



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1990 Volume IV: American Family Portraits (Section I)

The Paths of Literature—The Family Today

Curriculum Unit 90.04.03
by Rose Christoforo Mitchell

Introduction

The remedial reading program on the middle school level very often sets priorities on vocabulary development, comprehension and study skills to prepare students with skills required in reading to learn. The specialized reading skills require the utilization of materials in the content areas and very often leaves the appreciation of literature on the back burner.

We have become so skills oriented that in fact we separate and identify students as the readers and the non-readers, when we offer literature courses only to students who are on or above reading level. If we select appropriate literary materials at the suitable readability and interest levels then we can expose students to a balanced curriculum of skills and an appreciation of literature. We are depriving students of valuable learning experiences when literature is not an integral part of the curriculum.

What better avenue can we take if we utilize literature to help students make connections of what they read with real life problems. For decades evidence has indicated that academic achievement, behavior and self-esteem are positively related. A student's ability to learn depends not only on intelligence, but on his or her self-esteem. In our complex society the contemporary teenager is faced with a multitude of changes in his or her personal life, and the changes in the family structure is one that has adverse effects on the self-esteem. A teacher can provide conditions to promote self-esteem and to help students to overcome negative picture of self. It is very important to incorporate activities that promote self-esteem into the educational experiences and see them as an integral part of the experience.

Design of the Curriculum Unit

This curriculum unit is designed for Remedial Reading students in grades seven and eight. It is based on the premise that if students develop a positive self-concept and make a connection with what they read and real life problems, it will encourage them to read independently. It will also provide the students with a balanced curriculum of skills and an appreciation of literature. By using a Directed Reading and Thinking Activity Method, it is anticipated that students will be encouraged to read independently to further their understanding

and to realize the wealth of literary materials on any given personal problem. For the purposes of this unit the family as a theme in literature has been selected. It is designed for teachers who feel concerned about the selfconcept as a legitimate part of the educating process, and the importance of literature as part of the Remedial Reading Curriculum. The concepts of developing egostrengths can be adapted to any grade level. The strategies, classroom activities and resources referred to may be used by teachers as aids towards enhancing egostrengths and encouraging independent reading by students. For the purposes of this unit I have selected *Teacup Full of Roses* , by Sharon Bell Mathis. The format utilized in attaining the objectives of this unit, can be adapted to other materials you might choose. Included in this unit is an annotated list of fictional materials that may be selected.

Promoting SelfEsteem

An essential component of this unit is aiding students in acquiring a sense of identity and selfesteem. Research has indicated that academic achievement and self-esteem are positively related. A students ability to learn depends not only on intelligence, but his or her selfesteem.

Research also demonstrates that low selfesteem is a detriment to individual success and satisfaction. Those with low selfesteem suffer more emotional problems, expect rejection, perform poorly, take personal criticism adversely, are easily influenced by others and suffer more stressrelated illnesses. An individual with low self-esteem has little or no worth and do not see themselves as valuable human beings.

Selfesteem refers to the feeling a person has about his or her worth generally. It relates to how individuals estimate their own intrinsic value. Present wellbeing and future hope are both essential for selfesteem. Therefore an individual with high selfesteem feels that he or she has considerable worth and feel good about themselves. The individual feels that he or she is someone, has a sense of belonging, is competent and has possibilities.

Relating SelfConcept to the Curriculum Unit

The design of this unit is to consider the student in all aspects—biologically, psychologically and socially. He is not only a psychological organism with biological mechanisms, but a social being who wants to belong and act within the social atmosphere of group life. This individual thinks, feels, interprets and acts, with a need for satisfying self definition for constructive relationships with others and some control over what happens to him.

For decades literature has been taught as a goal to help students develop an understanding of the ways in which man has responded to his experiences in all periods of time. The primary focus inevitably concerned itself with teaching students the content of the mechanics of “the models of literature”, and very seldom recognized and dealt with the students needs for satisfying a self definition. The curriculum was not designed to help students deal in personal terms with the problems of human conduct.

Remedial reading students are very often engaged in laborious reading activities which have no relevance to them. The materials selected are usually outside or poorly related to the students knowledge of his physical realm of experiences. The students feelings about his experiences may serve to involve him more deeply in

the content of the subject. The teacher must determine attitudes about a given subject before moving them into a more analytical or cognitive realm.

My reading has indicated that a positive self is teachable. Selfdevelopment is a dynamic process and is open to change. The classroom should be a place where successful experiences are provided to produce feelings of adequacy. It should be a place that encourages exploration and discovery, which facilitates changes in self-perception.

When selecting suitable reading materials for students they should be relevant to the concerns they have. Concerns involve feelings and emotions, which are the most persistent ingredients of the underlying uneasiness that students have about themselves and their relation to the world.

