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ABSTRACT

This curriculum guide for the teaching of composition contains more than sixty lessons for use with third and fourth grade students. Each lesson contains a statement of purpose, a resume, a list of materials, and directions for teaching the lesson. The major sections for both third and fourth grade are: (1) "Let's Pretend with Things," (2) "Let's Pretend with Animals," (3) "Let's Pretend with People," (4) "Let's Pretend with Seasons and Holidays," and (5) "Let's Pretend with Stories." Many of the activities are designed to involve the senses and stimulate the imagination. Some of the lessons also include a suggested drama activity. Supplementary materials include cartoon illustrations for which the children are asked to write a fitting caption and then to share their work in small discussion groups. One of the two sections includes a demonstration tape entitled "Mixed Up Animals." (See related documents CS 200 512 and CS 200 513.) (WR)

Composition Curriculum

COMPOSITION C - D

Teacher's Guide

Developed under contract with the
United States Office of Education
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by

The Oregon Elementary English Project
University of Oregon
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Composition C

MATERIALS LIST

Composition C

LET'S OPEN THE DOOR

TOUCHING
- Five articles (variety of textures and shapes)
- Five boxes or paper bags
- Five sheets of chart paper

TASTING
- Chocolate kisses (one for each child)
- Celery (small piece for each child)

A SMELLING GAME
- A bag of assorted things to smell (dusty chalk eraser, soap, tempera paint, scotch tape, an old book, etc.)
- A blindfold

SOUND RIDDLES
- A piece of paper (to crumple)
- Pair of scissors
- Tagboard or heavy paper (to cut)

DESCRIBE A PAPER CLIP
- Paper clips (one for each student)
- Work sheet (one for each student)

PAPER AIRPLANES
- Lightweight paper 9 x 12 inches (one piece for each student)

A STATIC ELECTRICITY DEMONSTRATION
- Thread or pieces of paper
- One inflated balloon
- Small portion of dry wool or a piece of woolen cloth
- Teaspoonful of puffed wheat (optional)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH THINGS

THROUGH THE TELEVISION SCREEN
- (No materials needed)

WHAT GROWS ON THAT TREE?
- Drawing paper

ROSCOE, THE STUBBORN STOPLIGHT
- Cartoon transparency
- Overhead projector

GLOPPY OATMEAL
Dennis the Menace transparency
Overhead projector

THE GIANT POPCORN BALL
Yardstick
Drawing paper (one sheet for each student)

ICE CREAMS AND SHERBETS
(No materials needed)

THE MAGIC GOGGLES
(No materials needed)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH ANIMALS

KITTEN-SIZED ELEPHANTS
(No materials needed)

WHAT IS MY PET?
(No materials needed)

THE MIXED-UP ANIMALS
Audio tape, "The Mixed-Up Animals"
Tape recorder

TWO-WORD POETRY
Picture of a dog (or other pet)

YOU NAME IT
White drawing paper (one sheet for each student)
Crayons or paint (some for each student)
Small sheets of paper (one for each student)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH PEOPLE

A CARTOON STORY
Copies of cartoon (one for each student)

ACTION WORDS
Jump rope

WHO AM I?
Drawing paper (a piece for each student)
Crayons
Copies of Interest Inventory (one for each student)

TRAPPED INSIDE A COOKIE JAR
(No materials needed)

MAKE A PIONEER STORY
(No materials needed)

HUMAN CHAMELEON
Picture of a chameleon (optional)

FOOT-TALL HUMANS
Rulers (one for each student)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH SEASONS AND HOLIDAYS

HALLOWEEN
(No materials needed)

SNOWTIME
(No materials needed)

GROUNDHOG DAY
Picture of a groundhog

SPRING
Tulips and/or daffodils (may be artificial flowers)
Tape recorders (two or three)

APRIL FOOL ZOO
Drawing paper (one piece for each student)
Crayons

LET'S PRETEND--WITH STORIES (See Composition D)

Composition D

LET'S OPEN THE DOOR

LOOK AT THIS
Jars of water (one for each four students)
Liquid water-base paint or ink

ICE CUBE OBSERVATIONS
Ice cubes (about a dozen)
Paper towels

WHAT'S IN MY SACK?
Paper sacks containing three objects (one sack for each student)

UNUSUAL SANDWICHES
(No materials needed)

CLOUD WATCHING
Water colors
Art paper (one piece for each student)
Opaque projector

THE STORY OF AN OLD HAT
A well-worn hat

HOW DOES STEAM WORK?
An empty spice can
A nail
Water
Cellophane tape
String
A Bunsen burner or other type of heat source

POPCORN THROUGH THE SENSES
Popcorn and popper
Art paper--white and light brown (scraps may be used)
Scissors (one pair for every two or three students)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH THINGS

WHAT IS IT? YOU DECIDE
Copies of line drawing (one for each student)

THE MAGIC BICYCLE
(No materials needed)

TALKING ERASERS
Two chalkboard erasers

TURN ON THE DARK
(No material needed)

A TV DOOR
Tape recorder

TREASURE MAP
Copies of treasure map (one for each student)
Rulers (one for each student)

RIDDLE AND RHYME
(No materials needed)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH ANIMALS

A VERSATILE PET
(No materials needed)

MICE WITH HORNS
(No materials needed)

PEANUT ANIMALS
Unshelled peanuts (two or more for each student)
Toothpicks--round type preferred (four or more for each student)
Glue

RICHEST DOG IN THE WORLD
(No materials needed)

ZOO HOMES
(No materials needed)

THE ANIMAL THAT WAS DIFFERENT
(No materials needed)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH PEOPLE

CAVEMAN THUMBS
(No materials needed)

THE GOSSIPS
Copies of cartoon (one for each student)

BILLY TAKES A WALK
Copies of story (one for each student)

IF I WERE. . .
(No materials needed)

ROADS TO ANYWHERE
(No materials needed)

A NEW VIEW
(No materials needed)

CARTOON STORIES
Published cartoons
Copies of cartoon worksheet (There are six cartoons in all but each student will have only one of the six.)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH SEASONS AND HOLIDAYS

AUTUMN
Pictures of autumn scenes

OLD BOOK--NEW BOOK (Book Week)
An old, well-worn children's book
An attractive new children's book

A HALLOWEEN MEETING
(No materials needed)

CHRISTMAS GIFTS
(No materials needed)

THE FIRST VALENTINE
(No materials needed)

LET'S PRETEND--WITH STORIES

THE PEPPERMINT TOUCH
Peppermint candy (one piece for each student)

WHAT ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT?
Something wrapped up in a box

AN IMPOSSIBLE WISH COMES TRUE
(No materials needed)

IT'S MAGIC
(No materials needed)

TOUCHING

PURPOSE: To become aware of the sense of touch; to describe shape and texture.

RESUMÉ: The students examine a variety of objects and write words and phrases to describe the feel of the objects.

MATERIALS:

Five articles having a variety of interesting textures and shapes (pencil, tree bark, twig, sandpaper, cotton, marble, thimble, chalkboard eraser, piece of velvet cloth, etc.)
Five boxes or paper bags (appropriate size for each article)
Five sheets of chart paper

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Put each of the five articles in a bag or box and write a number on the outside of the container. Place the containers around the room on shelves or tables readily accessible to students.

Explain to the students that sometime during the day they are to examine the contents of each container using only their sense of touch. Tell them to close their eyes and to imagine they are a blind person trying to "see" the article with their fingers. Then they are to write words or phrases describing the textures and shapes they feel. Stress that they are to try to choose words that will create a vivid picture in someone else's mind.

Toward the end of the day (or the following day) bring the students together to share and discuss their descriptions. Attach each article to the top of a piece of chart paper. Ask students to tell what words or phrases they thought best described the feel of the objects. Record their ideas on the chart. Point out that finding good words to describe what we feel is like painting a picture with our sense of touch.

