functions which are verbal, linear and analytic. This is the area of the brain in which many reading and language processes take place. As its complement, the right hemisphere of the brain processes information that is visual-spatial, kinesthetic, and synthetic. ¹ Much of art learning derives from this area of the brain. With a great deal of emphasis in learning to read being directed towards the education of the left hemisphere, with the neglect of the right hemisphere, there is a need to develop activities in learning that combine reading and art. From observation, there are many students with serious reading deficiencies whose strengths appear to be in right hemispheric area. There can be a plan of art and reading activities in which students would have the possibility of making marked progress. Schools of this "Arts-Centered" approach have been in existence over the years with positive results. The most recent and nearby are: John F. Kennedy High School, Bronx, New York and the Mead School for Human Development, Byram, Connecticut.

The purpose and direction of this unit is to develop a reading plan through art that will encourage learning. This rationale is based upon the research that emphasizes combining language and visual learning processes

that encourage growth in both the right and left brain hemispheres.

It is my belief that art education has an integral place in the education of children when it becomes thoughtfully connected to the whole learning process. This view offers the child an opportunity to represent his thoughts and feelings through visual images. Children who have serious reading deficiencies can have success through the visual aspect of learning.

The application of art in the reading process gives the child the opportunity to develop his strengths in both the right and left hemispheres of the brain. In this unit drawing and color will be combined with the reading skills of *spelling*, selecting *details*, finding *main ideas*, ordering the *sequence* of events, and *drawing conclusions*. The goal within this plan is to “unlock” or open the child’s learning process through art so that reading improvement can take place. Thus children with many reading difficulties, who have made little progress compared to their learning potential, can gain confidence and feel successful. To insure that this process takes place the individual child’s developmental level needs to be known so that we can be aware of his/her stage of development. Once we know this level, the teacher can not only be sensitive to the child’s developmental level, but can know at what place in development the child has become “locked in”. The term “locked in” is used here to mean that the child’s growth is not open and progressing, but has become rigid and closed. Art can be the means by which growth may occur in reading.

A valuable tool in assessing the child’s developmental level in reading would be to be aware of the child’s developmental level in art. This can be observed through his/her drawings. For our purposes it is helpful to be knowledgeable of these stages of artistic development, and at the same time to be aware of the fact that these stages or levels of development are not to be followed rigidly. They may serve to help us design better learning programs for children. A child’s drawings may provide us with clues as to what his developmental level is in learning as a whole. Within a classroom of children there may be evidence of the wide range of visual development that correlates with the children’s learning development. In order to make this concept clearer we will include the developmental levels in art that can be observed in children. The examples used will be found in the work of Victor Lowenfeld and Rhoda Kellogg. This does not contain the total of research in children’s art development, but may be helpful in understanding the use of art in a reading program.

Stages or Levels of Development in Children’s Art

I. Scribbling Stage (2-4 years)

Child is exploring body control. Hand movements are evident in three sequential levels of scribbling.

1. *Uncontrolled scribbling.*
2. *Controlled scribbling— horizontal and circular scribbles that can be further analyzed into twenty basic scribbles.*
3. *Naming of scribbling—About the ages of 3 and 4 shapes or configurations become evident. The shapes appear circular or else cruciform, The child at this time begins to name his scribbles. Rhoda Kellogg would call these configuration design aggregates. ²*

II. Pre-Schematic or Pictorial Stage (4-7 years)

The child is developing his “schema”—visual images that he/she will use to represent people, things, etc. For example, the child will use only those parts of the human body that he/she is actively aware of. The more detail he/she adds is dependent upon his mental growth and the type of stimulation he receives from his environment.

Spatial concepts—the ways a child uses space in his drawing— become significant. Initially things float in a two-dimensional space. When a child proceeds to use a baseline in his drawing and places things on that line, it appears that the child is ready to learn to read. The child has moved into a three-dimensional reality. This is a particularly crucial place in development, since learning to read necessitates being able to move beyond the ego-centric stage toward the outer world beyond the self, which can be called becoming socio-centric. Psychologically, this is the place in development where the child becomes a separate and distinct individual from his parent/s. He/she is then able to grow towards relating to other children and adults in his/her life.

III. Schematic or the Achievement of a Form Concept Stage (7-9 years)

The child will further develop his schema—visual images by giving the human figure more details, will show greater action, and will relate to other objects in drawing. The child further develops his/her sense of space by trying to relate three-dimensional objects to a two-dimensional surface (paper). There are three common portrayals of space at this stage:

1. *X-ray*— Both the inside and the outside of an object is shown.
2. *Foldover*— If you were to fold the child’s drawing up, both sides of the drawing would look as if they were standing up. The objects are drawn perpendicular to the base line. The child is the center of his/her drawing. He/she will turn the drawing (paper) around or move himself/herself around the paper.
3. *Conceptualizing*— The child attempts to show two different planes in the same drawing. One plane can be the base line which is horizontal. The other plane is a growing attempt at depth which may portray itself as a curved plane. The child is not able yet to establish a horizontal and vertical frame of reference.