The Family

There are many stories, books and plays written about families. The reason being is that the family is the first and perhaps the most enduring context for growth. The family serves as the primary agent for socialization and provides a major context for adjustment. Everyone is part of a family in the world we live in. Families are the main setting for the experiences we have as a child. It is where we first learn to live and make adjustments by means of identifying with models, accepting values, developing affection and eventually distinguishing our own values and goals. It is within the family group that our behavior, ideas, thoughts and fantasies affect the lives of those with whom we live with. The family serves as the socialization agent, provider of care and the model for imitation and identification. It is within the family group that we have resources used to adjust to life.

The typical image we perceive when we hear the term family is likely to be mother, father and children living together in a household. This in fact, is not the reality as it exists in America today. Today people living in the same house may consist of any combination of the nuclear or extended families or just a group of people living together. The composition and size of the family has changed drastically.

In recent decades the nature of the family has been undergoing changes and a variety of problems related to the family has emerged. Statistics have indicated that there have been significant increases in premarital births and teenage pregnancies. The number of marital dissolutions have risen, thus there are many more single parent households. Research has also indicated that there has been a high incident rate of violence in the family, such as spouse abuse, child abuse and childinitiated violence. There have also been reports of sexual abuse of children, as well as a number of runaway and homeless children. Family related problems have attracted a great deal of attention in recent years.

Consequently adaptation in the family group is influenced by a number of factors and a variety of interpersonal relationships among the members residing within the house. There is no question that there have been numerous changes in the families today, and obviously has a great deal of affect on the children.

Working with Remedial Reading Students

Students who are reading below the expected grade level for his or her age must be provided with a program using a variety of instructional approaches. Recent research suggests that because the reasons why students have difficulty reading are complex, no one prescription or approach will work for all.

In the past literature was viewed as an enrichment course and only the skilled reader was allowed to take the course. Unfortunately this practice only reinforced the existing condition. The skilled reader became richer by reading interesting stories while the poor reader was assigned to worksheets and dull basal selections and continued along unmotivated and unsuccessful.

It is critical that students be motivated to read and have an interest in the subject matter. There are many high-interest low readability trade books available. They not only provide students with meaningful reading experiences but present them with an awareness of high quality literature in order to develop a lifelong connection of reading as a source of pleasure and enrichment. A student's own interest in the subject of selection, attitude towards reading are significant factors in determining the appropriateness of a particular selection.

Quality young adult literature provides students with a variety of learning experiences. It meets the student's needs and growth level. It stimulates thought and imagination. It carries an important message. It introduces the student to great works and authors. It develops a lifelong desire to read for pleasure and enrichment.

Students must be thinking and actively seeking meaning while they are reading. Remedial students need more practice. Reading comprehension depends on a common body of information between the reader and the writer. Remedial students sometimes do not have that body of information or in the classroom they do not have enough in bridging the gap between their lives and the life in the story. Students need to be prepared for the literary and cognitive demands of complex materials. They must develop effective reading strategies such as accessing prior knowledge, rereading, asking questions and making and checking predictions. Instead they are preoccupied with sounding out and pronouncing words. Remedial reading students must be guided from the very beginning of the lesson through a variety of prereading activities. The design of this curriculum unit is to bridge the gap of common body of information between the reader and the writer. Part of the prereading exercises would be to implement strategies and activities of part one objectives of promoting self-esteem and understanding the family structure.

A strategic reader blends prior knowledge with ideas from a book to construct a full understanding of the story. Before reading recalling what is already known about the topic is an important reading behavior. It allows the reader to make inferences, understand causal relationships and make predictions about what will come next.

This unit will employ a variety of instructional approaches. The activities will include both visual and auditory aids. It is highly recommended that teachers before implementing this unit, write out suggested charts for literary skills. Through my teaching experiences charts serve as excellent instructional aids and are very functional with remedial students for reinforcement and review. Teaching should be simple, clear and consistent and by employing the Directed-Reading-Thinking Activity Method students will develop a sensitivity to the literary elements of the novel and at the same time have an understanding of themselves and the theme of the family in literature.

Directed Reading Thinking Method (Dr. Russell Stauffer)

Dr. Russell Stauffer, long advocate of reading as a thinking process proposed a routine designed to foster increased comprehension. He called it Direct-Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA). The three basic steps are:

- Predicting*— This phase is directed by the teacher in the same manner as an introduction or motivation lesson. The phase referred to as setting the purpose. The teacher would ask
 1. questions such as, “What do you think the story is about?” “What does the title mean?” “From the picture can you guess where it happened?” “From the art work can you predict that it is a happy or sad story?”
- Reasoning*— While reading the story the students become responsible for verifying their predictions adjusting or changing. They are held to reasoning cause and effect situations, making predictions and involving themselves in judgment based upon details in the story checked against their own past experiences.
 - 2.
- Proving*— In the third phase of the DRTA the students cite excerpts, from the story that prove their assumptions and/or what caused them to change their predictions.
 - 3.