Ask students to look at the descriptions for one object and to see if they can put some of their ideas together to make a touch poem. Write the name of the object on the board as a title and encourage students to dictate lines as you write. Remind students that poetry may be glimpses of thoughts and feelings and that it need not rhyme or have a particular form.

If students seem to be in a poetry-writing mood, give them time to write a touch poem about one of the other objects. If the time doesn't seem right for poetry writing, suggest that "someone might like to write a touch poem about one of the other objects," but don't force individual effort.

TASTING

PURPOSE: To become aware of the sense of taste; to write vivid descriptions.

RESUME: The students taste two substances, describe compare them. Then they write a paragraph telling which they prefer and why.

MATERIALS:

A chocolate kiss (one for each student)
Celery (small piece for each student)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Tell your students that the five senses help them to know and understand their world. We discover many things through our senses of touch, taste, sight, sound, and smell. Then explain that this activity today will concentrate on the students' sense of taste.

Give each student a piece of celery. Tell them to eat it slowly and to think about how it tastes and feels in their mouths. Ask the students to give words and phrases which describe the way it tastes and feels. Write their descriptions on the board. Help them think of things to say by asking such questions as:

What happened when you bit into the celery?
How did the celery feel inside your mouth?
What flavor was it?
Did the celery change as you chewed it? How?

Next, give each child a chocolate kiss. After they have eaten it, elicit words and phrases to describe its flavor and texture. Write their ideas in a second list on the board.

Then ask students to compare the two foods:

In what ways are they alike?
In what ways are they different?

Have students write a paragraph telling which they enjoyed eating more--the celery or the chocolate kiss-- and why they liked it better. Stress the need to write vivid descriptions to explain their choices--tell them to try to make the reader feel the celery or chocolate in his own mouth.

A SMELLING GAME

PURPOSE: To become aware of the sense of smell and of words that effectively describe smells.

RESUME: One student at a time is blindfolded and asked to describe the smell of an item before he is allowed to guess its identity. A list of possible descriptions is compiled on the board. Students continue to check the smell of various things and to list which things can and which things can't be identified by smell alone.

MATERIALS:

A bag of assorted things to smell (a dusty chalkboard eraser, soap, tempera paint, roll of cellophane tape, an old book, etc.)
A blindfold

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Explain to the class that they are going to play a "smelling" game. A student will be blindfolded and then something will be passed under his nose. He will describe it, tell what it reminds him of, and then try to guess what it is. He may not guess the object, though, until he has followed the first two steps. Caution students that words such as good, bad, and nice mean so many different things that they will not count; students are to think of words that create clear impressions of smells.

Choose a volunteer and blindfold him. Then select one of the items in your bag and slowly pass it back and forth under his nose. Remind him to (1) describe the smell, (2) tell what it reminds him of, and (3) to tell what he thinks it is. (For example, if the item is soap, the student might say, "It smells like perfume. It reminds me of my mother. I think it is soap.") If he guesses wrong, let him have another guess. Then remove the blindfold.

Write the student's description and his association on the board. Ask the class how else they might have described the smell and what else it might have reminded them of. Add their ideas to those on the board.

Repeat the procedure with another volunteer and another item from the bag, each time writing the student's responses and discussing various other ways to describe the smell. Keep in mind that finding words to describe smells is very difficult and that descriptions are neither right nor wrong. Encourage students to think of vivid, fresh ways of describing their impressions.

After several students have had turns (while interest is still high), tell students that they can continue the game during their free time by being smell detectives. They can check familiar things to see which things could be identified by smell alone. Suggest that students close their eyes and smell a thing. If it has a smell, try to describe it. Then have students make a list of things that have a smell and things that don't. Have them include a description of each smell. Observations need not be limited to the school room.

On the following day arrange the class in groups to discuss findings. Have students discuss which thing they have on their lists and how they described each smell. Then ask them to decide which descriptions are especially vivid--which descriptions almost make them smell the thing.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

Look for ways that authors describe smells in stories. Read some examples to the class.

Composition C
(Revised)

SOUND RIDDLES

PURPOSE: To become aware of the sense of hearing; to effectively describe sounds.

RESUMÉ: The teacher makes some sounds without the students watching and they describe each sound. Then students write sound riddles by describing a situation or event using only the sounds heard. Riddles are collected in a riddle box and used for a "Where Am I?" riddle contest.

MATERIALS:

A piece of paper (to crumple)
Scissors
Tagboard or heavy paper (to cut)
Writing paper - about 3 pieces per student (cut each whole sheet into fourths)
A box with a slot cut in the top

TEACHING THE LESSON:

You will need either to set up something to screen your desk, or to have students hide their eyes in their arms on their desks while you make the sounds for this lesson. Ask students to be very quiet and to listen. Slowly crumple a piece of paper. Ask students to describe what they heard without actually telling what they think you did. (For example, students might say, "I heard a crunch," or "I heard a crackle.") Write their responses on the board. Probe for vivid words and phrases--ask if they can think of another way to describe the sound. Some students may create new letter combinations to approximate the sound they heard (e. g., s-cr-ch). After several contributions, show the class how you made the sound and let them hear it again and see how the sound is made.

Repeat the procedure, only this time cut the tagboard. Again have them describe the sound without stating that "You cut tagboard." Emphasize finding ways to clearly express the sounds heard. Continue activity until students are able to describe the sounds heard. Think of other sounds that are easy for you to make such as sharpening a pencil, opening and closing a drawer, stapling paper, and so on.

Then have students think of sounds they might hear at some familiar event, such as a baseball game, and have them tell only the sounds they might hear there. (For example: A slight, low whish and then a sudden crack! The crowd roars and cheers, "Go, Pete, go." The noise dies down. Then, "Peanuts! Fresh roasted peanuts! Peanuts!") Write the students' sound sequence on the board as they dictate. Point out that they have made an interesting sound riddle.

Composition C
(Revised)

Pass out pieces of paper and tell students that you want them to write some sound riddles for a "Where Am I?" riddle contest. Ask them to think of other familiar events or situations, pretend they are there, and write the sounds they would hear. Suggest that they may not know words to describe a sound exactly but they can think of letters to represent the sounds. When they have finished, have them write the answer and their name under the riddle, fold the paper, and drop it through the slot of the riddle box.

Plan to have the riddle contest two or three days later and suggest that students make more sound riddles and drop them in the box when they have time. Remind them to write their name on each riddle they write (Hopefully you will have two or three riddles per contestant.)

Divide the class into two groups for the contest. Draw one riddle at a time from the box and read it, with groups taking turns responding. If the written answer is not given by the contestant, allow two more attempts to guess the riddle, alternating turns between groups. Then, if necessary, tell the writer's answer. (Be sure to check the name on each riddle so no one gets to answer his own.) When the box is empty declare the group that guessed the most riddles correctly the winners.

After the contest informally evaluate the riddles by asking students which ones they especially enjoyed, which ones were hardest to guess and why, which ones they thought were most clever, etc.

DESCRIBE A PAPER CLIP

PURPOSE: To observe and describe a small object.

RESUMÉ: Students are asked to describe a paper clip as completely as possible. After planning a description, volunteers role-play a secretary ordering paper clips from a clerk who has never seen one.

MATERIALS:

Paper clips, one for each student
Work sheets, one for each student (see Supplementary Material)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Distribute the paper clips, giving one to each student.

Ask students to examine their paper clip very, very closely. Guide them by such questions as:

Who uses paper clips?
How are paper clips used?
What are paper clips made of? Why?
What kinds of things will paper clips hold together?
Can you think of another way to bend the metal so it could be used for something else? Explain your idea.

Distribute the work sheets and ask students to fill them out individually.

When everyone has finished, share and discuss the answers students have written. The last question (number 10) is a good evaluation of students' ability to summarize the information in the previous questions.

