



From Comics to Classics

Curriculum Unit 86.04.05
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The following curriculum unit is shaped for a seventh grade self-contained special education class. The average reading level of the class is fourth grade with an oral language level of third grade and a written language level of second grade. It is my desire to bring each student to a sixth grade reading level, a sixth grade oral language level and a sixth grade written language level. Overall I would like to achieve my goal of increasing their overall functional level of 30 percent upon the completion of the unit.

“From Comics to Classics” has been designed to include three quarters of an academic year’s work in Reading, Writing, and English. Each component has been designed to be taught separately if that is the desire of the teacher.

There are 3 components to this unit. Each has been planned for a full eight weeks or academic quarter. They are as follows:

Quarter 2—A. Reading the comic classics and written activities

Quarter 3—B. Reading of short stories and written activities.

Quarter 4—C. Writing of the comic strip narrative as the final project for the year.

Introduction

Reading and writing serve a greater purpose in acquiring good grades, good jobs, and are necessary for maintaining competency in the work place and in the community. Thirteen percent of the adults in the United States are illiterate; that is, having little or no education, being unable to read or write and/or showing a lack of familiarity with language and literature or with the fundamentals of a particular field of knowledge. ¹ Still another thirteen percent, as determined by the United States Census Bureau, are identified as functional illiterates, or people who are able to function in society but cannot show a level of competency in Reading, Writing, Language Arts, or Mathematics, and each year these figures increase rather than decrease.

Why is this so? Are we misplacing our priorities? Are our values diminishing? Is respect for the use and

structure of the English language gone? Have we lowered our standards in regards to reading and writing for pleasure? Do we really need to depend on the written word as a source of information and knowledge any longer?

I believe so. If the answer to all of these questions is no, then how is it that the results of proficiency testing completed here in the City of New Haven have listed our children as being below the state average in Reading, Writing, Language Arts and Mathematics?

There has been a continual decline in our students reading ability since 1983. Local performance on these tests range anywhere from 1.2 points to 7 points below the state average.

Many students are easily bored or lose their interest when reading and writing have to play a part in their day. Functional skills, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, are competing with the many visual aids available to children recently, such as movies, television, movie videos and music videos.

How is the educational system to compete with these things that do not require use of any part of the brain's functions other than to merely register the volume level or paint a picture?

How do we compete? We don't. We simply use these sources as our resources, turning our enemies into our allies. Use passive defense to defeat our opponent.

My proposal encompasses increased vocabulary skills, creative thinking, writing development and word usage skills by invoking mediums which are fun and exciting, as well as challenging.

"From Comics to Classics" utilizes comic books ranging from *Superman* to *Ben Hur* to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, developing and molding the child's creative mind.

In order to write well the student must be able to read and to know and identify that there is a direct relationship between the reading and writing processes. Through this comic strip narrative I intend to show the student that what he writes is intended to be read by someone else.

Before one can write well and while learning to write one must care about what is being written. Many students never improve their writing because they do not care enough about what they are writing, nor do they see the relevance to the workplace or within the community to take the time to learn and write correctly. Through "From Comics to Classics" the students will utilize mechanical skills while creating their series to be completed and read.

The reading selections used range from a third grade reading level to a twelfth grade reading level. Although I have focused on the less academically talented student, this unit may be incorporated into any curriculum by appropriating the readings by interest level and ability. The students will direct the unit from there.

In addition to increasing and developing academic skills, as they will be listed in the following pages, a behavioral change will take place. There really will be no need to incorporate a behavioral management system because the students will learn to carry out self-control and discipline themselves.

The students will find that there are no restrictions. Although there are requirements for them to meet in order to be successful, no one is telling them that, "No, you can't do that", "No, don't use that word", "No, that does not belong". They have total freedom where their ideas and creations are concerned. The book that they are creating belongs to them; it is a part of their being and they will protect it, criticize it and try very hard to

perfect it.

I have found that through trial lessons, which I have previously conducted in my classroom, numerous things take place during the writing sessions. The students want to write, they ask for help when they need it and admire their work so much that they opt to work on their writings during free periods.

Once the ideas begin to flow they are hard to stop, and my students have learned to pick up from where they left off the day before and continue with minimal frustration.

Format

Each day will follow roughly the same format. The class will be introduced to the unit. Each segment/component of the unit will be explained and demonstrated prior to beginning. The teacher will arrange his/her schedule so that each student has an opportunity to have a scheduled conference to discuss his/her writings.

The students will earn points for the completion of a comic strip narrative upon which the majority of their final grade is determined.

Each activity begins with a choral reading (or group reading) and/or discussion period of the work which was previously completed or the work that is to begin. The students are then assigned their individual writings and the writing session begins.

Folders

Each student will have a folder in which all work is to be kept. The teacher is responsible for maintaining the folders and adding comments on the students' work and progress.