In using the DRTA method it would be the teachers responsibility to preread the selection and to form questions that can be utilized to implement this method.

Selection of Materials—Realistic Fiction

Students need materials selected and organized to satisfy instructional objectives. The materials should match the planned instructional purposes. There is no doubt that many reading skills are necessary and equally applicable to reading content area textbooks or a piece of literature. One objective of this unit is to provide students with an appreciation of literature, being the vehicle to provide experiences for students to see themselves as positive human beings (with feelings, beliefs, values, attitudes, desires, needs and wants).

The selection of Realistic Fiction at the appropriate readability and interest levels helps students achieve a realistic view of themselves. Students who are dealing with difficult problems in their own lives, may read about fictional characters who have had similar experiences. Realistic fictions includes stories that in fact have happened to people in the natural, physical world and social environment whether experienced or imagined by the author. These stories may show people living and facing problems at a particular time or under certain circumstances that might be either familiar or new and unusual for students. However similar or dissimilar the time or circumstances may be people are alike in many ways. These types of stories provide students with an insight of universal problems of growing towards a creative and responsible adulthood. Realistic fiction has a universal aspect of living and growing whether or not the student makes an identification with a specific situation or character. It provides an entertaining story and relates to the developmental tasks of growing up and helps the student build his own values and concepts of self.

Unit Objectives

Part One—Promoting SelfEsteem and Understanding the Family Structure

1. To help students achieve a realistic view of the changing family and how they effect the individual.
2. To increase the students awareness of the differences in family size and structure.
3. To develop a greater appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of the family.
4. To provide experiences for students to see themselves as positive human beings.

Part Two—Literary Skills

1. To select the appropriate literary materials at the suitable readability and interest levels.
2. The student classifies a specific selection as to the kind of writing, using the correct nomenclature.
 - a. Distinguishing between Fiction and Nonfiction.
 - b. Distinguishing between Fantasy and Realism.
3. The student identifies and discusses such story elements as setting, character, plot, theme and conflict.
4. The student discusses author's style.
 - a. Identify author's point of view.

Part One—Promoting SelfEsteem and Understanding The Family Structure

Objective #1—To help students achieve a realistic view of the family.

Activity #1 Families Come In All Combinations

Purpose To help students recognize that there is nothing wrong with them if they belong to a nontraditional family type.

Discussion Discuss the following types of families with the class.

1. *Nuclear Family*— includes a mother and father and their children living in the same house.
2. *Single Parent Famil y*—One parent living with the children.
3. *Blended Famil y*—may include stepparent or stepchildren. (adopted or foster children)
4. *Extended Famil y*—may include grandparents or aunts and uncles living in the home. May include three or more generations.

Prepare a Confidential Survey

Before using this questionnaire stress to students the answers will be anonymous and that no one should sign their names. All they must do is check the appropriate line that best describes their families.

Describe Your Family

___ Live with biological mother and father

___ Live with mother

___ Live with father

___ Live with mother and stepfather

___ Live with father and stepmother

___ Live with adoptive mother and father

___ Live with foster parents

___ Live with a relative or relatives

2. How many brothers and sisters live with you? _____
3. How many stepbrothers and stepsisters live with you? _____
4. How many nonrelated children live with you? _____
5. How many cousins or relative children live with you? _____

Review the questionnaires than tally up students responses by marking an X in front of each item which someone gave an answer. Discuss the results with students. Continue the discussion about the variety of family types in the class in context of the changing family in America. Encourage an open discussion of students concerns and fears that center around the family.

Independent Activities

1. Have students create a collage that best describes their families.
2. Have students write a poem or song that describes the special qualities of their families.
3. Have students share snapshots of their families with the class.
4. Have students make a family album of pictures. Allow students to leave a space so that they may add information about each member of their families as the lesson progresses.

Activity # 2 A Family Time

Purpose To help students realize that families don't always stay together. This doesn't mean that

they aren't still a part of you.

Discussion Following Activity #1— Families Come In All Combinations students are aware of the fact that not all family members stay together or live in the same house. This does not mean they are no longer a part of you. Discuss that today's families move frequently. Sometimes when people change houses they move great distances while others move only down the street or across town. Regardless of the distances or the reasons changing houses almost always meant that some other things change too. What are some of the changes you experiences when you moved? Discuss new friends, new neighborhoods, new places to play, new experiences for other members of the family.

Independent Activities

keeping lines of communication open other than phone calls or infrequent visits.