IV. Gang Age Stage (9-11 years)

This stage is referred to as the period of *dawning realism* . The child continues to develop the human form with an emphasis on the difference between boys and girls—their clothing, hair styles, etc. The child’s understanding of three-dimensional space will evidence itself through: *overlapping* , discovering planes in space and filling in space between baselines. At this point it will be useful to discuss the child’s use of color, because the reading activities that will follow are dependent upon the understanding that color at this developmental stage is used by the child in an emotional and personal manner. Technical color theories have no application at this level. Color is experienced by the child at this level in a very subjective and intuitive way. ³

In summary, the learning stages of art development shown here correlate with Piaget’s stages of development

known as the sensorimotor period, the preoperational period, and the concrete operations period. A child's visual images are closely related to his intellectual growth. ⁴The image or drawing can be a means of encouraging the growth of reading skills in the child with serious deficiencies as long as we remain aware of the child's developmental level, which may or may not relate to his chronological age.

Many of the presently published reading materials utilized with children who have serious reading problems are known as the "high interest, low vocabulary" type. The disadvantage of some of this material is that it necessitates a relatively stable emotional maturity in the child and assumes him/her to have a wide variety of experience. The selection of suitable reading material requires stories that seek to develop the child's personality at his/her emotional level, that integrate the use of the child's imagination with the growth of his/her intellectual abilities, that recognize the child's abilities and hopes, and that result in a problem being resolved. Reading materials can and should contain meaning for the child at his/her developmental level by presenting him/her with stories that assure him/her that a child's circumstances and difficulties are not only understood, but that these problems can be resolved, bringing with it growing confidence and a hope for the future. If the child's inner life can be developed constructively, his/her ability to deal with the outer world in our complex and often perplexing contemporary society will be accomplished from a more secure foundation.

I have selected the fairy tale as the reading material, because it includes many of the above qualifications. Fairy tales contain vast sources of satisfaction for children since they develop the child's personality at their particular stage of development; thus they provide a source of learning about the inner problems of being a child—problems which are always resolved at the story's end. For centuries the fairy tale has endured and been developed across cultures throughout the world with similar and unifying messages through an oral tradition.

For a long time, the prevailing theories of child development declared fairy tales to be inappropriate for children. Many of the stories, it was felt, contained material—troubles, anxieties and violent fantasies—that a child should be protected from.

In opposition to this view of child-rearing, contemporary psychological thinking holds that our unconscious life is extremely important to the development of our personalities. The unconscious contains the struggles of our feelings, which can at times be negative and angry. The fairy tale can offer an acceptable situation in which to deal with these negative feelings by confronting the child with a problem to be resolved. The realities of life are not all good and pleasant for any of us, especially the child who knows that he/she is not all good. The fairy tale not only presents good and evil, but incorporates other of life's conflicts such as sibling rivalry, ambivalent feelings towards parents, sexual development, and gaining autonomy from one's parents. The many changing forms of the contemporary family and community life, and their concomitant feelings of isolation, can be observed in the fairy tale through development of the hero. The hero in the fairy tale endures many tests and troubles before finally gaining success. The reward is always achieved. The hero usually develops an interpersonal relationship which is necessary for achieving autonomy from one's parents. In the listening to and/or reading of the fairy tales the child will choose his/her own meaning as he/she needs to. The adult does not need to interpret the story for the child, since each child develops his/her own personality depending upon what he/she is ready to accept from the story. ⁵

The fairy tales selected for this plan contain the elements discussed above, with the aim being that the stories will give the child with serious reading deficiencies the opportunity to grow in his/her personal development, utilizing his strengths toward reading improvement through art. The art activities will become part of each reading skill developed for each fairy tale. The drawing of personal images in color will utilize basic art

materials that are readily available to the teacher. They are paper, crayons, colored pencils and washable markers. Drawing is the child's most direct and personal way of presenting his personal images. It is also the child's most common and familiar method of image-making.

The four tales chosen as the reading material are:

Grimm's Fairy Tales

1. *The Three Feathers*
2. *The Juniper Tree*
3. *The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear*
4. *Fitcher's Feathered Bird*

These four tales have been selected since they were favorably accepted by a group of sixth graders with reading problems in a remedial situation. Although chronologically sixth graders, this group of students was functioning in reading at a second/third grade level. Development in their art work ranged from about the level of a four year old to above the level of a twelve year old child.

Less commonly known tales, such as the four chosen here, apply to the previously discussed objectives concerning the value of the fairy tale.

1. *The Three Feathers* is a tale in which the hero is one of three brothers who is considered to be a hopeless simpleton. In spite of his position, the simpleton is victorious in the end; he is able to complete the tasks that the three brothers are given. Three feathers are thrown into the air by the brothers' father, who is an old king. Each brother follows the direction of the feather in order to find (1) a carpet, (2) a ring and (3) a beautiful woman. Only the simpleton brother is able to succeed at the tasks and gain the position of king. Because nothing is expected of the hero, he uses his natural abilities, rather than trying to be clever like his brothers. The hero becomes someone for the child to identify with when he becomes superior. Often a child may feel stupid in the real world. If the feeling is reinforced in his life, it may result in his becoming 'stupid' because he believes it. In this tale the so-called simpleton becomes a figure for the child to struggle along with until the hero realizes his potential. He is not so stupid after all. His inner wisdom even causes him to be respected by his clever brothers. ⁶