Grading

All work for the comic strip narrative has been assigned a point value. Upon completion of each segment the student has the opportunity to earn the maximum total of points. Upon completion of the narrative the points are then added together and a letter grade is then determined for the course.

Point Values for the Narrative

Activity	Points
Class development of hero/heroine	25
Class development of hero/heroine's setting	20
Individual development of villain/monster	25
Individual development of special vocabulary and dialogue	20
Development of action	25
Rough draft #1	10
Rough draft #2	10
Final written draft	20
Illustrations	10
Final draft of pictures and story	25
Completed book—from cover to cover	30
	200 total

Letter grade distribution

151-200 = A

131-150 = B

122-130 = C

99-121 = D

0-99 = WELLLL—F

Objectives, Strategies and Lessons

It is my desire that through the curriculum unit “From Comics to Classics” and the various multisensory methods, the functional level of the student will increase by at least 30 percent.

I intend to accomplish all of the following objectives in regards to the student’s competencies. Each objective will appear in sequence with the appropriate strategy and lesson plan.

A. READING THE COMIC CLASSICS AND ACTIVITIES—Quarter Two

Goal: TO INCREASE COMPREHENSION SKILLS

The student will read a series of comic classics and answer comprehension questions, which also encompass answering Who? What? Where? When? and Why? in relation to the story.

My students’ most prominent disability lies in comprehending what they have just read, retaining and recalling the information. They are very visual students and before I can ask them to write a story I must feel confident that they understand what a story consists of.

Therefore, the unit begins as a group activity. The teacher divides the comic book into four reading sections to be read over a course of four days.

In reading Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde for example, there are 81 pages along with discussion questions at the end of the book.

Pages 7-15 in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde introduce Dr. Jekyll in his lab and his inventions. Over a period of 40 minutes the class takes turns reading two pages each. During the reading the teacher should stop and ask questions related directly to the pages read. For example, after reading about what Dr. Jekyll’s newest experiment is, how he discovers it and what the side effects are, I would expect the teacher to ask the group a few questions such as: “What did Dr. Jekyll discover?” “How did he figure out how it works?” “Do you think creating this drug is good?” “Why or why not?” and so on. Do not get the students too far away from the subject because they may have a difficult time getting back on track.

After reading pages 7-15 the class puts the books down and prepares their notebooks for answering the comprehension questions and outlining the first part of the classic. (See following pages for set up)

The questions are very simple and are written out on the blackboard for the students to copy down into their notebooks. Each question is then read aloud by the teacher and answered by the class. As these questions are being answered, the teacher is to write the answer on the board as the students once again copy it down into their notebooks. Stress that the format that you use on the blackboard is the exact format that they are to use in their notebooks. This alleviates any question that the students may have about how to write it down. Upon completion of this session the notebooks are placed inside the folders.

The wording and the questions both increase in difficulty so that the students can identify that some words have more than one meaning in context and that there are various ways to say the same thing. For example: The question 'What does Dr. Jekyll look like?' soon becomes 'Describe Frankenstein from what you have read'.

Each student shall read six comic classics over the course of eight weeks/or one academic quarter. If time allows more will be incorporated into the curriculum. I chose to begin reading *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* because I wanted to capture the interest of my students. Slowly the list leads to books that they would not read on their own.

Reading List for Comic Classics

1. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
2. Frankenstein
3. Tom Sawyer
4. Huckleberry Finn
5. Moby Dick
6. 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
7. The Red Badge of Courage
8. Black Beauty

Format for Outline and Comprehension Questions

(Title of Book) Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde Name _____
Date _____
page numbers _____
Class _____

- Dr. Jekyll
1. Who is Dr. Jekyll?

- Dr. Jekyll is a doctor.
2. Where does he live?
He lives in Soho
 3. What did he invent?
He invented a drug that could change him from good to evil.
 4. Why did he invent this drug?
Because he believed that two people can live inside one body.

Mr. Hyde

1. Who is Mr. Hyde?
Mr. Hyde is the evil side of Dr. Jekyll.
2. Where does he live?
Hyde lives inside Jekyll's body.
3. Is Mr. Hyde ever good?
No, Mr. Hyde is never good.
4. What do you think of Mr. Hyde so far?
I think Mr. Hyde is bad and dangerous. He is going to hurt Dr. Jekyll and other people, I think.

ENGLISH AS A SUB COMPONENT TO READING

Goal: TO INCREASE WORD USAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS

The student will develop and utilize a vocabulary book which includes that vocabulary he does not know how to spell, is foreign to him or misuses in his work.

Phonics and linguistics are two ways of teaching children to read and spell. The two are so often interchanged in every school system, school district, school and classroom. My students spell phonetically. They know that they spell the words wrong because the words do not look right— in steps frustration and the idea that they will never be able to spell. I want to discourage that from happening. I intend to use the rote teaching for most of my vocabulary lessons in conjunction with phonics.