To culminate the activity, ask for volunteers to role-play the telephone conversation between the stock room clerk and the secretary. Suggest that students think of questions that someone who has never seen a paper clip might ask in order to recognize one when he saw it. How will the secretary help him? What will she tell him?

DESCRIBE A PAPER CLIP

Examine your paper clip very carefully and fill in the following blanks. You may need to use your ruler.

1. How long is it? _____

2. How wide is it? _____

3. What color is it? _____

4. What metal is it made of? _____

5. What did the metal look like just before it was bent into a paper clip?

_____

6. How many bends are there? _____

7. What would you compare it to? A paper clip is like _____

_____

9. What unusual uses can you think of for a paper clip? _____

_____

_____

10. Pretend that you work in an office and have just run out of paper clips. When you call the stock room to order some more, there is a new boy working there. He doesn't know where the paper clips are and has never seen one. How will you describe paper clips so he can find them and send some up to you? Use your answers to the questions above to help you plan what you will say. Write your description here.

_____

_____

_____

PAPER AIRPLANES

PURPOSE: To observe and write a clear description.

RESUMÉ: The students make a paper airplane, fly it, and write a paragraph describing the activities.

MATERIALS: Lightweight paper 9 by 12 in. (one piece for each student)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Put your paper airplane makers to work. Let each child use a piece of lightweight paper to make an airplane. If you have students who do not know how to fold one, enlist the aid of those students who are adept at the skill. They can easily teach the others.

Take the students outside to an open place on the playground. Tell them to watch their plane carefully as it flies and to try to remember every detail of its flight. Divide students into groups of four and let one group at a time fly their paper airplanes. After each group has had two or three turns, gather up the planes and return to the classroom. Then have the students write a paragraph describing the flight of their planes.

Questions such as these could be used to provide stimulus for the writing assignment.

How did you throw the airplane so that it would fly?
How long did it stay up?
How did it move in the air?
Where and how did it hit the ground?
Why do you think it flew?

When everyone has completed the writing assignment, bring your class together to share their stories and their theories on why planes fly.

A STATIC ELECTRICITY DEMONSTRATION

PURPOSE: To observe and describe accurately.

RESUME: Students watch a science demonstration involving static electricity and describe what they saw happen.

MATERIALS:

Thread or pieces of paper
One inflated balloon
A small portion of dry wool or a piece of woolen cloth
About a teaspoonful of puffed wheat (optional)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Beforehand, cut the thread into lengths of 1-1/2 to 3-1/2 inches. (Tiny slivers of paper may also be used.)

Ask the students to observe closely. Rub the inflated balloon briskly with the wool to charge it, and then hold the balloon over the pieces of thread (or paper or particles of puffed wheat) and watch them perform.

Then divide the class into groups of two or three students and ask each group to write a description of what they observed. Ask them to include the materials used, the steps, and what the pieces did. If the students are able, ask them also to tell why the pieces behaved as they did.

In order to check accurate descriptions, ask one member of the group to read his description, and then have the class answer these questions:

Was anything left out?
Was anything added that shoulnd't have been?
Did they describe what happened correctly?

(Alternate procedure: Have groups trade descriptions and check the accuracy by answering the above questions.)

THROUGH THE TELEVISION SCREEN

PURPOSE: To imaginatively write a new ending for a story.

RESUME: Students imagine what would happen if they could walk (or crawl) through their television screen into whatever television show they wished.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Discuss favorite television series with the class. Ask for their favorites and list them on the chalkboard. Students may if they wish tell why they like a particular series, but do not let them get sidetracked with a discussion of plots and particular episodes.

Lead into composition by asking students to imagine that they all have a magic ability. They can squeeze through the television screen and enter any TV show they wish.

Stimulate ideas by asking such questions as:

What television show would you enter?
Can you think of a particular program you would like to be part of?
Would you enter it at the beginning or near the end? Why?
What do you think would happen?
How would you return?

Then ask students to write a story about an imaginary entrance onto the TV screen. When they have finished, divide students into pairs or small groups and let each student read his story to the group.

WHAT GROWS ON THAT TREE?

PURPOSE: To describe an imaginary object.

RESUME: Students are asked to create and describe a new type of tree that grows something other than fruit or nuts.

MATERIALS: Drawing paper

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Ask the students to list the kinds of things that grow on trees. Write them on the chalkboard. The list should include twigs, leaves, fruit, nuts, flowers. (Do not get into a long list of the kinds of fruit, or nuts or flowers). Ask the students to share briefly what kinds of trees grow in their yards or on the school property or the kinds of trees they see on their way to school.

Then lead the class into thinking about a new imaginary kind of tree. You may suggest the idea of a money tree or a candy tree and mention their use as gifts. If students have seen such trees, have someone describe them.

Then ask the students to use their imagination to think of a tree that grows something unusual. It cannot be nuts or fruit (unless it is a type of fruit that does not ordinarily grow on trees). Also, it cannot grow money or candy. Anything else is permissible.

Have students draw the tree they imagine, and after they have finished, ask them to share their drawings with the class, and describe their tree orally.

As an extension, you may ask students to tell what they would do with the things that grow on their tree; what would the market be for them?

ROSCOE, THE STUBBORN STOPLIGHT

PURPOSE: To complete a story told by the teacher.

RESUMÉ: The teacher reads an unfinished story about a stubborn stoplight, and the students are asked to finish it.

MATERIALS:

A cartoon transparency (see Supplementary Material)
Overhead projector

TEACHING THE LESSON:

To clarify the concept, make certain the students know the meaning of the word "stubborn." Ask them such questions as:

Have you ever been stubborn?
What did you do?
Can you think of a time when someone else was stubborn?

Show the transparency of Roscoe, the stubborn stoplight, and let students describe how he looks. Then tell the students that you are going to tell (or read) them the beginning of a story about a stubborn stoplight:

> Once a stoplight named Roscoe hung in the middle of a busy intersection. He would change his lights from green to yellow to red, green-yellow-red, green-yellow-red, all day long, telling the cars when to go and when to stop. It was a very busy intersection and he saw many cars, trucks, and buses every day.
>
> Sometimes even an ambulance or a fire truck came by with its siren sounding and its red lights flashing.
>
> But after many months, Roscoe got tired of his job. He thought, "Why do I always have to flash green-yellow-red, green-yellow-red, green-yellow-red all day long? Why can't I change from green to red, or from yellow to green or from red to yellow? Or why can't I stay on one color all day long, if I want to?"
>
> The more Roscoe thought about it, the more stubborn he became. Then he decided what he would do.