2. *The Juniper Tree* is a story that deals violently with a family situation. A husband and wife have a son after many years of marriage.—Before the wife dies she asks to be buried under the juniper tree in front of their house. Sometime later the husband remarries and with his new wife has a daughter. The stepmother torments the boy until she tricks him into being decapitated by the lid of a chest full of apples. The stepmother sits the dead boy in a chair with a cloth holding his head in place, with an apple in his lap. The daughter enters the house and is told by her mother to talk to the boy. If he doesn't answer, the girl is to punch him in his head. Thus his head is knocked off and the girl feels she is to blame for this horrible act. With the girl in tears the stepmother proceeds to make a stew for supper _ from the boy's body. Father comes home to supper to be told by the stepmother that the boy has left home. As was the custom long ago, the bones were thrown under the table. The girl gathers up the bones in her best scarf and proceeds to bury the bones of her stepbrother under the juniper tree. Magically the spirit of her brother takes the form of a beautiful bird which/who will see that justice is done. The hero boy in the form of a bird sings a song repeated numerous times, which tells what

harm was done to him. The bird sings for three people in requesting three gifts: (1) a golden chain, (2) a pair of red shoes and (3) a millstone, and returns to his home. Dramatically the story ends with father receiving the golden chain, stepsister getting the pair of red shoes and stepmother getting her due by being crushed with the millstone. To resolve the tale, brother returns to his human form and life proceeds happily. Beneath the violent occurrences in this tale are found two psychological conflicts to be resolved, i.e. the ambivalent feelings toward the parent and the Oedipal conflict. So typical of the fairy tale is the appearance of two mothers, the good mother who dies and the stepmother who represents evil. The presence of these two mothers permits the child to be angry at the stepmother without guilt. This means that the child can be angry with his own mother and at the same time protect himself from his feelings of abandonment. Thus he/she can safely handle any ambivalent feelings toward the person who is of prime importance to the child. ⁷ The Oedipal conflict is also apparent when the girl is used by her mother, who attempts to make the girl feel guilty for her stepbrother's death. From the boy's point of view, he was abused and killed by his stepmother, but becomes victorious in life after destroying the evil stepmother. The stepmother's lack of control brought about her own destruction.

3. The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear relates the task of feeling and overcoming fear. A father has two sons, The elder is successful and approved of; the younger son is unsuccessful. The younger son is sent into the world to learn how to become something with his most important goal—to be able to feel fear. The boy stays with a sexton and his wife and is given the job of ringing the bell in the church tower at night. The sexton, unknown to the boy, disguises himself as a ghost in order to scare the boy. The boy, being unable to express fear, shoves the disguised sexton down the stairs, breaking his leg. The sexton's wife is very upset and throws the boy out. The boy continues and meets a man who promises to show him fear. The boy must sit all night under a gallows from which are swinging seven dead people. The night is cold, so the boy builds a fire to keep warm. He brings down the seven bodies from the gallows to keep them warm. The boy claims they are stupid; they won't talk, and they let their clothes catch fire. He proceeds to hang the dead people back up on the gallows. Along comes another man to challenge the boy's inability to feel fear. The boy is told that if he can watch for three nights in an enchanted castle, which is guarded by evil spirits, he will get to marry the king's beautiful daughter. The boy chooses three things to bring with him: a fire, a lathe, and a bench with a vise and a whittling knife. During the three nights that pass, the boy is challenged by ferocious cats and dogs, a bed that rides throughout the castle, dead men divided in half, and a bowling set of skulls and bones. On the third night he is presented with a dead body in a coffin. A giant old man with a long white beard appears and dares the boy to a test of strength. The boy fools the man by catching his beard in the anvil with his ax. His reward is a chest of gold. The following morning the king keeps his promise by giving his daughter in marriage to the boy. Still he can not feel fear. The boy's wife resolves the problem by pouring a bucket full of cold water and minnows on him. Finally, he feels fear. This tale emphasizes the need to gain independence from one's parents and the repression of sexual feelings. The child hearing the story may deal with his sexual fears or not. Rather he/she may deal with fear as the worries or anxieties of a child. ⁸

4. Fitcher's Feathered B_ is a story that deals with female sexual growth. A sorcerer, disguised as a poor man, takes three daughters, one by one, to his home in the forest. Each daughter is given two tests to accomplish while he is gone away. The girls may go anywhere in the house except one forbidden room. The sorcerer gives each girl the key to the forbidden room along with an egg which they must carefully guard. The two eldest girls fail the test. Curiosity overcomes them to open the forbidden room. Inside are the bloody bodies of dead people who have been hacked with an ax. The egg which the first two girls carry rolls into the room to become covered with blood that can not be removed. Only the youngest daughter is able to outsmart the sorcerer. She puts her egg in a safe place, goes to the forbidden room and reassembles the pieces of her sisters' bodies who

have been killed by the sorcerer for disobeying his orders. The sisters come back to life and are hidden in another room. The sorcerer comes home and believes that the youngest daughter has been faithful to his wishes. She will be his bride. Continuing to fool the sorcerer, the youngest daughter tells him that he must bring a basket full of gold to her parents. The two elder sisters are hidden in the basket, and proceed to force the sorcerer to exhaust himself by not resting along the way with his heavy load. Meanwhile the youngest daughter has glued feathers all over her body to make the sorcerer believe she is a bird. So that the sorcerer and his friends will come into the house, the feathered sister places a flower-decorated skull in the window. With perfect timing the girls' family arrives, locks the doors with the sorcerer and his friends inside, and burns the house and all inside. During the time in which a child's sexuality is awakening into its more overt adolescent stages, this tale can be appropriate, since beneath the gore are ideas about sexual curiosity, temptation and sexual roles. ⁹ Aside from the sexual nature of the story, which some children might find difficult to deal with, is the more approachable theme of the good and evil ways of handling curiosity; the evil sorcerer exploits curiosity to destroy his victims, while the inherently good sisters use their curiosity to seek fulfillment and destroy the destroyer.