Each week, beginning on Monday and Tuesday, five words are introduced to the students for a total of ten words per week. These words gradually increase in difficulty so that the child can see progress in his ability to learn. The “New Vocabulary” is taken directly from the readings of the classics, and in the future, from the short stories. Once the vocabulary is identified the teacher writes them on the blackboard as the students copy them down into their notebooks.

The first set of exercises that the students complete is to figure out the definition of the words. It is not important that the students know the book meaning. After the class understands what the word means, in relation to their lifestyles, it is time for them to come up with a sentence that explains the word correctly. At this point I found that all of my students were working together rather than working against each other. The teacher writes the class definition on the board and their sentence following. The class is to copy both down exactly as they see it. This will begin to teach them a simple form of organization and outline.

It is the student’s responsibility for homework to write each word and its definition three times and to study and know the definition for a quiz on the following day. This is done for two days, and on the third a set of written exercises is required for the students to complete. The exercises are written on the board and copied into their notebooks. Each exercise is related directly to the vocabulary to increase spelling, defining and utilizing the word correctly. For homework the same night I require my students to study the sentences and the words for a sentence dictation session the next day. This also aids in increasing their understanding of the meaning and use of the word in context.

On day five the students are well prepared to take a spelling test which is dictated by the teacher. The teacher says the word, uses it in the sentence that the class created and then repeats the word a second time. Following this the students write the word on their paper. Do not allow the students to begin to write until the entire sequence has been completed. This session increases their listening and recalling skills.

In the second quarter when the class begins to read the selected short stories the teacher introduces the students to an additional exercise that they are to be responsible for. The students are to locate and identify the vocabulary given in their readings, copy the sentence it is used in and find the “book definition” along with the definition the class came up with. Aside from this ‘dictionary work’ each student is solely responsible for finding and recording ten words that he came across in his readings. These words are determined by asking three questions, “Do I know this word?”, “Do I understand what it means in context?”, “Can I spell it without looking?”. If the answer to any or all of these questions is ‘No’ then the student knows that word is one which belongs in his vocabulary book. This book becomes a source of reference for the future semesters.

LESSON
PLAN 1a English

Day 1

- 1) Introduce new vocabulary #1-5. Teacher writes the words on the board as students copy them into their notebooks.
- 2) Teacher and students define the word and create a sentence using the word correctly.
- 3) Teacher writes the definition following the word and the sentence underneath as the students copy the work into their notebook.

Example: Divide means to separate. I will divide this pizza in half.

HOMEWORK: Students make a copy of the words and definitions to take home. Write each word and definition three times each and study for definition quiz.

Day 2

- 1) Students take a dictated definition quiz.

Teacher says the word, students write the word on their paper and follows it with the definition. Upon completion the class corrects peer's papers together, by switching papers.

- 2) Teacher introduces second half of new vocabulary as in Day 1.

HOMEWORK: Repeat assignment from day one using the new vocabulary.

Day 3

- 1) Students take definition quiz using the vocabulary from Day 2.
- 2) Teacher writes a series of written exercises on the blackboard for the students to do. Students write the exercises in their vocabulary books and complete as per the directions.
 - A. Put all your vocabulary in alphabetical order.
 - B. Unscramble these words to make the vocabulary.
 - C. Fill in the blanks with the right letters.
 - D. Write one of your own sentences for each of the following words.
 - E. Match up the correct definition with the appropriate word. (and vice-versa)

F. Write one vocabulary word which rhymes with each of the words below.

G. Divide these words into syllables then tell how many syllables there are in the word.

H. Tell what word means the same as these words below.

HOMEWORK: Students will study the sentences from 1-10 for a dictated sentence quiz.

Day 4

1) Teacher will dictate the ten sentences to the class twice. The students will then write the sentence on a piece of paper paying special attention to the spelling, capitalization and punctuation.

2) The students will exchange papers and the class will correct.

HOMEWORK: The students will write all ten words five times each and study for the vocabulary test.

Day 5

1) Teacher will dictate to the class the vocabulary. He/She will say the word, use it in a sentence, then repeat the word a second time. The students will spell the word on their paper. Follow the sequence through all ten words.

2) The teacher will assign two students to correct the tests.

Lesson 1b English

Day 1

- 1) Introduce new vocabulary #1-5. Teacher writes the words on the board as students copy them into their notebooks.
 - 2) Teacher and students define word and create a sentence using the word correctly.
 - 3) Teacher writes the word and sentence on the blackboard as the students copy the format down into their notebooks.
 - 4) Teacher instructs students to read short story and upon completion to find the vocabulary in context, noting the page number and the exact form in which it was used.
- HOMEWORK: Same as Lesson Plan 1a.

Day 2 Same as Lesson Plan 1a.