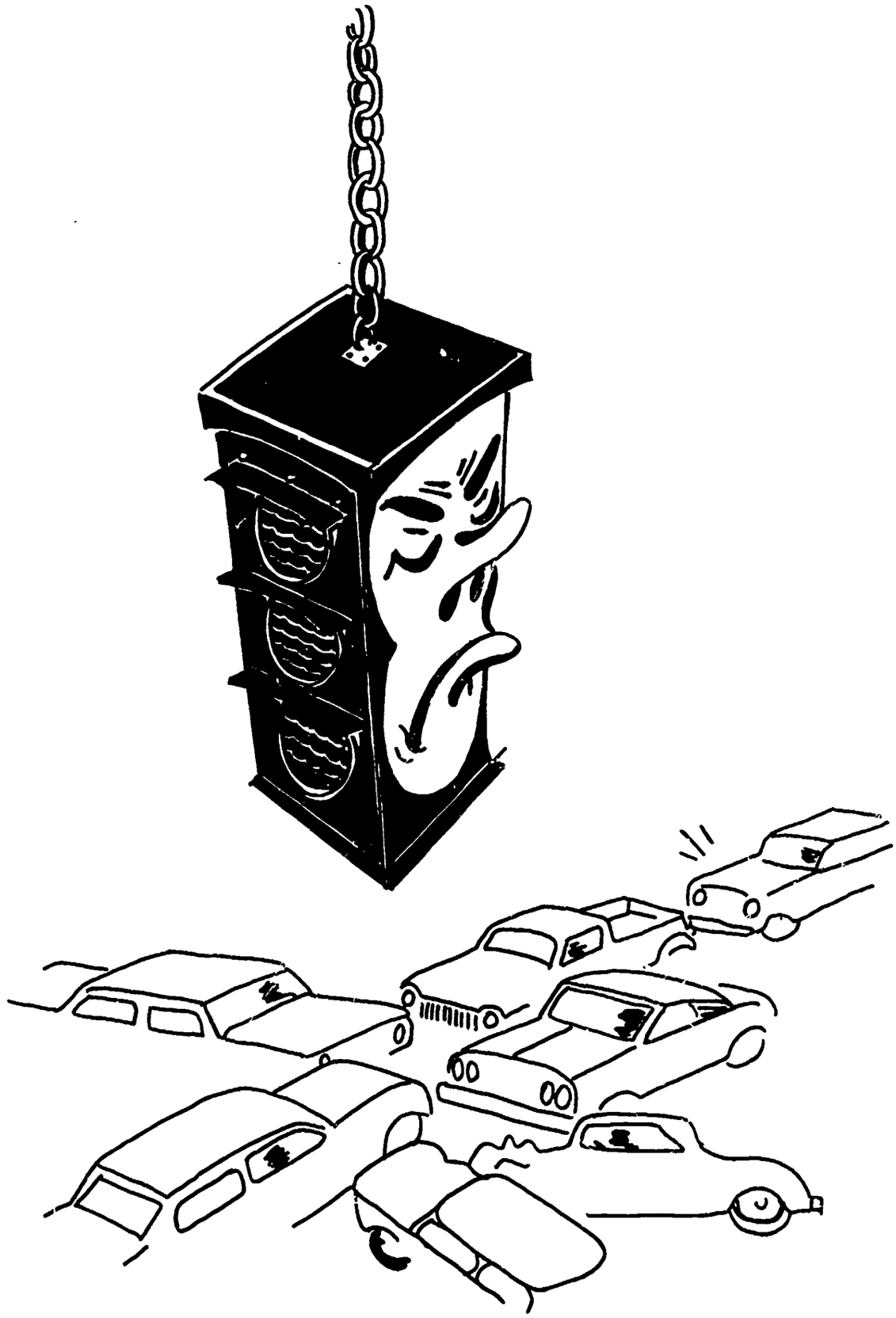
Stop at this point, and ask the students to complete the story. You might pose some questions to stimulate ideas such as:

What do you think Roscoe did next?
If you were Roscoe, what would you do?
What do you think happened to the cars at this busy intersection?

Students work individually to end the story, or in small groups.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

For students who are challenged to do more, ask them to tell about other things that move in a city, and make up a story about them.



GLOPPY OATMEAL

PURPOSE: To create and use unusual descriptive words.

RESUMÉ: Students are shown a Dennis the Menace cartoon and then asked to create unusual descriptive words to fit specific sentences and situations.

MATERIALS:

Dennis the Menace transparency (see Supplementary Materials)
Overhead projector

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Show the cartoon on the overhead projector. Discuss the words gloppy and squooshy. Ask the students:

Do you understand what Dennis meant by those words?
Are they good words?
Do you think the words gloppy and squooshy can be found in a dictionary?

Select two to four volunteers to use dictionaries to look them up.

Since the words cannot be found in a dictionary, ask:

Where do you think Dennis (or Hank Ketchum, the cartoonist) got them? (He must have made them up.)
Can you think of other imaginative words or phrases to describe oatmeal?

Divide the class into groups of two to three students and pass out two or three slips of paper with phrases such as those given below to each group. Several groups could work on the same phrases. Have the groups make up their own words or phrases to describe the given phrases. When the groups have thought of several unique words for each phrase, suggest they think of appropriate situations and draw cartoons.

Suggested phrases (others could be used):

A dry, cold pancake
A melting ice cream cone
A dog that wiggles when he barks
An old battered and rusty car
Butter and syrup, mixed
Bare feet walking in mud

A leaning stop sign
A mud puddle covered with a thin layer of ice
A dripping wet towel
Soap in your eye
Buttermilk

Let the groups share their cartoons and words they have made up. They may do the showing orally, or by posting the work on a bulletin board, or by fastening the cartoons together to make a book.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

An extension might be to think of a brand new word that would describe something used in school and try to use it in conversation. For example, splory paints, gritchy chalk, or an eyetific book.

In the experimental curriculum, this page held an enlargement of a Dennis the Menace cartoon, dated September 14, 1970. This cartoon was drawn by Hank Ketcham and copyrighted by Hall Syndicate Because of the copyright, the cartoon could not appear in material to be released to the public domain.

THE GIANT POPCORN BALL

PURPOSE: To write imaginatively and descriptively.

RESUMÉ: Students try to describe what they would do with a popcorn ball three feet in diameter.

MATERIALS:

Yardstick
Drawing paper (one sheet for each student)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Hold up the yardstick and ask the students to imagine a ball one yard in diameter.

Then ask them what they might do if they found such a ball, made of popcorn. Pose a specific situation, such as:

> Imagine that your doorbell rings one Saturday and you go to the door and open it. Outside you see a huge box, addressed to you. You pull it inside and open it. You find a huge popcorn ball, as wide across as a yardstick.

What will you do with it? Of course, you and your friends could eat it, but can you think of any other ways to use it? (Play ball with it, use it for decoration, carve it into a chair, etc.)

Ask the students to write a short paragraph describing what they would do with the huge popcorn ball. Distribute the drawing paper and ask the students to illustrate their paragraph.

Then when all have finished, ask students to share with the class.

SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

Either singly or in groups, children could play out what they would do with the popcorn ball and then write it up.

ICE CREAMS AND SHERBETS

PURPOSE: To use descriptive words.

RESUMÉ: Students list flavors of ice cream and sherbet and write an imaginary advertisement for a new flavor.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Ask the students to think of different flavors of ice cream and sherbet they have eaten. List the different kinds on the board. Briefly discuss which flavors are comparatively new and/or unusual. Then ask students to think of possible new flavors for ice cream and sherbet, writing their suggestions in a second list.

Divide the class again into groups of three to five students and ask each group to choose a new ice cream or sherbet flavor (one from the second list or a brand new idea). Ask them to imagine what it would look like and how it would taste. Then have them write an advertisement for the new product. Suggest they use highly descriptive words that will appeal to people's sense of taste and sight, creating a desire for the new product. Advertisements may be designed for use in newspapers, on radio or television, or in magazines. Students may illustrate advertisements that will appear in print.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

Make up a color wheel with drawings or cut outs of ice cream cones arranged in a circle with the bottom end of the cones pointing in toward the center. Use primary and secondary colors. Ask the students to name an ice cream or sherbet for each color and describe it. It could be the oddest one they have ever eaten, or they could make up an unusual flavor to go with the color. Some students might want to try alliteration in their descriptions: crazy cranberry, goofy grape.

THE MAGIC GOGGLES

PURPOSE: To use imagination in writing and to develop a writing model.

RESUME: Students imagine uses for magic goggles which can "see anything" and write a class story with the teacher serving as secretary.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin by reading or telling this story:

> Imagine that Mr. Wonderman, the magician, has just invented some magic goggles he wants you to try. These goggles look like ordinary glasses, but they have a special switch you carry in a pocket or purse. Once you turn the switch on, the goggles will still look ordinary to others, but to the person wearing them they are magic and allow him to see whatever he wants to see.
>
> Just imagine how useful these magic goggles could be. You could. . .

Discuss the possible uses of the magic goggles. Pose questions to help students think of ideas:

> How might you use the magic goggles in school? (during study time? during a test? in the lunch room? on the playground?)
> How might you use them at home?
> Would you ever want to use the goggles when you went shopping?
> If you got lost, could the magic goggles help you? How?