The four Grimm's Fairy Tales discussed above would be read aloud by the teacher as an oral introduction to each story. This method would reaffirm the oral tradition of the fairy tale along with giving the child the pleasure of using his imagination to listen to and picture the events of the story. A suggested oral discussion would follow) guaranteeing the adult's active involvement in telling the story and affirming the need for a shared experience with the teacher. No pictures or illustrations would accompany the oral presentation of the stories since they may divert the child's attention and interfere with the images that flow in the mind as the story is being told. ¹⁰

A list of ten to twenty words selected by the students and/or the teacher would be incorporated into a spelling lesson. These words would be of a high emotional impact and would adapt themselves to a suitable reading objective for the level of the students, which in my situation would be the second/third grade reading level. Some suggested examples of words from Fitcher's Feathered Bird would be: sorcerer, forbid, hacked, horrified, hugged, gleaming, ax and disguised. The use of art through color and drawing will be utilized. Since color has such a highly personal and emotional meaning—for each of us, the students would be asked to write or draw each word in color using markers, pencils or crayons. The color(s)—or lack of them—should be freely chosen. The purpose of emphasizing the use of color is derived from the evidence related in the Luscher Color Test, which utilizes color(s) to determine an individual's personality or emotional condition. There appears to be evidence that color(s) have a direct effect on body chemistry, with the result that specific color(s) can assess an individual's anxieties. ¹¹ From observation in a remedial situation this past year in the use of color in spelling, students who participated did make progress in their spelling abilities. Color seemed to cause an emotional release. Some students resisted the use of color when applied to the practice writing of words. Others who became involved in using color in their practice writing of words had greater success in spelling words correctly. This use of color as an emotional release in the learning process would suggest further research. The research sources available in this area of color psychology applied to learning are limited.

Each word in the spelling list, being one that possesses high emotional impact, can be portrayed in a visual image through drawing. An example would be the word sorcerer from Fitcher's Feathered Bird. We can think of the many "pictures" that would come to mind. Each child's drawing of his/her image would be accepted at his/her developmental level without imposing adult values. Then we can proceed to develop a sentence in writing that describes or explains each drawing. Praise and encouragement should be given for all efforts. As confidence increases the demand for more complex sentence formations can be made. Story context and dictionary usage can be helpful when a child has difficulty with definition or sentence formation. At times a

word may need to be utilized in an oral sentence to assist in forming a visual image.

Reading comprehension, being the ability to understand and communicate the levels of meaning in written material, is a necessary skill for the child, both as a thinker and a future contributing member of society. Comprehension skills require the following abilities:

1. The ability to decode the written word.
- 2 The ability to concentrate.
3. The ability to know word meaning(s).
4. The ability to relate experience(s) to the material.
5. The ability to think at his developmental level.
6. The ability to have the belief (self-image) that one is capable of understanding. ¹²

Comprehension tasks will be developed through art connecting writing and the drawing of personal images. The cognitive skills of selecting details, finding main ideas, ordering the sequence of events, and drawing conclusions as cause and effect will be presented in a combined writing and drawing format. Specifically this will include questions that will allow for visual depiction of concepts, and sentence formation. At the factual level the student will initially select details by making lists classifying the characters, places and objects found in each fairy tale. List examples from Fitcher's Feathered Bird with questions that ask who?, what?, and where? This would bring responses such as: sorcerer, three daughters, house in the forest and forbidden room. Drawings of these details would be made with labels in the form of sentences that describe each detail. In order to arrive at the factual main idea of each fairy tale the previously developed lists of details would assist the student in answering the question: What is this story about? The goal here is to incorporate the lists of details in writing sentences that describe the main idea of each story. These two concepts: main idea and details can have an interchangeable order. That is based upon the understanding that individual children may have the strength of thinking analytically or synthetically. They may work best thinking from parts toward the whole and/or thinking of the whole and further separating it into its parts. Flexibility in being aware of individual differences in students is of great importance since developing confidence and the feelings of success are qualities that the child with serious reading deficiencies urgently needs.

The factual skill of ordering the sequence of events in the fairy tale through imagery and sentence formation will then be developed. Sequential ordering lends itself appropriately to the visual image in drawing. From observation, children with serious reading problems have great difficulty in ordering events in the sequence of their happening. This might have some developmental connection to a child's concept of time. Initially, students would select one event or situation of their own choice from the fairy tale to illustrate. Upon the group's completion, the individual drawings would be organized into sequential order as each event occurred in the story. Sentences would then be written, both as a group and individually. To further enhance sequential development each student would be given a piece of three-"frame" drawing paper- or what is known as a "T.V. story pad". Students would be asked to select three events from the fairy tale that would portray the beginning, middle and end of the story. Each of the three drawings would be given a descriptive sentence that explains each picture. Students with the understanding of beginning, middle and end may proceed to a five-

frame “T.V. story pad” in which they are asked to order events as first, second, third, fourth and fifth.

The interpretive comprehension skill of drawing conclusions (cause and effect) will be the next objective. Interpretive ability requires the student to go beyond the factual information of the fairy tale. The student must manipulate the factual information he/she has gained from his/her previous tasks in selecting details, finding the main idea and ordering the sequence. The child has to be able to arrive at interpretations that are not clearly stated in the fairy tale. The goal is to give meaning by asking questions such as: What caused _____?, How do we know that _____?, and Why did _____?