Add step four in the above lesson using the second half of the new vocabulary.

Day 3-5 Same lesson as in Lesson Plan #1a.

B. READING OF SHORT STORIES AND ACTIVITIES—Quarter Three

Goal: TO INCREASE THINKING SKILLS AND RECOLLECTION

The student will read a series of short stories, verbally and manually demonstrating his comprehension of the following parts in relation to the story: the main point, interpretation of characters, description of characters, setting, action, and illustration of events.

The writing component is divided over the last 8 weeks of the academic year. It begins by slowly introducing the student to the reading of short stories. As mentioned before the teacher includes in his/her lessons two additional vocabulary assignments. Using these the student will find himself re-reading the entire story.

The student is given two to three stories per week and a worksheet with questions relating directly to the themes and the five components of the theme. The students are already accustomed to the format for outlining various questions dealing with the story classics from quarter one.

The teacher should purchase or make a task board for this quarter. The board includes 4-4"x6" folder for daily instructions and 4-9"x12" folders for the assignments attached to a piece of sturdy cardboard and securely tacked to the wall. (fig. 1)

Each 4"x6" folder holds the assignments for a given story, the author, name of the anthology, page number, due date and folder corresponding worksheets can be found in. I chose the following list of short stories and divided them so that the students are focused on one component at a time and to assure both of us that they will be competent in the work the future quarters of this unit demand.

Although most of the stories contain all five components they are divided into sections which denote a specific component. For example *TV as a Baby Sitter* explains more of a main point than does *A Hanging* by George Orwell.

Main Point:

Salvation by Langston Hughes

The Name of the Game by Peter Farb

“Christmas Eve” by Dich Gregory

TV as a Baby Sitter by Jerzy Kosinski

Why Jessie hate English by Sloan Wilson

Characters/Interpretation of:

Uncle Kwok by Jade Snow Won

ROOTS by Alex Haley

OLD MOTHER HUBBARD by A.B. Guthrie, Jr.

THE BIRDS by Daphne du Maurier

Action:

A PIG FROM JERSEY by Berton Roueche

The AFRIC AN by Alex Haley

38 WHO SAW MURDER DIDN'T CALL THE POLICE by Martin Gansburg

Setting:

TWO CITY SCHOOLS by Paul Jacobs

TRICKS! TREATS! GANGWAY! by Ray Bradbury

A HANGING by George Orwell

THE KITCHEN by Alfred Kazin

THE CASK OF ARMONTILLADO by Edgar Allan Poe

The teacher is to arrange a scheduled meeting with each student at least twice per week. During such meeting the discussion is centered around the work they have done so far. Together the teacher and student suggest various ways of writing and try new experiments. If the teacher finds that a student is stuck or confused about a certain component of the story he/she may wish to make this student's work more focused and have him spend more time on a particular part than another.

Once the teacher and the student feel a sense of security with each component, themes which encompass all four are assigned and the lessons follow the same format as mentioned earlier.

LESSON PLAN

Day 1

- 1) Introduce the word “characters” to class. Discussion on various characters they know and comparisons.
- 2) Read theme 1 aloud in class. Discuss the characters. Interpret from reading what the characters may do in the “real world”.
- 3) Class outlines descriptions and personalities of characters read. See format from previous section.

Day 2

- 1) Review all of day one.
- 2) Read theme 2 aloud in class. Discuss the characters.
- 3) Individually the students outline descriptions and personalities.
- 4) Class discusses various answers and compares thought.

Day 3

- 1) Review days 1 and 2.
- 2) Class reads themes silently.
- 3) Class outlines the characters’ personalities and descriptions.
- 4) Teacher begins holding conferences with individual students to discuss work.

Day 5-9 Repeat day three, changing and exchanging themes. *Day 10* Brief quiz on characters’ descriptions and interpretations. For main point, setting and action repeat the above lesson plan substituting the appropriate material.

C. WRITING OF THE COMIC STRIP NARRATIVE—Quarter 4

Goal: TO INCREASE AND DEVELOP CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS

The student will prepare a comic strip narrative including the following components: Hero characteristics setting,

Figure 2

HERO

Male _____ Female _____

1. What does hero look like?
 - Color hair
 - Color eyes
 - How tall
 - What sort of build
 - Any unusual marks or physical characteristics
2. What special powers does hero have? Does hero have them all the time? When?
 - A. Physical
 - B. Sensory (eyesight, hearing, touch, taste, smell, E.S.P.)
 - C. Mental
3. What sort of special costume does hero have? Does hero have costume on all the time? When?
4. What special equipment does the hero have? What does the equipment do?
5. Are there any special dangers for the hero? What are they?
6. How did the hero get to be what the hero is? What is the hero's history?
7. Does the hero have a special goal? What is it?
 - Villain characteristics, vocabulary and action.