As you discuss possible uses, be watching for a suggested use that would lend itself to story writing. After a number of uses have been suggested, tell the students that they have thought of some interesting uses for the goggles and that some of the ideas suggest a good story. Choose one that seems appropriate and make up a name for the main character--the child who has the magic goggles. Establish the time and place and develop a story cooperatively. Write the story on the board as students dictate. As you write, call attention to uses of capitals and punctuation marks.

Encourage contributions from different students, maintaining an accepting attitude for all ideas. Keep students' attention focused on a single story by discussing how new ideas might fit into the story. Also, having a student read "the story so far" periodically will help the class develop a unified story.

When the story is finished, type it in storybook form and display it where students may read and enjoy it. Some students might add illustrations to the book. Work done in a group situation in which the teacher serves as secretary tends to become a model. Your cooperatively written book may be referred to from time to time to remind students of the way to begin sentences, use periods, capitalize names, and so forth.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

1. Some students might like to dramatize the story of the magic goggles or use it for a puppet play.

(A simple puppet production may be made by drawing figures on heavy paper, cutting them out, and pasting them to the end of a tongue depressor A table turned on its side or a free standing counter allows students to be hidden from view while their puppets perform above in view of the audience.)

2. Some students who want to write their own magic story could add chapters to the book. You might prepare slips of paper giving a specific time and place and then let students draw the slips from a box. They would then write a story about the magic goggles in that time and place.

KITTEN-SIZED ELEPHANTS

PURPOSE: To encourage original thinking and writing.

RESUME: Students are asked to imagine that a new type of elephant (kitten-sized) is being sold at the local pet store.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin a discussion about pets. Ask a few volunteers to tell what kinds of pets they have, or have had. Then consider unusual pets. Ask students to tell about the most unusual pet they have ever seen. Do not prolong this type of introductory discussion, however, as the purpose is merely to get students involved in thinking about pets.

Ask the students to imagine that their best friend has told them that the pet store is selling baby elephants. And, the baby elephants are no bigger than a kitten. Ask them to suppose that they went down to the pet store to see for themselves and there they were--tiny baby elephants. The manager of the pet store told them that when the elephants grew up, they would be no bigger than a cat.

Then ask the students such questions as:

Would you like to own such a pet?
What would you feed him? Would some companies produce a special baby elephant food?
Where would you let him sleep?
What would you do with him while you were at school?
If you owned a tiny baby elephant, what might you train him to do?
What kinds of things might happen to you and your baby elephant?

When the students have expressed a number of ideas, ask them to write a story about their imaginary new pet. They may want to begin with their friend telling them about the pet store, or they might start the story where they bring the tiny baby elephant home. Encourage them to tell an interesting story that is different from everyone else's.

WHAT IS MY PET?

PURPOSE: To complete sentences, to learn to write riddles.

RESUMÉ: Students write about their pet in a riddle, so that other students must guess what kind of a pet it is.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin by telling or reading:

> Bill had an unusual pet. He wanted to tell his class about his pet, but he put the clues into a riddle. He said, "My pet Sally has four legs and is tan. She likes to hop and play on the lawn. My pet eats grass. I like my pet because no one else in our city has one like her. What kind of a pet is Sally?"

Ask the students, "Can you guess what Bill's pet was?" If they cannot, add another clue, like "Sally comes from Australia." Bill's pet, of course, was a kangaroo.

Ask students what clues they would give if they were making up a riddle about a frog. Write their ideas on the board, eliciting complete sentences. Evaluate whether they have described the frog adequately without saying something that clearly identified it.

Then have students individually write a riddle about a real or imagined pet. Stress that they are not to tell too much about their pet but are to make the class guess what that pet is.

Remind students to avoid details that would "give away" the riddle. Ask them to avoid such sentences as "My pet barks" or "My pet eats cat food," for instance.

To encourage complete sentences, you might write sentence beginnings such as these on the chalkboard:

My pet has
My pet likes
My pet eats
I like my pet because

When students have finished, let them read their compositions aloud and have the class guess what kind of a pet they have.

THE MIXED-UP ANIMALS

PURPOSE: To complete a taped story.

RESUMÉ: Students listen to a tape and then try to write a story about a dog who moos, a cow who roars, and a lion who barks.

MATERIALS:

Audio tape "The Mixed-up Animals"
Tape recorder

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Play the tape for the students to listen. The tape leads the students to a specific story about Callyfraz, a cow who can only roar like a lion, Marko Barko, a dog who can only moo like a cow, and Leonidas, a lion who can only bark like a dog. The students are asked to write a story or a play about an adventure of the three animals. After the tape ends, write the names of the three animals on the chalkboard, and have the students work on their stories.

When the stories are finished, ask volunteers to read their stories to the class.

The stories could all be assembled as chapters to a class story about these three animals.

SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

Divide the class into groups of three and let them work out an ending and play it together before writing.

THE MIXED-UP ANIMALS

ANNOUNCER: We all hear many sounds every day. Some of them are happy sounds (CHILDREN LAUGHING), some are sad sounds (CHILD CRYING), and some make us want to do something (BOUNCY MUSIC). Some sounds go on so often that we usually tune them out and don't even notice them (AUTO TRAFFIC). Others make us perk up and listen (SIREN)

Some sounds are so familiar that we can see pictures in our minds just by hearing them. Let us listen to some familiar animal sounds. (DOG BARKING, COW MOOING, LION ROARING) Could you tell what animals were making those noises? Of course, they were a dog (DOG BARKING), a cow (COW MOOING), and a lion (LION ROARING). Shut your eyes and listen again. Try to see the animals in your imagination. (DOG BARKING, COW MOOING, LION ROARING).

Did you see the dog, the cow, and the lion?

Now shut your eyes again. Think of a dog, a real dog, one you know. Think of his particular color, his size and his shape. We will call him Marko Barko. This dog, Marko Barko, has a problem. He opens his mouth to bark, this comes out (COW MOOING). You can imagine how miserable his life is. All of the other dogs laugh and laugh whenever Marko Barko tries to bark, because all he can do is (COW MOOING).

One day as Marko Barko was walking along a country road and feeling very sad, he met a cow. Her name was Callyfraz. She also had a problem. Whenever she tried to moo, she went like this (LION ROARING), and scared all the other cows away. As Marko Barko and Callyfraz walked along discussing their problems, they met a third animal.

This third animal was named Leonidas, and he was a lion who said he had the worst problem of all. When he tried to roar to scare other animals and people away, he went like this (SMALL DOG BARKING). It was very embarrassing for a King of the Jungle.

Now think how you might finish the story. What strange things or funny things might happen to the three animals, Marko Barko the dog, Callyfraz the cow, and Leonidas the lion? What kinds of adventures might they have? How could they help each other? Think of an exciting or funny adventure and write it down.

(END)

TWO-WORD POETRY

PURPOSE: To introduce students to writing simple poetry.

RESUME: Students write poems of two words per line.

MATERIALS: Picture of a dog (or other pet)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Display the pet picture a day or two before teaching this lesson.

To begin the lesson, ask students to describe the dog (or other pet)--what he looks like, how they think he feels, how they think he moves, what they think he likes to do, and so on. Then ask them to try to describe him using only two word phrases such as: curly hair, lonesome eyes, bouncing playmate, etc. Write their phrases on the board in poetry form, one phrase per line. Choose a title and the poem is complete.

After the class model has been completed, ask students to choose something else (animal, object, favorite spot) and to write individual two-word poems. If students ask to write about a person or a controversial topic, use your judgment about steering them toward another subject.

The finished products could be put into a class book, or they could all be duplicated so each student would have a copy.

YOU NAME IT

PURPOSE: To become aware of details necessary for effective description.

RESUME: Students are asked to choose a shape, a color, and a number. These choices form the basic description of a new animal. Students draw the animal, filling in additional details, and then make an oral presentation.