As a culminating activity the students would write their own fairy tale that would aim to solve a problem or achieve a goal selected by the child. The tale would include drawings as personal images and sentence writing that would communicate how the character(s) solved their problem or achieved the stated goal. The purpose is to assist severely deficient readers to organize their perceptions and experiences through visual imagery toward a more successful representation of their thoughts.

A child’s drawing is a pictorial device that can represent reality vicariously and economically, and thus reflect his thinking. The child with inadequate language is deprived of many opportunities to represent his experience. Without language he lacks our major device for constructing models of reality. This alone could account for cognitive deficiency. But if his visuospatial capacities are intact he may be able to construct visual models of reality, and represent his experiences nonverbally by drawing images of them. ¹³

LESSON PLANS

Story 1 The Three Feathers

Procedures

I. Oral Reading/Telling of the tale by the teacher followed by discussion of story between students and teacher.

II. Spelling Activity to select 10-20 selected words of high emotional impact.

Suggested Word List that may be augmented by students:

simple amazed torment delicate
sad impossible trial wisely
clever clumsy clamor
quarreling glittered demanded

Use of color in drawing and sentence writing:

1. Using color(s) (markers, pencils, crayons) of students’ choice draw a picture (image) for each word. Relate word to context in The Three Feathers: e.g. “Once upon a time there was a king who had three sons; two were smart and clever but the third did not talk much, was simple, and they never called him anything but Dumpkin.”

2. Upon completion of drawings each student will develop a sentence for each picture that incorporates the spelling word(s).
3. Draw or write each word in color (markers, pencils, crayons) repeating the word a suitable number of times for visual reinforcement. The word may be repeated, e.g. five times each, depending upon the teacher's objective and students' ability. In addition the use of onomatopoeia (the formation of words in imitation of natural sounds) may offer a creative use of forming the visual image of a word. An example would be the word: clamor. Many words of emotional impact lend themselves to image making: e.g. sad. The visual image of the letters forming tears could be a possibility. Each child's efforts would be encouraged and acceptable at his/her particular level. At no time should the adult attempt to place adult aesthetic values upon the child's drawing. The teacher should encourage understanding among the students of an appreciation for each child's efforts. Negative artistic criticism should not be permitted!

During the spelling activity time can be made for the students' silent and oral reading of the tale. The teacher may orally retell/reread the story to the group, especially if a student is insecure in his/her oral reading ability. Thus, the teacher is recognizing the student's problem and presenting him/her with a positive model.

Comprehension Skills

Selecting Details and finding the Main Idea may be presented analytically or synthetically depending upon the abilities of students. This is explained above in the unit's Content Objectives and Strategies.

III. Selecting Details

1. Have students identify the Characters (Who?), the Places (Where?), and the Things (What?) found in the story *The Three Feathers*. Develop three lists through discussion questions with students that answer the questions: Who?, Where?, and What? Below are three suggested lists from the story *The Three Feathers*.

a. Characters (Who?)

"old, weak" king

two "smart" sons

one "simple" son—Dumpkin

"great fat" toad

little toads

two "peasant" women

one “beautiful” woman

b. Places (directions) (Where?)

kingdom

front of palace

east, west

ground, underground

c. Things (What?)

“beautiful” carpet

feathers

trap door

box

“golden” ring

nails

wagon wheel

carriage—“hollow” carrot

horses—six mice

ring (to jump through)

Following the formation of the above three lists that tell the Characters, the Places, and the Things, have each student select at least one item from each of the three lists. Students will then draw in color a picture (image) for each item. Have students select items that interest them. After completion of the drawings have students write a sentence that describes each drawing. When complete discuss all Detail drawings and sentences with the group.

2. Proceed to a series of questions related to Details that can be answered true or false.

False 1. The old weak king had two sons.

True 2. The youngest son, called Dumpkin, is laughed at by his brothers.

False 3. Dumpkin’s feather flew south.

False 4. The smart sons climbed down the stairs through the trap door.

False 5. The little toads gave Dumpkin the carpet.

True 6. The king was pleased with Dumpkin's carpet.

False 7. The two smart brothers brought the king two beautiful golden rings.

False 8. Dumpkin returned to the king with a clumsy peasant woman.

True 9. The two smart brothers thought that the peasant women would be able to jump through the ring.

True 10. The beautiful woman jumped through the ring, and Dumpkin became the king.

IV. Finding the Main Idea

1. The Main Idea will answer the factual question: What is the story about?

In order for Dumpkin to become king, he must overcome his feeling that he is stupid by finding the most beautiful carpet, the golden ring and a beautiful woman who can jump through a hanging ring.

The Three Feathers contains the fairy tale qualities of:

- a. Presenting the hero with a problem
- b. Giving the hero trials or tasks to accomplish
- c. Presenting the hero with his reward for succeeding in his tasks which resolve the problem

Discuss the above three qualities of a fairy tale with students.

- a. What was Dumpkin's problem?
- b. What three tasks did Dumpkin accomplish?
- c. What was Dumpkin's reward which resolved the problem?

Have students draw three pictures (images) that answer the three questions given above.

When the three drawings are complete students will write a sentence for each picture. The three sentences will tell the Main Idea.

V. Sequence: ordering events in the story.

1. Students would select one event or situation from The Three Feathers to illustrate.
2. Upon completion the drawings would be organized by the group into the sequential order in which they occur in the tale. Sentences would be written as a group (board or chart) that depict

the order of events in the fairy tale. Questions to be asked would be:

- a. What happened at the beginning of the story?
- b. What happened at the middle of the story?
- c. What happened at the end of the story?