- Snapshots*— The teacher may provide the class with a Polaroid Camera or students might
1. choose to take in their own cameras. Have students take snapshots of each other so that they may send them to a family member who doesn't live with them.
- Taped Letter*— The teacher may provide the class with a cassette player or students might
2. choose to take in their own cassette players. Have students prepare a message to be sent to a family member who doesn't live with them.
 3. *Letter Writing*— Have students write letters to family members who do not live with them.
- Special Occassions* Have students make cards for holidays, birthdays or special events to share with family members who do not live with them. *Alternative*— For students who are reluctant to write have a *Prepared Card Shop* where students might select a commercially made card for a special occasion. These cards can be accumulated among teachers and students brought from home. Or have a committee of students who are artistic and/or have good writing skills make cards for the *Prepared Card Shop* for students to select from.
- 4.

Objective #2—To increase students awareness of the differences in family size and structure.

Activity #3 The Television Family

Purpose To help students recognize different family sizes and structures are part of America today.

Discussion Some of our ideas about families come from the families we see on television. How real are television families? Keep a list of all the television programs about families that you see in one week. Answer the following questions for each program as a group or students might work independently.

The Television Family (Questions)

1. Describe the television family size, kind of family members, customs and lifestyles.
2. Is the television family like real families you know?
3. Did the television family seem real to you? Why or Why not?

4. If you were writing a halfhour television program about a family you know, how would your story compare to the ones you saw on television?
5. Describe the families you have seen in television commercials or in newspaper or magazine advertisements. Tell what you remember about them.

Independent Activities

1. Have students develop a *Family Show Television Guide*.
2. Have students write their own Family Shows.
3. Students or teacher may tape a particular family television show and can share the video with the class for discussion purposes.
4. Have students make a collage of different families pictured in magazines.
Family Album— have students go back to their family albums and write something about each member of their family pictured. Such as “ My father works for the United States Postal Service.” or “My mother works at Pratt and Whitney nights and stays home during the day. or “My sister is studying to be a teacher.”

Objective # 3—To develop a greater appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of the family.

Activity # 4 You Give A Little and You Take A Little

Purpose To help students understand their role and responsibilities as a family member

Discussion In every family each member has a role and responsibilities. Define the terms role and responsibility with the class. In what ways are you still dependent on your family? How are you becoming more independent? In what ways are your family interdependent? Discuss how each family member takes from the family and gives to the family.

Independent Activity

1. Have students make a list of their roles and responsibilities under the headings *What I Give* and *What I Take*.

Objective #4—To provide experiences for students to see themselves as positive human beings.

Activity # 5 Making A Mistake Is OK

Purpose To help students see themselves as positive human beings.

Discussion Mistakes cannot always be avoided. Not only that, they are essential. If you never made a mistake, you would never learn anything new. Few people realize that. For anyone at any age, life consists of problems and solutions. It is a process of making mistakes and learning from them. When you make a mistake, it is best to take notice of it, understand how it happened and

then let it go. Have students volunteer to discuss mistakes they have made and how they felt. You might even tell one of your own.

Independent Activity

Have students write in a few sentence about a mistake they have made. Tell students that their responses will be private. Have them answer the following questions.

- a. How do you usually feel when you make a mistake?
- b. Do you feel differently if the mistake is made in front of a group of people?
- c. How do you usually react to your mistakes.

Activity # 6 Use Your Credit Card

Purpose To help students see themselves as positive human beings.

Discussion Do you take your good qualities for granted and worry only about your poor qualities? If this is true, then you are not giving yourself enough of credit. In order to build a good selfimage it is important to recognize the things you have done well. Have students share their good qualities with the class. You might also have students exchange good qualities about each other.

Independent Activity

Have students write about a good quality they might have. Give students the following questions to help them in describing their good qualities.

- a. How do you feel when you do something well?
- b. When other people pay you a compliment, how do you react?
- c. If you do something nice for someone, how do you feel?

Literary Skills

Objective #1—To select the appropriate literary materials at the suitable readability levels.

The Novel: Teacup Full of Roses by Sharon Bell Mathis

The novel selected for this curriculum unit *Teacup Full of Roses* by Sharon Bell Mathis is of low readability level and of high interest level. This book is descriptive in its portrayal of the family today enduring a complex social problem. It is an ideal novel to teach students about the family in literature and to motivate them to

read independently. It portrays different family structures (extended, single parent, and blended) and explicitly describes the relationships within these families. It is an exemplary model of the kind of family relationships that exist today and how they effect the individual members of the family. It is a representative literary work that has the family as its central theme and serves as a model for instructional purposes in understanding family structure, roles and responsibilities.