MATERIALS:

White drawing paper (one sheet for each student)
Crayons or paint (some for each student)
Small sheets of paper (one for each student)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Pass out small pieces of paper (sheets from a note pad would be fine). Have students write their name in the corner of the paper and then discuss the shape of the paper. Ask them to name as many other shapes as they can and think of familiar examples of each. Ask students to choose one of the shapes and write it down on their paper. Then ask them to choose a color they think is interesting and write it. Finally, ask them to choose a number between one and one hundred and write it down.

After students have written the three things, have them try to imagine an animal in that shape, with that color fur or skin, and with that many legs. Have them close their eyes and try to get a mental image of such an animal.

Pass out drawing paper and let students make a drawing of their strange new creature. Suggest they start by making the shape they chose in the color they chose and then add other details. While they work ask them to think of a name for their animal.

Then direct their thinking to the animal's habitat and way of life. Tell them to just think quietly to themselves while you slowly pose the following questions to stimulate thought. (You might have them keep their eyes closed if you wish.)

Does your animal make any sounds? If so, what kind?
Where does it live? Does it live alone or in groups?
How does it move? Does it move fast or slow?
What does it eat? How does it get its food?
Who are its enemies? How does it protect itself?
What kind of personality does it have? Is it quiet and peaceful, or noisy and fierce?

Let students share their new animal with the class. Allow time for them to think through what they want to tell before they begin oral presentations. After each child tells about his animal, give students an opportunity to ask questions about the animal.

When all the students have had an opportunity to tell about their animals, ask students what kinds of information helped them know what the animal was like. Write the list on the board.

A CARTOON STORY

PURPOSE: To create a story from a series of cartoons.

RESUMÉ: A series of cartoons is distributed and students are asked to draw in the middle frames and tell what happened.

MATERIAL: Cartoon (one copy for each student; see Supplementary Materials)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Many students find it easier to create a story after seeing something to stimulate their imagination, and many students are oriented toward cartoons.

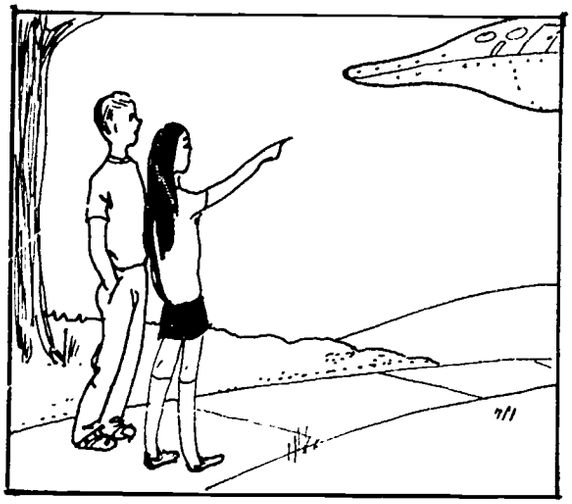
Distribute the student papers and discuss them briefly. Have the students relate the sequence of events by asking such questions as:

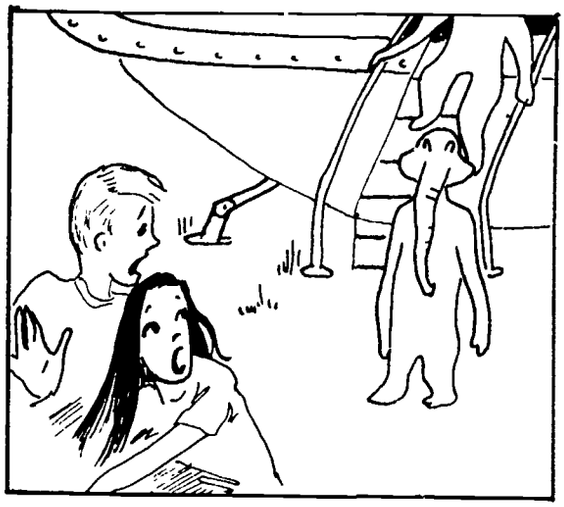
Who is in the first picture?
What are they doing?
Where might this be?
Why are the boy and girl there?
What year do you think this is?
What do you suppose they are thinking or saying?
What is happening in the second picture?
How do you think the boy and girl feel?
What do you suppose the space creature is thinking?
Describe the next to last picture.
How does the story end?
What do you think happened between the first two pictures and the last two pictures?

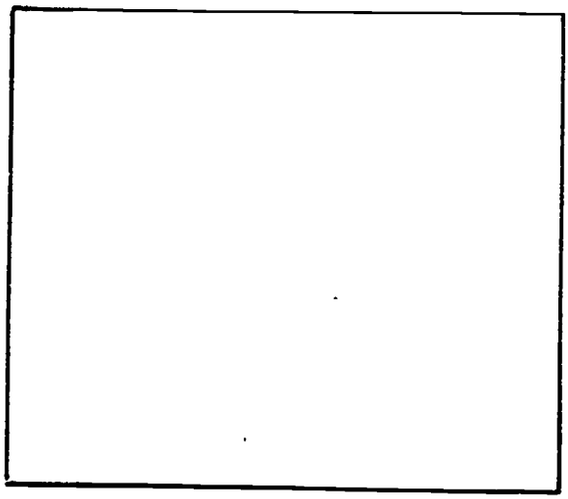
Suggest also that the students choose names for the characters in the cartoons. Let them draw in the scenes in the middle, and then describe to the rest of the class what they think happened.

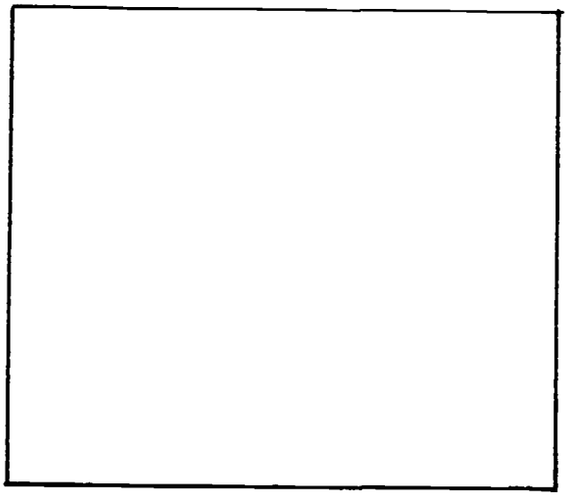
SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

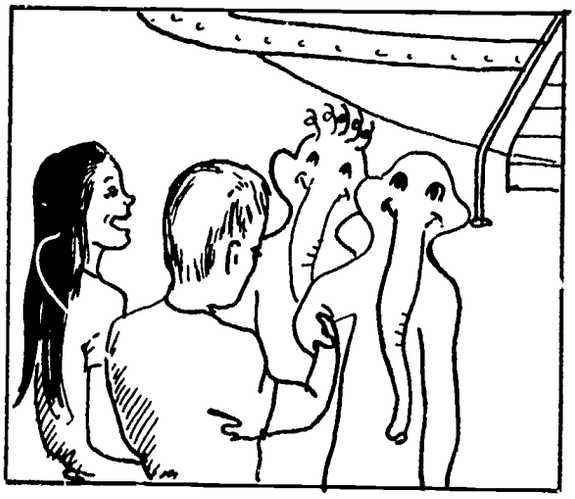
Divide class into groups of four. Let them plan together and then play out the whole idea of cartoon strip. This activity could be followed by the writing.