3. Proceed by giving each student a page of three-“frame” paper in the style of a “T.V. story pad.” (This can simply be prepared by drawing three numbered boxes on a spirit master.) Each student would draw his own image of the (1) beginning, (2) middle and (3) ending events of The Three Feathers. Student would give each picture a sentence related to the drawing.

4. Additional sequence story “frames” could be made if suitable. As an example, a five-“frame” paper can be given to students on which they would draw and write sentences for five events from the story in the order that they occur.

VI. Draw Conclusions

1. The skill of being able to Draw Conclusions will ask the student to interpret factual information that he has acquired from the preceding skills and go beyond the information given in the story to answer the following questions:

- a. What do you think caused Dumpkin to be able to win out over his “smart” brothers?
- b. How do you think that being called “stupid”, like Dumpkin, didn’t stop him from being a wise king?

All of the stories will follow similar skills development. In order to avoid the redundancy of explanations, the plans for the remaining fairy tales will include the pertinent information that would be convenient for a teacher’s use. Refer to the above lesson plans for The Three Feathers when additional information may be helpful.

Story 2. The Juniper Tree

Procedures

I. Oral Reading/Telling of the tale by the teacher.

II. Spelling Activity

Suggested Word List

cry snatched horror trembling

cried hatred hack present
evil crunch stew wonderful
push squashed bones
punch terror butchered

1. Use color(s) to draw a picture (image) for each word. Relate word(s) to context of story: ea. "But Ann Marie stood by and cried and cried and the tears fell in the pot so that it didn't need any salt."
2. Develop a sentence for each picture that incorporates the spelling word(s).
3. Draw or write each word in color. Refer to The Three Feathers Spelling Activity #3 for further development.

Students' silent and oral reading of The Juniper Tree: Since this is a long story for students with severe reading problems, it may be advisable to separate the tale into sections for reading.

Comprehension Skills

III. Selecting Details

1. Have students identify the Characters (Who?), the Places (Where?), and the Things (What?) found in the story The Juniper Tree. Develop three lists through discussion questions that answer the questions: Who?, Where?, and What? Below are three suggested lists from the story The Juniper Tree.

a. Characters (Who?)

"rich" man—father

first wife

second wife—stepmother

son—bird

daughter—Ann Marie

goldsmith

cobbler and his wife

millers' men

b. Places (Where?)

family's house

yard

kitchen

goldsmith's house

workshop

cobbler's shop

mill

c. Things (What?)

juniper tree

apple(s)

chest

wardrobe

chest of drawers

chair

stew

scarf

golden chain

pair of red shoes

millstone

Following the formation of the above three lists that tell the Characters, the Places, and the Things, have each student select at one item from each of the three lists. Students will then draw in color a picture (image) for each item. Have students select items that interest them. After completion of the drawings have students write a sentence that describes each drawing. When complete discuss all Detail drawings and sentences with the group.

2. Questions related to Details that can be answered true or false.

- True 1. The Mother of the boy had died, and was buried under the juniper tree.
- True 2. Ann Marie was the daughter of the second wife.
- False 3. The second wife loved the little boy.
- False 4. The boy was killed by Ann Marie.
- True 5. The stepmother tried to blame Ann Marie for the boy's death.
- False 6. Supper was a chicken dinner.
- True 7. Ann Marie tied up her brother's bones in her best silk scarf.
- True 8. The beautiful bird sang for a goldsmith, a cobbler and twenty miller's men.
- False 9. Ann Marie was given a golden chain by the bird.
- True 10. The bird killed the stepmother, and the little brother came back to life.

IV. Finding the Main Idea

1. The Main Idea will answer the factual question: What is the story about?

The little boy has been killed by his stepmother. In order to come back to life and punish his stepmother, he becomes a beautiful bird that sings in return for three presents: a golden chain, a pair of red shoes and a millstone. The little boy (bird) returns to a happy life after he kills his stepmother with a millstone.

The Juniper Tree contains the fairy tale qualities of:

- a. Presenting the hero with a problem
- b. Giving the hero trials or tasks to accomplish
- c. Presenting the hero with his reward for succeeding in his tasks which resolve the problem

Discuss the above three qualities of a fairy tale with students.

- a. What was the little boy's problem?
- b. What three presents did the little boy get while he was a bird?
- c. What was the little boy's reward that resolved his problem?

Have the students draw three pictures (images) that answer the three questions given below.

When the three drawings are complete students will write a sentence for each picture. The three sentences will tell the Main Idea.

V. Sequence: ordering events in the story.

1. Each student will select one event or situation from The Juniper Tree to illustrate.
2. Drawings will be organized by the group into the sequence in which they occur in the story. Write sentences as a group (board or chart) that show sequential order. Refer to the three

suggested questions in plans for The Three Feathers: Sequence #2 a., b., c.

3. Develop three “frame” drawings with sentences. Refer to Sequence #3 in plans for The Three Feathers.

4. Five “frame” drawings with sentences: Refer to Sequence #4 in plans for The Three Feathers.

VI. Draw Conclusions

1. Refer to Draw Conclusions: #1 in plans for The Three Feathers.

Questions (Interpretive)

a. Why do you think the little boy was changed into a bird instead of a dog or a fish or a snake?

b. Why do you think the little boy never told his father about how mean his stepmother was?

