

WRITING CENTER

PURPOSE:

A child learns the value and importance of writing through risk-free experiences with paper and writing utensils. The experiences are meaningful and make a connection to daily life situations. A child learns that drawings, scribbles or writing approximations are accepted as a form of story telling or a way to communicate information to others. In these ways, the child is beginning to move developmentally along the writing continuum.

WAYS TO ENHANCE LITERACY:

- ⇒ Add ABC books, wordless books, and Pictionary.
- ⇒ Add Blank Books (child created booklets) for children to write in.
- ⇒ Add Shape Books (pre-cut shapes for child created booklets)
- ⇒ Have available a book containing everybody's name in the classroom...label it "Our Name Book" so children can practice and be expose to everyone's spelling of their names.
- ⇒ Add catalogs
- ⇒ Surround this center with a print rich environment.

MATERIALS TO WRITE ON:

- Plain copy paper in various sizes and colors
- Newsprint
- Computer paper
- Marker Board
- Construction paper
- Envelopes
- Individual Chalkboards

MATERIALS TO WRITE WITH:

- √ Pencils and colored pencils
- √ Markers, chalk
- √ Alphabet stamps and pads
- √ Crayons

SHARED READING EXPERIENCES

An appropriate response grows naturally out of the literature of a shared reading experience. Selected activities should be meaningful and engage students in more listening, speaking, reading and writing. The following list of suggested activities is not meant to be an inclusive list but to be a mini-menu of activities, which have proved to be successful over time.

1. **Art:** develop an interesting display using students' art work and taking "chunks" of language from the book to add to it.
 - Sponge prints → crayon resist → clay sculpture
 - Finger painting → string painting → papier-mâché
 - Marble painting → cardboard prints → shaving cream design
2. **Dramatize the Story:** acting out a story brings to life the plot, the identity of characters and the language. Students can either act out the story using the existing text or retell it in their own words. Dramatization does not require staging a play: expressive reading, pantomime and interpretive dance are drama too.
3. **Graphing:** survey students, graph and compare their results. Graphs can vary in type:
 - Circle graph → Bar graph → Pictograph
4. **Innovations:** re-creations of a story using different characters, settings, and/or situations but incorporating the writing structure of the original. The new text is written in a blank Big Book or on separate sheets of paper. The children will illustrate the new text. Possible forms are:
 - Big Books
 - Small books
 - Bulletin Board Stories
 - Mural
 - Pocket Chart Stories
 - Shape Books
 - Journal
 - Poetry Book
 - Wall Stories
 - Transparencies
 - Classroom Book

SHARED READING ACTIVITIES

Shared reading lessons using poetry, chants, songs, rhymes and shared books provide opportunities to extend vocabulary and an understanding of concepts while increasing awareness of language structure. Shared reading lessons should incorporate:

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics instruction
- Concepts of print
- Introductions to reading strategies

Why do Shared Reading?

- Models what a book is what a book looks like, how it is used.
- Provides a supportive climate that encourages students to participate in reading
- Gives student a sense of security by offering a relaxing predictable routine.
- Models expressive reading that creates interest and invites participation.
- Facilitates natural literacy through repetition of text.
- Draws students into reading through the intrigue, fun and excitement of the book.
- Demonstrates the role of author, illustrator and reader in creating meaning
- Introduces students to new and more complex language.
- Provides opportunities for students to participate in a variety of ways.
- Models strategies needed in guided independent reading.
- Acknowledges students' contributions as those of readers and writers.
- Allows students to become co-readers with the teachers and see themselves as co-writers with the author.