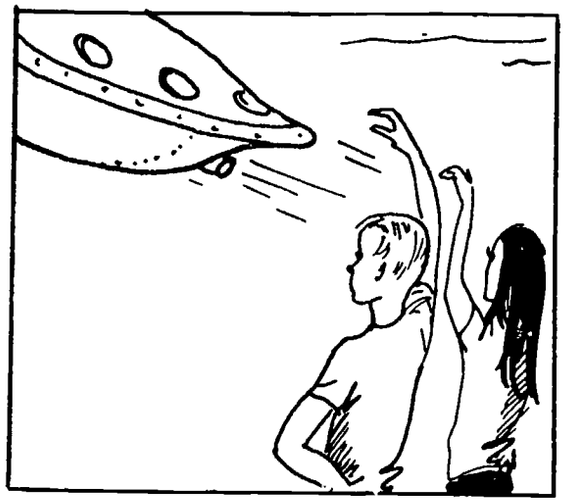












Composition C
(Revised)

ACTION WORDS

PURPOSE: To develop a list of action words and to write an original jump-rope rhyme.

RESUME: The students will watch several children jump rope and make a list of action words that could be used to describe the jumping. Then they will make up a new rhyme or chant for rope jumping.

MATERIALS: Jump rope

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Clear a space in your classroom, get out a jump rope, and give several children a turn at jumping while the others observe. Instruct the jumpers to think of different ways to jump and different things to do with other parts of their body while they are jumping.

Tell the class that many athletes use rope jumping as one of their training activities. Ask for volunteers to demonstrate how various athletes (a boxer, a basketball player, a gymnast, etc.) might jump rope. Help students think about it by asking such questions as:

> How fast do you think he would jump?
> Would he jump with both feet together? Why?
> How long do you suppose he would jump rope before he stopped to rest?

After a few minutes of demonstrations and observations, have students sit down and discuss the various actions. Together make a list of all the action words which tell what the jumpers did.

Give students an opportunity to share some of the jump-rope rhymes they have chanted while jumping rope * Point out the strong rhythm of the rhymes and how they have to be said to keep with the rhythm of the jumper.

Ask students to look at the list of action words and cooperatively make up a new rope-jumping rhyme. Suggest that students try to include a variety of actions such as touching nose or ear, turning right or left, smiling, frowning, waving, etc.

Then divide the class into small groups of 3 - 4 students with each group composed of all boys or all girls and have each group write a new chant or rhyme for rope jumping. Suggest that students might find it easier to get started if they first decided who would use the rhyme. For instance, a baseball player who was using rope jumping for physical conditioning might make up a chant of action words heard at a baseball game, a horse-back rider might make up a story about a ride that started out with a slow walking rhythm and increased in tempo to a fast running rhythm, etc.

When all the groups have finished, let each group read theirs in unison while a volunteer jumps rope to it. Students might like to put all the new rhymes and chants together in a booklet and illustrate it.

*Examples of familiar rope-jumping rhymes:

Down by the river where the green grass grows
There sat (girl's name) as sweet as a rose
Along came (boy's name) and kissed her on the nose.
I told Ma and I told Pa
And (girl's name) got a lickin'
Ha, Ha, Ha.
One, two, three, four,. . . etc.

Spanish dancer do the splits
Spanish dancer do the kick
Spanish dancer turn around
Spanish dancer touch the ground
Spanish dancer get out of town.

Teddy bear, teddy bear turn around
Teddy bear, teddy bear touch the ground
Teddy bear, teddy bear show your shoe
Teddy bear, teddy bear that will do
Teddy bear, teddy bear go upstairs
Teddy bear, teddy bear say your prayers
Teddy bear, teddy bear switch off the light
Teddy bear, teddy bear say Goodnight!

WHO AM I?

PURPOSE: To write complete sentences; to write a riddle.

RESUME: Students draw a self-portrait and complete an interest inventory, then write a riddle describing themselves. Other students try to identify the pictures and riddles.

MATERIALS:

Drawing paper (a piece for each student)
Crayons
Interest Inventory (a copy for each child; see Supplementary Material)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin this lesson with an art experience. Have students draw a small self-portrait, coloring in hair, facial features, and clothing details. The art project could be done a day before the writing lesson. If so, drawings should not be displayed or shared until the entire lesson is completed.

Distribute copies of the interest inventories and ask the students to complete each sentence.

After students have finished, ask them to use these sheets to make up a riddle about themselves. First ask them to write the title "Who Am I?" Then have them choose four to six sentences from their inventory sheets and write them under the title. Tell students not to write their names on the sheet.

When everyone has finished, mount the riddles and drawings together on a bulletin board for students to read and try to identify.

OPTIONAL PLAN:

Let the class try to match riddles and portraits during free time. To do this have each student write his name neatly on an envelope and attach the envelope to his self-portrait. Number the riddles. Students may then write the number of a riddle on a slip of paper and drop it into the envelope of the person they think it describes. After about a week have students look at the numbers in their envelopes to see how well fellow students have been able to identify them.

WHO AM I?

Interest Inventory

1. My pets are _____

2. My favorite food is _____

3. My favorite drink is _____

4. My favorite dessert is _____

5. My favorite television program is _____

6. My favorite color is _____

7. My favorite flower is _____

8. My best friends are _____

9. My hobbies are _____

10. After school or on weekends, I like to _____

_____

Composition C
(Revised)

TRAPPED INSIDE A COOKIE JAR

PURPOSE: To use imagination in writing; to relate an interesting story.

RESUMÉ: Students imagine what they would do if they were trapped inside a cookie jar.

MATERIALS: Paper and cover stock to make a book (optional)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin this lesson by asking, "What is your favorite cookie?" Allow time for a number of students to tell about their favorites and then ask, "Has anyone ever had a chance to eat all the cookies he wanted?" If some have, ask them to tell about it. Be sure to ask how they felt afterwards. If no one has ever had such an opportunity, ask a few students how many cookies they think they could eat if they had the chance, what kind(s) they would choose, how they think they would feel, etc.

Then ask students to imagine the following situation:

> One day when you came home from school the smell of freshly baked cookies greeted your nose. But you reminded yourself that Mother seldom baked cookies--only at Christmas-time and when she had to take cookies to a meeting. Then you noticed an empty mixing bowl and some cookie sheets in the sink. It really was a cookie smell--your ravenous appetite wasn't playing tricks on you after all. You looked a little further and saw a note from your mother which read:
>
> > Dear J.J., I've gone to get my hair done and will be back in time for dinner. Have been baking cookies all day for the church social tonight. The extras are in the cookie jar. Help yourself and then take the dog for a walk. Love, Mother.
>
> Eagerly you lifted the lid of the cookie jar and peeked inside. Ummm--your favorite cookies! Then as you reached for a cookie, the cookie jar began to spin and grow. The next thing you knew you found yourself falling headfirst into a giant cookie jar. . .

Ask students to finish the story. If some have trouble getting started you might encourage thoughts with such questions as:

> How did you feel when you fell into the cookie jar?

What did you do in there?
How many cookies did you eat?
Was there anything in the cookie jar besides cookies?
Did you try to get out? How?
How did the story end?

When students have finished, ask volunteers to share their stories with the class.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY:

Make a book cover the shape of a cookie jar and approximately the size of a sheet of writing paper. Using it as a pattern, cut paper to match. Then have students proofread and correct their stories and recopy them on "cookie jar" paper. Fasten the stories together to make a book. Decide on a name for the volume of stories and have someone neatly letter the title on the cover and decorate it like a cookie jar.

MAKE A PIONEER STORY

PURPOSE: To develop a story cooperatively.

RESUMÉ: Working together as a class, students build a story about pioneers.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

(The content of the lesson could come from social studies, or from a favorite story. It need not be about pioneers, though the example below uses that topic.)

Begin the story as follows, pointing to individual students to supply words or phrases to fill in each blank:

> One day on the Oregon Trail, a wagon train of pioneers met a band of Indians. The wagon train captain, Mr. _____, walked forward to meet the Indian chief.
>
> The chief said, "We want you to help us. We _____."
>
> Mr. _____ replied, "But we must be traveling. We have _____ miles yet to go."
>
> The chief, whose name was _____, said, "But if you help us, we will help you by _____."
>
> Mr. _____ called the wagon train together, and told the pioneers what the chief had said. The pioneers decided _____.