The Brooks family, Issac, Mattie, Aunt Lou and the sons Paul, Joe and Davey live in a ghetto in Washington, D.C. Mattie Brooks is a hardworking woman, who supports the household. She loves her son Paul, to the point that she excludes everyone else. Issac Brooks has been very ill and is unemployed. He works diligently at trying to please his wife Mattie. Aunt Lou, Issac's oldest sister lives with them. She is an elderly woman who believes that the spirits speak to her. The oldest son, Paul is a gifted artist, and is slowly killing himself and his family with his heroin addiction. The second oldest son, Joe had a plan to hold the family together. He invested time and interest in his youngest brother Davey. In fact he forfeits his own plan of college and joins the Navy, giving all his hardearned money to Davey. Davey, the youngest son, is the one with the brains. He could make something of himself. When Paul steals Davey's money, anger invades Joe's dreams. In a fight with the local drug dealer, tragedy occurs that changed all their lives and took one life away.

Preparation for Reading

1. Students may either read independently, in small groups or as a class. Another approach may be for the teacher to read to the class either orally or on tape and for the class to follow.
Setting The Stage For Reading This is the most important part of the reading experiences. Question strategies and use of background information is dependent upon teacher motivation. This is judged according to the make up and needs of your class. The theme of this unit is the family in literature. Discuss with class that in this novel, they are going to
2. read about an extended family who must deal with a very common social problem. They will meet two characters who come from different types of families, the first a singleparent family and the second a blended family. Students must be given a purpose for reading and they should be stated explicitly so that the students understand. For this unit the purposes are:
 - a. To read about the Brooks family and identify the characters and their problems and feelings.
 - b. To identify the social problem that the Brooks family is faced with and how they deal with it.
 - c. To identify the singleparent family and the blended family and notice how these characters feel about their particular situations.
3. *Question*

Strategies In a DirectedReadingThinking Activity (DRTA) approach the questioning process is very important. It is necessary that the teacher preread the assignment, so that he can guide students accordingly. By asking questions strategically this will allow students to make predictions and to discover their purpose for reading.

Teachers Role

- a. To elicit statements from students about what they would do in a particular situation. The situation is chosen to correspond closely to one that the story's main character will encounter.

- b. The teacher tells the students that the character faced with a similar situation and asks them to predict what he or she will do.
- c. Finally after reading the story the student discusses the main characters actions along with their predictions and their assessment of what they themselves would have done.

Remember to:

- a. To select key ideas from the selection for prediction activities.
- b. To develop questions that are relevant areas of students background knowledge .
- c. Questions should focus the students attentions on the important aspects of the text. Low level detailed questions may not be important to the central theme of the selection.
- d. The questions should create a coherent framework for understanding and remembering the text.

Objective #2—The students classify a specific selection to the kind of writing, using the correct nomenclature.

CHART #1

Distinguishing Between Fiction and Nonfiction

Fiction—Any piece of writing that tells about people or things that never existed or things that never actually happened.

Fictional stories can be funny, sad or exciting.

In fictional stories all the events are made up.

All fiction has a plot that consists of a *problem* or *conflict* , a *climax* where the problem is solved, and a *resolution* where we see what happens after the problem is solved.

Nonfiction— Stories and other types of writing that are based on truth and tell about people or things that actually existed or things that actually happened.

In nonfiction stories, the writer picks real events that have to do with one subject.

CHART #2

Distinguishing Between Realism and Fantasy

Realistic Fiction—Stories madeup or invented by the author, some of which are very believable. They are believable because they tell about things that do happen, or could happen in real life, and they tell about people who seem real.

Fantasy—A story that tells about things that could not really happen except in one’s imagination. Stories that tell about such things as talking animals, great giants, tiny people, fairies and other imaginary beings.

Discussion

When teaching literature it is very important that students classify the specific selection as to the kind of writing. This is an ongoing process in the classroom. This is also an ideal time where the teacher may review and reinforce library skills.

Objective #3—The student identifies and discusses such story elements as setting, characters, plot, theme and

CHART #3

Basic Story Elements

Setting—The time and place where the story happens.

Characters— The people or animals who are in the story.

Plot— The events and actions that happen in the story.

Conflict— The struggle or the problem that the characters face.

Theme— The main idea or meaning of the story.

Discussion Setting

Setting refers to the time and place in which a story happens. Setting is like the background in a picture. It places the characters and the events that happen in a time and place. It tells the reader when and where the story happened.

The setting should match the characters and the events in the story there may be just one setting for the whole story. Or the setting may change during the story as the characters move from one place to another or from one time to another. If there is just one setting, the writer may describe it at the beginning of the story. But bits of the setting may be given as the story moves along. As you read you should watch for descriptions of the setting and try to picture the time and place.

Worksheet #1

Teacup Full of Roses by Sharon Bell Mathis

Setting

- 1 . Where does the story take place?
2. When does the story take place?
3. Does the setting change during the story?
4. Does the setting fit the events in the story?

Discussion Characters

The characters are usually the people in the story. However, an animal can also be a character, or a thing can be a character. But whether it is a person, an animal or a thing, a character causes events in the story to happen or is changed because of the events in the story. One doesn't work without the other.

There may be several characters in a story or there may be only one or two. If there are many characters you find that not all are important to the plot. Some will just appear for a short time and add color to the story.