Now the student has a firm understanding of the parts of a story and how they all have to work together.

Before the class begins working, a discussion about the various comic strips and heroes, past and present, takes place. The teacher begins by introducing the final part of the unit to the class and explaining its sequence and the use of the point system. The first day consists of the class as a unit developing the hero and his characteristics. They decide on the following points: Physical characteristics, special powers, costume, special equipment, dangers to his powers, hero's history, hero's goal/reason for being the hero if any (fig. 2). These characteristics, like the majority of the comic strip information, is recorded and kept inside a notebook especially for the comic strip narrative.

For 20 to 30 minutes the class and teacher work out the various characteristics they would like in a hero. No idea is turned down because the students will then have the sole responsibility to decide what specific parts they want their hero to possess.

The teacher writes the information found on fig. 2 on the board for the students to copy in their books. Once all the options are on the blackboard the students use fig. 2 to decide on their own superhero. They may choose to use all of the ideas or just a selected few. Each hero will be different and this format aids the student in basic organizational skills. It helps them to think of one idea at a time and to make it complete. Once completed I ask the students to draw a rough draft of what the hero will look like. At this point they can see if this is what he really wants.

Setting: Beginning on the second day the class is re-introduced to the setting of the story. Again the teacher writes the information from fig. 3 on the board as the students copy it down into their notebooks. Hold a short discussion on the various options to a setting. This has the advantage of inserting new ideas into the student's mind and he is not so likely to rely on the old ideas or ones that he has used before, or the ideas everyone comes up with. Creating the setting is done individually and then discussed with the teacher prior to saying "I'm done", to be sure that there is no information that is in conflict with another.

Lesson Plan

Setting

Objectives *Students will be introduced to setting—its function and necessity. Where action of comic strip episodes take place.*

Students will analyze and discuss types of settings that exist in comics.

Students will choose and develop settings for their individual comic strip episodes.

Materials *Setting ditto. Comics for visual reference. (?) Chalk.*

Activities

1. 5-10 minutes. You have chosen a hero. You now have to create a world for your hero. You can give him a place to live in, work in, areas to move through and battle villains in. Where do some

of the comic book heroes live?

e.g. Batman—Gotham City

Black Panther—New York City Superman—Metropolis

Flash—Central City

We want to try to create a new and different setting for the hero. New Britain, Pulaski High, Hartford? Or even an imaginary setting (place), you invent a name or place.

2. 10-15 minutes. Divide into groups. Individuals work on settings for their episodes with aid of ditto and teachers.

Follow Through Check on progress in class and work in folders.

More work on setting tomorrow.

Setting

1. Where will your story take place? In a city? New Britain? At Pulaski? What are some other possible settings?
2. Will your hero travel to different places to fight villains? What special dangers will these places have that challenge the hero?
3. Does the hero have a regular job when he's not fighting villains? Where does he work?
4. Will the hero have a hideout or a laboratory?
 - a) Where will it be?
 - b) What will it look like?
 - c) Will there be any equipment there to help fight villains?
5. Does the hero have somewhere to live? A house? Apartment? Mansion?
6. Will the villain lead the hero into traps? What will they look like?
7. Is the hero ever called back to where he came from? Where is this place? What kind of people live there?

(figure 3)

Villain: Over a forty-five minute period of time the students develop their villain. The teacher will discuss the various villains students know and have the students describe them in their own words and terms. The teacher will then show a number of pictures of villains such as Al Capone, Dirty Harry (Clint Eastwood), Bonnie and Clyde and a host of others and have the students try to figure out who they are and describing them before they are told their names.

For the remainder of the period the students again copy from the board the information regarding the description of a villain. (fig. 4) Following the completion of the worksheet the students are to illustrate their villain as they did their hero.

Lesson Plan

Villain

OBJECTIVES: Students will learn the characteristics of a comic strip villain.

Each student will create his or her own villain.

MATERIALS: chalk and blackboard, pictures of villains, ditto.

PROCEDURE:

- * 1) You have already been introduced to two important characteristics of a comic strip. Who can tell me what we've been working on so far?
- * 2) OK now that we've created the good guy, Olympia Man, and each of you have or will create a place for his adventures to take place, we have to create the bad guy.
- * 3) Let's make a list of some of the villains that we know of. How would you describe them?
- 4) Do you know Batman and Robin? Who are some of their enemies? How would you describe Cat Woman? What are some of the things she does?
- 5) I'm going to show a picture of some villains in the movie Lord of the Rings. Have any of you seen the movie? Did you like it? I haven't seen the movie yet but I intend to. (Show picture) How could you describe these pictures of the villains.
- * 6) Did any of you see the movie Star Wars? Who were the villains in that movie? (Show picture) Describe them and some of the things that they do.
- * 7) Group work: 10 to 15 minutes
We're going to break up into small groups again and I want you to work with your group leaders this time to create your own individual villains. These characters can be as wild and imaginative as you want them to be but remember he's going to be fighting our hero Olympia Man and the action will take place in your own individual setting. (ditto)