Story 3 The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear

Procedures

I. Oral Reading/Telling of the tale by the teacher. Discussion.

II. Spelling Activity

Suggested Word List

stupid secretly motionless ashamed
eerie freezing rascal gallows
shivers enchanted whimpering horrible
trouble ferocious screaming squirmed

1. Use color(s) to draw a picture (image) for each word. Relate word(s) to story context: e.g. “ I took him for some rascal and pushed him downstairs.”

2. Develop a sentence for each picture that incorporates the spelling word(s).

3. Draw or write each word in color. Refer to The Three Feathers Spelling Activity #3 for further development.

Students’ silent and oral reading of The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear.

Comprehension Skills

III. Selecting Details

1. Have students identify the Characters (Who?), the Places (Where?), and the Things (What?) found in the story The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear. Develop three lists through discussion questions with students that answer the questions: Who?, Where?, and What? Below are three suggested lists from The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear.

a. Characters (Who?)

father innkeeper's wife
"clever" son king
"stupid" son cats
sexton (ghost) grisly man
sexton's wife six tall men
man (cousin) dead man in coffin
dead men big man with beard
wagoner (queen) king's daughter
innkeeper

b. Places (Where?)

boy's house
sexton's house
church tower
highway
place of the gallows
inn
enchanted castle

c. Things (What?)

bell playing cards
bell rope chains
louvers bed
fifty thalers (old money) covers
tree pillows
gallows ninepins(nine dead men's bones
treasure (gold) and two skulls)
fire coffin
lathe ax
bench anvil
vise iron bar
whittling knife bucket

minnows

Following the formation of the above three lists that tell the Characters, the Places, and the Things, have each student select at least one item from each of the three lists. Students will then draw in color a picture (image) for each item. Have students select items that interest them. After completion of the drawings have students write a sentence that describes each drawing. When complete discuss all Detail drawings and sentences with the group.

2. Questions related to Details that can be answered true or false:

True 1. The so-called “stupid” son doesn’t know how to be afraid at home.

False 2. The “clever” son does not think his brother is “stupid”.

False 3. The “stupid” son is scared when he sees the ghost in the bell tower.

True 4. The “stupid” son meets a man and a wagoner along the highway.

False 5. The “stupid” son is frightened by the dead men hanging from the gallows.

True 6. The king promises the “stupid” son the treasure and marriage to his daughter if he can stay three nights in the castle.

False 7. The ferocious cats play cards with the “stupid” son.

False 8. Only half a man fell down the castle chimney.

True 9. The “stupid” son brings the dead man in the coffin back to life by warming him up.

True 10. Only the king’s daughter is able to make the “stupid” son feel afraid.

IV. Finding the Main Idea

1. The Main Idea will answer the factual question: What is the story about?

A father has two sons, one of whom is known as “stupid” because he can not feel fear. He is sent into the world to find fear through spending the night with dead men on a gallows, confronting a ghost in a bell tower and spending three nights in an enchanted castle where he is challenged by many seemingly frightening ordeals. It is only at the end of the story, after he has married the king’s daughter, that he comes to know what fear is. She pours a bucket of cold water and minnows on him.

The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear contains the fairy tale qualities of:

a. Presenting the hero with a problem

b. Giving the hero trials or tasks to accomplish

c. Presenting the hero with his reward for succeeding in his tasks which resolve the problem?

Discuss the above three qualities of a fairy tale with students.

a. What was the boy’s problem?

b. What were the boy’s tasks to accomplish?

c. What is the boy’s reward for succeeding in his tasks which resolve his problem?

Have the students draw three pictures (images) that answer the three questions given above.

When the three drawings are complete students will write a sentence for each picture. The three sentences will tell the Main Idea.

V. Sequence: ordering events in the story.

1. Each student will select one event of situation from The Story of One Who Set Out to Study Fear to illustrate.
2. Refer to The Three Feathers: Sequence #2 a., b., c
3. Three-"frame" drawings with sentences: Refer to The Three Feathers: Sequence #3.
4. Five-"frame" drawings with sentences: Refer to The Three Feathers: Sequence #4.

VI. Draw Conclusions

1. Refer to Draw Conclusions: #1 in plans for The Three Feathers.

Questions (Interpretive)

- a. Why do you think the so called "stupid" boy is sent out to study fear, while his older "clever" brother stayed at home?
- b. Why do you think the queen, who becomes the "stupid" boy's wife, is angry with her husband's not being able to feel fear?

Story 4. Fitcher's Feathered Bird

Procedures

I. Oral Reading/Telling of the tale by the teacher.

Discussion

II. Spelling Activity

Suggested Word List

sorcerer hacked horrified weird
disguised gleaming curiosity wandering
forbid ax hugged escape

1. Use color(s) to draw a picture (image) for each word. Relate word(s) to story context: e.g. ".....here are the keys of the house, you may go anywhere and look at everything, but there is one room, which is opened with this little key here, that I forbid you under penalty of death."
2. Develop a sentence for each picture that incorporates the spelling words.
3. Draw or write each word in color. Refer to The Three Feathers: Spelling Activity #3 for further

development.

Students' silent and oral reading of Fitcher's Feathered Bird.