As readers, we are more interested in the main character or characters. The plot depends on them. The main character usually has a problem or wants to do something. We want to know what happens to this character. If he or she is interesting the story will be interesting.

Worksheet # 2

Teacup Full of Roses by Sharon Bell Mathis Characters

1. Who is the main character? _____
2. What is the main character's position? _____
3. Is the problem solved? _____
4. How does he solve his problem? _____
5. Where and when does the story take place? _____
6. How does the setting underline the main character's problem? _____

Worksheet # 3

Teacup Full of Roses by Sharon Bell Mathis

Characters

Characters are the people in a story. When you read you should think about what the characters are like.

Things to think about

1. What does the character do in the story?
2. What kind of person would do that?
3. Think of some words to describe the character (friendly, brave, loving, generous, shy, angry, cruel, loyal, rude, etc.)
4. What do the characters look like?

Think about the characters in *Teacup Full of Roses* write a description of each one.

1. Joe _____
2. Paul _____

3. Davey _____
4. Ellie _____
5. Aunt Lou _____
6. Warwick _____
7. Carolina _____
8. Issac Brooks _____
9. Mattie Brooks _____

Worksheet #4

Teacup Full of Roses by Sharon Bell Mathis

Characters

1. Who is the main character?
2. What is the main character's problem?
3. Is the problem solved?
4. How does he solve his problem?
5. Where and when does the story take place?
6. How does the setting underline the main character's problem?

Plot— The plot is the story, line, the actions, in the events that happened in a story. Every plot has a beginning, middle and an ending. To follow the story line it is important to notice the order in which the events happen.

Discussion : Work with group of students and sequentially direct the students to list the important events that happened at the beginning of the story, at the middle and at the end.

Conflict— Another part of the story is conflict. The conflict is the struggle or the problem that the main character or characters face in the story. The conflict brings together the character and the plot. There are three kinds of conflict. These should be explained to students and can be charted if so desired.

1. The main character may have a problem with another character.
The main character may have a need to reach a goal to win something, or to do something
2. special, or the main character may have to struggle against some feeling or need inside himself or herself.
3. The main character may be faced with some danger outside themselves. This danger may come from an animal, or a force in nature.

In *Teacup Full of Roses* what type of conflict applies?

Theme— You need to know each of the other parts of story (plot, character, conflict, setting) in order to

understand the theme. The theme is the general meaning or idea behind the story.

Theme is a little harder to talk about than plot, character, setting, or conflict. You can find each of these right there in the story. But the theme of story is behind the words. It is a statement about the world or the way life is, and the plot, characters, conflict and setting illustrate this view of the world.

Many good writers do not tell you directly what the idea or meaning of the story is. You must figure out what the story means from the events in the plot and the characters actions in the story. Sometimes the title of the story will give you a hint about the theme.

Some stories will have a very simple theme such as “honesty is the best policy.” A good story may have more than one theme. You may get a different message or meaning from the story than other readers do. This is because each person sees events in a different way. But you should be able to show how the events in the story fit the theme that you find in it.

Worksheet #5

Teacup Full of Roses by Sharon Bell Mathis

Theme

1. What is the title of the story? _____
2. Why do you think it has that title? _____
3. What does the main character discover about himself by the end of the story?

4. What do other characters discover about him? _____
5. What do you think the idea behind the story, or the meaning is? _____

Independent Activity:

Say It With Flowers For hundreds of years people have used the language of flowers to express their feelings. Red Roses for example represent love, perhaps because they are the color of the heart. Green Ivy stands for friends and loyalty because it clings to the wall to support it. Find some books on the language of flowers and see if they tell about your favorite kind of flower. Write a short paragraph describing your favorite flower and what feeling it expresses. You may also want to illustrate or find a picture of your favorite flower.

Note:

The violet stands for faithfulness
The snowdrop stands for hope.
The lily stands for innocence.
The honeysuckle symbolizes happiness.
Forget-Me-Nots are associated with love.

The flower in the title and the picture on the cover of *Teacup Full of Roses* also has a special meaning. What is the meaning in this story?

When working with story elements I usually work orally and use charts to help students remember the important story elements. With remedial students by using a Directed Reading-Thinking Activity this elements are identified and remembered more clearly. When students are asked to identify them independently for assignments such as book reports, they are very successful. They are also very successful when working with short stories in daily classroom instruction.

Objective #4—The student discusses author's style and identifies author's point of view

Discussion: Point of View

Every story is told from a point of view. The point of view is the position from which we see the events of the story.

First Person Point of View

- ¥ The first person point of view uses the personal pronouns I, me, we, and us.
- ¥ A firstperson narrative is told subjectively, through the eyes of one character, and may therefore be a slanted presentation. We see the events as that person would have see them.