Follow up *The student will write a short paragraph for homework. This paragraph will describe the student's individual villain. It is to be graded in the following manner:*

Originality 5 points

Sentence Structure 5 points

Characteristics of villain 10 points

VILLAINS

- 1) What evil things does this villain do?
- 2) Why is our hero, Olympia Man, against this villain?
Is this villain trying to kill our hero or is he afraid of him?
- 3) What does this villain look like?
Does he give the appearance of being evil or is he disguised?
- 4) Where does this villain live? (Remember the settings you have created.)
- 5) Will the villain trick our hero? What kind of traps has he set for Olympia Man?
- 6) Does the villain have any friends to help him? What do they look like.

Now that you have created the characteristics for your villain, briefly describe in a short paragraph your villain.

Sounds Into Words: The teacher begins this session with illustrating different sounds by using objects in the classroom. By clapping the hands, thumping the desks and slamming the door have the children try to spell them the way they sound and begin the development of the action vocabulary. As the words are spelled the teacher writes them on the board as the students copy them down into their books.

Lesson Plan—Sounds Into Words

Objectives

Ss will hear sounds and make up words representations of sounds

Ss will see special words peculiar to comics. Ss will contribute words to the class reference list

of words for comics.

Ss will use words from this list in writing his/her own comic.

Ss will learn the use of capital letters to catch a reader's attention.

Materials—chalk, objects in room (door, desk, paper, etc.), newspaper, magazine (comic book)

Activities

1) Illus. different sounds through the use of objects that make different noises.

-How do you think this sound would look if you wanted to write it on paper? Examples put on board.

Thump desk, rip paper, Open Blinds

-What do you think these things would sound like?

Kicking a door in; Breaking a window; Starting a Corvette; A TV under water; A pizza in the face; Lightening

2) Refer to Dr. Campbell's lesson yesterday on Capitals.

-Why do we use them? When? eg. Newspaper front page, comic cover. Why do we want to attract attention?

3) Comics always have special words to represent sounds. These words are always in CAPS. why?

-If you saw CHAWHAM on the page, what might it represent?

-What about SWOK SPLOOSH KAWWHANG

* not conventional words, but they do represent very graphic sounds.

4) Group work—make up own word list in each group; each list will be made part of a whole list for the whole class (might be able to come up with more words if in smaller groups)

Follow through—Collect each group’s list of words and print on ditto for distribution. Each student will illustrate one word for his/her own story at later date.

FUMPPH THUVOOM
KAWHAMP FDAK
KRAK SHKROW
KAWHANNG SSHHRAMM
KRATCH CRUMP
THRAK FWRAK
BOM FAM
KRAKOOM SWOK
SWAK KPOW
FWAM KRAK
FWAP KACHOW
SSHHRACK KABLAMM
SHKAROWM WHABOOM

Action So far most of the work for the comic strip narrative is completed; the hero, the villain, the setting, and the action vocabulary. Now the task of writing is upon us.

The teacher writes the word ACTION in the center of the blackboard and circles it. Ask the class what things come to their heads when they see or hear the word action. As the students begin to tell you what they think of write all the thoughts on the board steaming from the nucleus work, action. Attach the ideas that are somewhat related to each other and continue this until the students run out of ideas or begin repeating themselves (or get silly!). Explain to them that this is a way of starting a story.

The clustering form helps drive out ideas that may be suppressed for one reason or another. Ask the class to look at the cluster they just did, look at and praise the ideas they came up with, ask for ideas that may make a good story. At this point you will notice that eyes will light up with ‘bright ideas’ and they will want to start writing before they forget. Don’t discourage that, but try to make them wait until more ideas are thrown out onto the floor, after all another thought might sound better than the first one. After approximately five to ten minutes, let the class begin writing. Have them use the cluster and the words on the board. They will want to take a peek at their neighbor’s work or ask the teacher for help. Encourage the sharing of ideas to develop excitement in the class. This type of excitement is a positive aspect for the class, it keeps the writing project full of life and enjoyable rather than a chore, and keeps the ideas and thoughts flowing. The actual writing will take an average of seven to ten days.

After completing the first draft, have the students rewrite it skipping every other line on the paper. This will then be handed into the teacher for grammatical editing. Once they have handed in this paper I found it advantageous to have them work on drills in grammar. (see following section) The paper is then returned for rewriting and correcting and again handed in for editing by the teacher. This process is repeated until the paper is virtually error free. When this event takes place the teacher sections the story so the student can begin creating the comic book. The easiest way to do this is to mark off where one idea begins and a second one starts in a red pen or marker like this []. In addition to these corrections and editing the teacher holds conferences with the students individually to clear up any confusions.