Comprehension Skills

III. Selecting Details

1. Have students identify the Characters (Who?), the Places (Where?), and the Things (What?) found in the story Fitcher's Feathered Bird. Develop three lists through discussion questions that answer the questions: Who?, Where?, and What? Below are three suggested lists from the story Fitcher's Feathered Bird.

a. Characters (Who?)

sorcerer (beggar)

oldest girl

second girl

third girl

brothers and relatives of the three girls

sorcerer's friends

b. Places (Where?)

home of three girls

sorcerer's house in dark forest

forbidden room

the way (road) between girls' home and sorcerer's house

c. Things (What?)

basket

key(s)

egg

basin (sink)

butcher's block

ax

gold

skull with jewels and flowers

barrel of honey

featherbed

Following the formation of the above three lists that tell the Characters, the Places, and the Things, have each student select at least one item from each of the three lists. Students will then draw in color a picture (image) for each item. Have students select items that interest them. After completion of the drawings have students write a sentence that describes each drawing. When complete discuss all Detail drawings and sentences with the group.

2. Questions related to Details that can be answered true or false.

True 1. The sorcerer disguises himself as a beggar when he steals girls.

False 2. The sorcerer lives in a city.

False 3. The oldest daughter obeys the sorcerer's directions.

False 4. The girls may look at every room in the sorcerer's house.

True 5. The forbidden room was full of dead people.

False 6. The second daughter does not unlock the forbidden room.

True 7. The third daughter hides the egg.

True 8. The two dead sisters are brought back to life.

True 9. The third daughter fools the sorcerer by covering herself with honey and feathers so that she will look like a bird.

True 10. The sorcerer and his friends are burned to death.

IV. Finding the Main Idea

1. The Main Idea will answer the factual question: What is the story about?

A man has three beautiful daughters that are taken away one by one by a sorcerer disguised as a poor sick beggar. Each daughter is put through two tests: (1) they can not enter a forbidden room, and (2) they must take care of an egg. The first two daughters fail the tests through curiosity, and are killed by the sorcerer who throws their bodies into the forbidden room. The third daughter outsmarts the sorcerer. She hides the eggs, enters the forbidden room, brings her sisters' bodies back to life and hides them. The sorcerer returns to believe that the third daughter has passed the tests and wants her to marry him. She isn't going to marry him, but manages to fool the sorcerer by telling him that he must give some gold to her father. She hides her two sisters with the gold in a basket and the sorcerer proceeds on his way with his heavy load. The girl disguises herself as a bird and welcomes the sorcerer and his friends to the wedding. When the sorcerer and his friends are all in the house the girls and their family set the house on fire, killing the sorcerer and his friends.

Fitcher's Feathered Bird contains the fairy tale qualities of:

- a. Presenting the heroine with a problem
- b. Giving the heroine trials or tasks to accomplish
- c. Presenting the heroine with her reward for succeeding in her tasks which resolve the problem

Discuss the above three qualities of a fairy tale with students.

- a. What was the youngest (third) daughter's problem?
- b. What were the youngest daughter's tasks to accomplish?
- c. What is the youngest daughter's reward for succeeding at her tasks which resolve her problem?

Have students draw three pictures (images) that answer the three questions given above.

When the three drawings are complete students will write a sentence for each picture. The three sentences will tell the Main Idea.

V. Sequence: ordering events in the story

1. Each student will select one event or situation from Fitcher's Feathered Bird to illustrate.
2. Refer to The Three Feathers: Sequence #2 a., b., c.
3. Three-"frame" drawings with sentences: Refer to The Three Feathers: Sequence #3.
4. Five-"frame" drawings with sentences: Refer to The Three Feathers: Sequence #4.

VI. Draw Conclusions

1. Refer to Draw Conclusions: #1 in plans for The Three Feathers.

Questions (Interpretive)

- a. Why do you think the youngest (third) girl was the one who fooled the sorcerer rather than her two older sisters?
- b. What do you think caused the sorcerer to be so cruel and mean?

Final Project

Students will write and illustrate their own original fairy tale that will require:

1. A hero/heroine that is posed with a problem to solve.

2. The hero/heroine will have from one to three tasks or trials to accomplish.
3. The hero/heroine must resolve the problem by the end of the tale.

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1. Robert Masters, "Creative Arts and Academic Performance" *Dromenon* (February, 1979), page 3.
2. Rhoda Kellogg, *Analyzing Children's Art* (Palo Alto, California, 1969), pp. 52-63.
3. Viktor Lowenfeld, *Creative and Mental Growth* (New York, 1957), pp. 505-506.
4. Irene J. Athey and D.O. Rubadeau, *Educational Implications of Piaget's Theory* (Waltham, 1970), pp. 227-236.
5. Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), pp. 4-19.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 102- 11.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 281.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 300.
10. S.J. Samuels, "Attention Process in Reading: The Effect of Pictures on the Acquisition of Reading Responses." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 58 (December, 1967) pp. 337-342.
11. Max Lüscher, *The Lüscher Color Test*, (New York: 1969), pp. 1-8.
12. Ronald W. Burton, *Tests and Techniques for Aiding Individual Readers*, (Santa Monica, California, 1977) pp. 70-71.
13. Rawley A. Silver, *Developing Cognitive and Creative Skills Through the Arts*. (Baltimore, 1978), p. 10.

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Classroom Materials (Supplementary)

Eye Gate Media

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Middletown, CT 06457

Cassette Library—Vol. 1, Tales and Poetry Grimm's Fairy Tales

LLA 6006 The Frog Prince; The Fisherman and His Wife

LLA 6007 Rumpelstiltskin; The Goose Girl; The Three Sluggards

LLA 6009 The Juniper Tree; The Seven Ravens

LLA 6010 Hansel and Gretel; The Fox and The Horse

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