Third Person Point of View

- ¥ The third person point of view uses personal pronouns he, him, his she, her, hers, they, them, and theirs.
- ¥ The story is told by a narrator is objective. He is not a character in the story.
- ¥ The narrator in the third person point of view can tell us about characters in the story. Explain anyone's feelings and tell us why and how any thing happened.

Limited Point of View

- ¥ In a limited thirdperson narration, the narrator tells the thoughts and feelings of just one main character, the other characters are revealed through dialogue and action.
- ¥ The narrator is outside the story, but the writer chooses to tell the story entirely from the angle of one of the characters. We can't know any character feels. We can't see anything that character can't see and we don't directly learn anything that the character doesn't know.

In discussing author's style and point of view it is very important that the teacher guides the students. It is also wise to compare this story with other stories the students are familiar with. Teaching point of view should be continuous and part of the curriculum in students reading and writing.

Conclusion

As a Reading Consultant I have found that remedial reading students meet with success when an instructional program is designed to meet their needs socially, emotionally and developmentally. Students who have negative feelings about the reading process have to be dealt with on both a personal and instructional level. It is the responsibility of the teacher to motivate these students, to provide rewarding experiences and to accentuate on the positive.

The reading process is a complex one that involves a communication between the writer and the reader. There is no one prescription that will work effectively with all students. Consequently teaching remedial students involves a variety of learning modalities. It is the teachers responsibility to present these students with a direct teaching and learning experiences.

Reading for understanding and meanings means that students must develop effective reading strategies such as accessing prior knowledge, rereading, asking questions and making and checking predictions. We cannot assume that students can utilize the skills independently, we must teach these skills directly and as they are mastered then we may relinquish them to work independently. No one lesson plan will be plotted out specifically for the teacher to follow step by step, therefore it is the responsibility of the teacher to first assess the needs of your students, determine their interests, and then develop a Directed ReadingThinking method to meet their needs.

This unit was basically designed to give the classroom teacher suggested strategies so that you may include literature as a part of your curriculum.

A Bibliography For Teachers

Borton, Terry, *Reach, Touch and Teach* . New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1970. This book describes the author's attempt to teach students at basic personality levels, touch them as individual human beings and yet teach them in an organized fashion.

Canfield, Jack and Harold C. Wells. *100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom: A Handbook for Teachers and Parents* . Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1976 This book provides you with a repertoire of creative classroom activities for enhancing ego-strengths of children and adults of all walks of life. There are a variety of 105 classtested techniques for group leaders.

Clark, D. H. and A. Radis, *Humanistic Teaching* . Columbus, Ohio: Charles R. Merrill Books, 1972. This book contains valuable "how to" skills, learnings and techniques developed by two psychologists applying insights to the learning process.

Combs, Arthur W. ed. *Perceiving , Behaving and Becoming*. Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Washington, D.C. 1962. This book contains a series of articles by the leading educational theorists in perception, self-concepts and selfactualization. Included are statements by Carl R. Rogers, Abraham H. Maslow, and Earl Kelley.

Ginott, Haim G. *Teacher and Child*. New York: Macmillan, 1972. This book offers teachers a model for

language of acceptance and compassion: words that convey feelings responses that changes moods, statements that invite good will, answers that bring insight, replies and radiate respect, designed to enhance the quality of the classroom.

Glasser, William, *Schools Without Failure* . New York: Harper & Row, 1969. This book is an approach to reduce school failures— on personal involvement, relevance and thinking. Through the classroom meetings he demonstrates how to reach negatively oriented, failure conscious students and how to help them aim for positive goalsetting, personal achievement and individual responsibility.

Gordon, I.J. *Studying the Child in School* . New York: Wiley, 1966. This book gives a number of practical suggestions as to how teachers can develop a better understanding of the children in their classroom.

Gordon, Thomas. *T.E.T. Teacher Effectiveness Training* . New York: Peter H. Wyden Publisher. 1974. This book tells how teachers can bring the best out in their students.

Herndon, James. New York: *How to Survive in Your Native Land*. Simon and Schuster, 1971. This book shows the picture of what junior high schools in middle class suburbia are really like and how they systematically destroy children's spirits.

Jersild, Arthur T. *When Teachers Face Themselves* . New York: Teacher College Press, 1955. This book is a study of the relation between selfunderstanding and education. It is centered on the teacher whose "understanding and acceptance of himself is the most important requirement in any effort he makes to help students know themselves and to gain healthy attitudes of selfacceptance."

Postman, Neil and Weingartner, C. *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* . New York: Delacorte Press, 1973. This book is an emphasis on the students subjective and personal evaluation of himself as a dominant influence on his success or failure in school. He explains how the selfconcept develops in social interaction and what happens to it in school. He also suggests ways for teachers to reinforce positive and realistic selfconcepts in students.