ACTION

Objectives

Ss will learn and discuss the function of action in a story.

Ss will determine the action they wish to use for their episode.

Materials *Chalk, magazines.*

Activities

1. So far we have our hero, you have your own villain, setting and action word. What else do we have to decide on? Write action on the board. What does this word mean to you?
2. In every thing we see or read (examples—movies, books, magazines), there is always some kind of action taking place. Why? Use examples of movies or books.
3. In the comics we're writing, using a hero and a villain, what kind of action usually takes place? Why?
4. Clustering
5. Group Work—Using the ditto, students will put together everything they have to make a story.
6. Writing and editing of first draft.
7. Writing and editing of second draft, rewrite first.
8. Division of story into ideas.
9. Teacher conferences.

ACTION

1. What kinds of conflict does the hero and the villain become involved in? (fights, chase scenes, traps, etc.)
2. What has the villain done to cause this conflict? (Example: Has he/she killed, kidnapped, or destroyed someone or something?)
3. How does our hero get himself into this conflict? (Example: Does someone ask the hero for his help?) How does he get himself out of the conflict?
4. Which special powers aid either Olympia Man or the villain in their deeds? Do any of these

powers ever cause problems for them?

5. What other characters are involved in your story (if any) besides the hero and the villain? How do they fit into the action?

Putting it all together:

Materials

15-20 9"x6" paper per student
crayons
3 brass fasteners rulers
magic markers clear contact paper
pencils 3"x5" index cards
pens 1 photo of each student

Cover Page: Have the students decide on a title and the picture for the cover of his book. Once decided have him lightly sketch the information on the cover with a pencil. In the lower right hand corner have the student fill in all the information pertaining to the author and illustrator of the book. Remind the students to give credit where credit is due. For example: photos or pictures drawn by a peer or a parent. Once the information is set into place have they leave behind.

Title Page: The title page is the second page of the book and includes the following information; the title of the book the author, the illustrator the publishing company, (this was decided by the class and was created from the school name, classroom and the year) and the copyright stating permission for any duplicating of the books. The lining up of the words was done with the aid of a teacher or aide. Once the class understood the way it was done they were able to follow through on their own. I also put on the bulletin board my copy of a comic strip narrative so the students had a visual aid to go by in case no one was a round to help them. The work then became very independent and they did not feel as if they were forbidden to work on the book at their leisure.

(figure available in print form)

Dedication Page: This third page of the book is simply dedicated to whomever the child wishes.

(figure available in print form)

The fourth page is blank and the fifth page is the picture page.

Picture Page: This page is divided from corner to corner. The top part is illustrated with a portrait of the hero and the bottom page is of the villain with their respective names on the page in the opposite corners.

(figure available in print form)

The sixth page is blank and the seventh is the first page of the written story.

The Beginning: The pages from the seventh page to the end will vary from child to child. The pages are separated into three sections from top to bottom. The students are to divide the pages by using a ruler and a pencil. The pages should be as even as possible. After the pencil marks are made outline the sections with a

marker or pen erasing all pencil marks that remain visible. I had my class do at least ten pages prior to writing and drawing the story, this way they only have one thing to think about at a time.

The writing of the sections, of the story, is written on the top of each individual part of the page to allow room for the illustration. The writing of the entire story should be done first and then the student can go back and take his time to illustrate it.

This is a difficult part for the students to comprehend at first. There are so many ideas and numerous ways to illustrate one sentence or paragraph. I found it easier on the class if I assisted them page by page. As the teacher I would simply ask "What do you see when you read this?" When they said "I don't know" I would have them read it aloud to me and ask the same question over again. For the most part they wanted to be right and not be laughed at, so to alleviate that I would offer some ridiculous thought and that would get them thinking.

The art work did not have to be original, although I would put a bit of pressure on the child who says he can't draw when he hasn't even tried. There are a number of degrees of illustrations the class can use. For example; photographs, pictures from a magazine or poster, requesting the help of a parent or friend an onward.

Continue with the writing and illustrating process until the story is complete. At the end of the story a single page will denote THE END, followed by a blank page followed by . . .

About the author: On piece of paper have the students fill in the following information:.

I am the author of this book. My name is ____ (name) ____ and I am ____ years old. I was born in ____ (city and state) ____ on ____, 19 ____ . My favorite hobbies are ____, ____, ____, , and ____ . My favorite book that I have read is ____ by ____ (author) ____ .

(student's signature)

After this is completed and corrected the students carefully transfer the information onto a 3"x5" index card in pen. The index card is then glued onto the second to last page of the entire book. Above the information a picture of the author is also glued on the paper. The teacher may wish to take on the responsibility of acquiring the pictures early in the quarter. The final page of the book is blank.

Now the comic strip narrative is complete . . . almost. The final part of the unit is to bind it and preserve it. Laminate each page separately with clear contact paper, do both sides to add body to the pages. If the paper does not have holes punched on the side use a three ring hole puncher. After the holes are set bind all the pages together using three brass fasteners, one in each hole. Binding the book can take the entire class one morning or three forty-five minute periods to complete. This may very well prove to be the most frustrating part of the entire unit, but if done properly it can teach patience, listening skills and improving following directions.

The Comic Strip Narrative is now complete and ready for the final phase of the unit and year . . . Evaluation.

EVALUATION OF COMIC STRIP NARRATIVE

Goal: TO INCREASE CRITICAL WRITING AND READING SKILLS

The student will read and evaluate his peer's writing based on the basic evaluation scale which will include the following components; main point, interpretation and description of characters, action, setting and illustration of events.

Evaluation of a piece of work is a tough process to learn, but children do it all the time and don't even know it. Although sometimes not at all discreet, they do know what they like, what will work and what won't, as well as something that was created in a day as opposed to work which shows that time was spent on it.

There are two steps in the evaluation process prior to writing a critique. One is to read the book for fun and the second is to read the book for information, to find out what it is all about.

Students are introduced to and are required to use the evaluation sheet following these pages. First look at the book and take in his (the author's) illustrations and cover page. Note the colors used, the design of the cover and of the characters. Have the student note two to three flaws and four to five good points. The second step is to read the book a third time and pay attention to the characters, the third is the main point, followed by the setting, to the action, and finally commenting on the overall comic book—neatness, color creativity effort etc.

Upon completion a xeroxed copy of the critique is made, one is handed into the teacher for evaluation and grading of the evaluator and the second is given back to the author anonymous. The anonymity protects the author from any form of prejudice. Conferences are held with both students individually to discuss the critique.

Date: Name of Book:

Name of Author:

Read the book twice before you begin completing this sheet.

B. Answer each question thoroughly.

1. ILLUSTRATIONS—How did they appeal to you?

Note the color, the forms of the heroes.

How are they affecting the book? Note two flaws and four good points about the illustrations.

2. CHARACTERS—How do the characters interact with one another if at all. Are they almost real, life-like? Could they be real? Are they interesting? Funny? Do they remind you of anybody you know? Note two flaws and four good points about the characters.

3. MAIN POINT—Was it clear? Did you understand what the main point was? Did it make sense? Why? What would you add or change? Note three flaws and five good points.

4. SETTING—Can you visualize the setting as you read the book? Did you feel like you were there? Was the setting clear? What would you add, or change? Note two to three flaws and five good points about the setting.

5. ACTION—Was reading the book exciting? Were you intrigued? Scared? Tickled? Bored? What did you feel? What would you change and Why? Note two to three flaws and four to five good

points in the action.

6. VOCABULARY—Was it used well? Did it fit in with the action? Did the author create his own words? Were they good? Note two flaws and four good points about the vocabulary.

7. ENTIRETY—How was the book as a whole? Was it neat? Sloppy? Rushed? Original? Copied? Would you buy it if you saw it in a store? Would you look at it or pick it up to see what it was about? Why or why not? What are your feelings about the book? Note two to three flaws and four to five good points and tell what your ideas are, if you have any that you would like to see the author add to the book. Sequels maybe . . .

LANGUAGE AS A SUPPLEMENT TO WRITING

Goal: TO IMPROVE GRAMMAR USAGE

The student will study and utilize capital letters, punctuation and quotation marks in this writing.

My students have minimal comprehension of grammar usage. They need to constantly be drilled, either by a teacher or on work sheets. As a supplement to this unit a series of ditto ideas and work has been added. Using the task board from the earlier lesson insert the four problem areas for the students, mine are; punctuation, capitalization, word usage and spelling.

The most success I have had in drills is from work they already know, their peers. Give a series of lessons that require writing a paragraph and have the class exchange papers and silently correct them. Focus on one area at a time.

Next take the themes that the students have already read rewrite them on a ditto and eliminate the punctuation, the capitals in another, etc. and have the student rewrite the paragraph correctly then hand it to another student to correct and still to another to re-edit, finally making the way back to the teacher for final editing and correcting. The paper returns to the owner for revision.

A final idea in drilling punctuation is to team up with another teacher and as her class writes your class corrects them and vice versa.

The students learn responsibility and the process of correcting and revising as well as the drill in grammar and language.

QUARTER FOUR SCHEDULE

DAY ACTIVITY

- 1 Intro. unit, point system. Class develops hero.
- 2 Setting.
- 3 More on setting if needed. Villains.
- 4 Class develops action vocabulary.
- 5-28 Cluster ACTION. Class begins writing sessions. Teacher conferences begin.
Intertwine language lessons.
- 29-31 Class begins binding comic books.
- 32-38 Critiques and conferences of final writings.

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