Raths, Louis E., Harmin, Merrill, Simon, Sidney B. *Values and Teaching: Working with Values in the Classroom*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1966. This book outlines a theory of values and a classroom methodology for the classifications of values. It contains many classroom activities that teachers can employ to help students clarify their values.

Ringness, Thomas H. *Mental Health in the Schools*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1968. This book indicates evidence of the impact of teacher personality and behavior on the conduct and aspirations of students from several grade levels. (pages 6593)

Rosenthal, Robert and Jacobsen L. *Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teachers Expectations and Pupils Intellectual Development* . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968. This book indicates that whatever teacher expects from a student she will probably get. The need for the teacher to "believe in" the child's ability to succeed.

Simon, Sidney B., Howe, Leland W., Kirschenbaum, Howard. *Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students* . New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1972. This book contains seventy-nine classroom exercises designed to help students clarify their values. Each exercise is clearly written and contains many examples of ways in which it can be used.

Watejen, Walter B., and Robert R. Leeper (eds.) *Learning and Mental Health in the School*. Washington, D.C.:

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. 1966. This book deals with ego strengths, efficient learning, teacherpupil interaction, and selfactualization.

Annotated Student's Fictional Bibliography

Beatty, Patricia. *Be Ever Hopeful, Hannalee* . Morrow Junior Bks., 1988. In 1865 the war just over, 14 year old Hannalee and her recently reunited family decide to start a new life in Atlanta.

Calvert, Patricia. *Stranger, You and I* . Scribner, 1987. Zee becomes pregnant after a foolish encounter and is rejected by her family. Her only support is Hugh, a 17 year old, life long friend.

Cannon, Bettie. *A Bellsong For Sarah Raines* . Scribner, 1987. After her fathers death, Sarah and her mother move from Detroit to Kentucky, where her parents grew up. Sarah must struggle to come to terms with her father's suicide.

Christiansen, C.B. *A Small Pleasure* . Athenum, 1988. Wray Jean tries to find her identity and ease the pain of her father's death from cancer.

Collier, James Lincoln. *Outside Looking In* . Macmillan, 1987. Fergy takes his young sister and runaway to find his wealthy grandparents and a better way of life. He is ashamed of his parents because they travel around the country selling honey for medicinal purposes and stealing.

Corcoran, Barbara. *The Sky Is Falling* . Atheneneum, 1988. Annah is sent to a struggling New Hampshire family to live after her uncle loses the family money and commits suicide. Annah learns with her new family that friendship is of greater value than money.

Davis, Jenny. *Goodbye and Keep Cold* . Orchard Books, 1987. Edda father is killed in a mine accident in a small Kentucky town. Her mother is dating the man responsible for her father's death.

Dixon, Jeanne. *The Tempered Wind* . Atheneum, 1987. Gabriella is an unwanted orphan suffering from dwarfism. She accepts a job with a family in Montana where she find love, disappointment and independence.

Ehrlich, Amy. *Where It Stops, Nobody Knows* . Dial Bks for Young Readers, 1988. Nina Lewis and her mother are traveling across the country. She finally realizes they are running away.

Classroom Materials

- 1 . AddisonWesley Publishing Company, Reading, Mass. 01867.
Aware —Grades K6—Teacher Resource Book.
2. Britannica Instructional Media, Chicago, Illinois 60611.
About Me —Intermediate—Teachers guide and student books.

- Creative
Learning,
Warren,
3. Rhode
Island
02885.

Understanding Your Feelings—Intermediate—4 Filmstrips, 2 Cassettes and Guide.

4. Educational Activities Inc., Freeport, New York 11520.

Getting It Together Is Life Itself—Jr. Sr. High—sound filmstrip

5. EyeGate Media, Jamaica, New York 11435.

Getting To Know Me—Intermediate-Jr. High—6 Filmstrips

6. Follett Publishing Co., Crystal Lake, Illinois 60014.

Girls and Boys—Men and Women—Intermediate—4 Filmstrips.

7. Globe Book Company, Inc., New York, N.Y. 10010.

Getting It Together—Jr.Sr. High—Psychology Text.

8. Listening Library, Old Greenwich, Conn. 06870.

Coping Strategies for Growth—Jr.Sr. High—4 Sound Filmstrips.

9. MultiMedia Productions, Inc., Stanford, California, 94305.

Self-Development—Using the Classroom to Solve People Problems Intermediate—Cassette and Filmstrips

10. Rancourt & Co. Portland, Maine 04103.

Learning About Me—Developing the Self-Concept Intermediate Teacher Manual and

11. Scholastic, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632.

Becoming Yourself—Middle School—Sound Filmstrip

12. Universal Education and Visual Arts, Universal City, Calif. 91608.

Understanding Your Relationships With Others (Two Parts) *Understanding Yourself*—(Two Parts)—Intermediate—Filmstrips and Cassettes.

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