Encourage the story to continue, child by child contributing a sentence or more and building on what each has given before. You may write the story on the chalkboard.

You may want to stop the story for suggestions of names of major characters, or a review of what has happened before.

If the story bogs down, you may take a turn telling part of the story and introduce a new character or a complication of the plot.

The story could end at any suitable point.

HUMAN CHAMELEON

PURPOSE: To imaginatively assume a physiological change and to write about the experience.

RESUMÉ: After the basic concept of a chameleon is established, students are asked to imagine that they too are able to change color to match their surroundings. They write a story about their experiences.

MATERIALS: Picture of a chameleon (optional)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

A few days before teaching the lesson, write Mystery Word: Chameleon on a piece of brightly colored paper and display it in the room where students will be sure to see it.

To begin the discussion session, ask students to tell what they know about the word "chameleon." (How to pronounce the word may be a significant contribution as some students may know about a chameleon and not recognize the word.) Elicit, or tell, that the chameleon is unique in that it changes color according to its surroundings. It is a member of the lizard family and its name means dwarf ground lion. Show a picture of a chameleon if one is available.

Ask students to think of advantages and disadvantages of the chameleon's automatic color change and list their ideas on the board under appropriate headings. You may need to pose some questions to encourage ideas:

How would changing color to match his surroundings protect the chameleon?
Can you think of a situation in which being the same color as his surroundings might be dangerous?
Because of his color what might the chameleon be able to do that other animals couldn't?
How might the chameleon's color limit the things he could do?

Then ask students to imagine they possess the same magic power as the little lizard--that they are human chameleons. Their whole body and all their clothing changes color to match their surroundings. Their hair, eyes, fingernails--everything--changes color automatically whenever they enter a new setting. But color is the only way their body changes. They are still the same size, think the same, move the same--in every other way they are exactly the same.

Have students close their eyes and try to imagine what it would be like to be a human chameleon in these situations. Pause between each suggestion to give students time to form a mental image and think about each situation.

You are in a field of snow.
You are in the woods.
You are on a school playground.
You are on a football field.
You are in a shadow.

Then ask each student to continue imagining himself as a real live human chameleon and to choose an imaginary place or scene to be in. When they have a setting clearly in mind, they may write a story about their experience as a human chameleon.

If some students have difficulty getting started, work with them individually, suggesting ideas through such questions as:

Where are you?
What color are you?
How does it feel to be like that?
What time of day or night is it?
Are there any other creatures or people near you? If so, who?
Does anyone or anything come near you? If so, why?
What do they do?
What do you do?
What happens next? etc.

When students have finished their stories, let them get together in groups to read the stories to each other. Have students watch for missing words and other errors as they read their stories so they can make corrections. When they are satisfied that they have done the best job they can to make their stories easy for someone else to read, let them display their stories on the bulletin board or make them into a book. (They might like to share them with another class.)

FOOT-TALL HUMANS

PURPOSE: To use imagination and logic in writing a story.

RESUME: Students are asked to pretend they and all other humans have suddenly become one foot tall. They are to carry this idea to a conclusion in story form.

MATERIALS:

Rulers (one for each student)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Tell your students that today you want them to pretend something. They are to imagine that one night every human being suddenly shrank. Adults became one foot tall, and children were even smaller than one foot. But all buildings, cars, animals and birds remained the same size.

To help students recognize the significance of such an event, place a ruler on the desk or floor and have them notice how big one foot is. Then have them measure things in the classroom to see which things are taller or shorter than one foot.

Guide students' imaginations with such considerations as:

Can you imagine what the world would look like if you were just a foot tall? (Maybe some would like to view the classroom from this level.)
Would grownups be able to drive their cars?
Would you be able to open a door? Get into a chair? Wash your hands?
What things could you do that you can't do now? What couldn't you do?

When students seem to have an understanding of what it would be like to be small, move on to considerations of what might happen under those conditions:

How would you get your food?
Where might you take a nap?
Assuming that the clothes you had on shrank with your body, where and how would you get new clothes?

HALLOWEEN

PURPOSE: To provide an opportunity to write a Halloween story from a different point of view.

RESUMÉ: Students are asked to think about what happened to their jack-o-lanterns on Halloween night. Then they are given a story beginning and asked to finish the story.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Ask a few volunteers to tell what happened to their jack-o-lanterns on Halloween night. In response, suggest that some jack-o-lanterns might have had some interesting experiences and would have fascinating stories to tell. Then ask students to listen while you read or tell the following story.

. . . It was the day after Halloween and several discarded jack-o-lanterns were lying on a trash pile. They were discussing their activities on Halloween night.

"I sat in a window the whole evening," said one sadly.

"My owner dropped me and I really cracked my head," moaned another.

Two more pumpkins spoke at the same time, "We went trick or treating."

Suddenly the smallest pumpkin began to talk. "I didn't expect anyone to buy me," he said, "because I am rather lopsided, but a man came into the store on Halloween night and took me home with him. When we got to his house I could hear excited voices but it was quite a little while before the man cut some eyes in me so I could see. Next he carved me a nose so I could smell and then he sliced me a great big mouth. I was going to say 'thank you' but then I remembered how upset people get when you talk to them."

A fat old pumpkin nodded his head wisely and muttered, "People don't think we can talk. It really shakes them up when they hear us."

The little pumpkin agreed and continued his story. "They put a candle in my middle and I felt very warm. Then children in strange-looking costumes picked me up and carried me out into the dark windy night."

Composition C

The little pumpkin's eyes grew very large and he whispered, "You'll never believe what happened then. . "

Ask students to write a story about the little pumpkin's adventures. If some students have difficulty getting started you might ask such questions as:

Where did the children take the little pumpkin?
What did he see? What did he hear?
How did he feel out in the dark windy night?
What happened to him?

Plan a way to share stories. Students could work in pairs helping each other proofread and correct their stories. The stories could then be typed on dittoes and made into books so each child would have a copy of all the stories.

SNOWTIME

PURPOSE: To use all the senses to experience the excitement of the first snowfall.

RESUMÉ: Students go outside to romp in the falling snow, then return to the classroom to write their observations.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

When the first snowflakes of winter begin to fall they are like magnets which draw all eyes. Schoolwork is forgotten. So bundle up and take your class out to run through the floating flakes. However, before you leave the classroom ask your students to tell some of the various ways in which they can find out about the characteristics of snow.

After you have returned to the classroom and before the students begin writing, discuss with them their reactions to the snow. Make a list of their describing words on the chalkboard. These can be used when the students begin writing their paragraphs.

Questions such as these should bring a variety of responses:

How did the snowflakes feel?
How did the snow change the way the landscape looked?
Were there any special sounds?
What words could be used to describe a single snowlfake?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Almost every anthology of children's poetry contains some excellent poems about "snow." Perhaps some students would enjoy locating several of these to read aloud to the rest of the class.

GROUNDHOG DAY[1]

PURPOSE: To recognize and describe a different point of view.

RESUMÉ: The students write as if they were the groundhog who has just come out of his hole to make his yearly prediction about the coming of spring.

MATERIAL: Picture of a groundhog (see Supplementary Materials)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Display the picture of the groundhog for several days prior to February 2. As a research project have your class find out all they can about the superstition concerning the groundhog and his ability to predict the coming of spring.

Let your students choose a specific time and place within the confines of the school day for their imaginary groundhog to make his appearance on February 2. On Groundhog Day (or the day closest, if Groundhog Day falls on Saturday or Sunday) take your class to the designated spot a few minutes before the time chosen. Let the students get as close to the ground as possible so they can see how everything would look from the groundhog's point of view.

Guide their observation with questions such as:

> What are some of the things you see?
> Do the objects around you seem different when you look at them from ground level? How are they different? Why?
> What are some things you notice which you might ordinarily overlook?

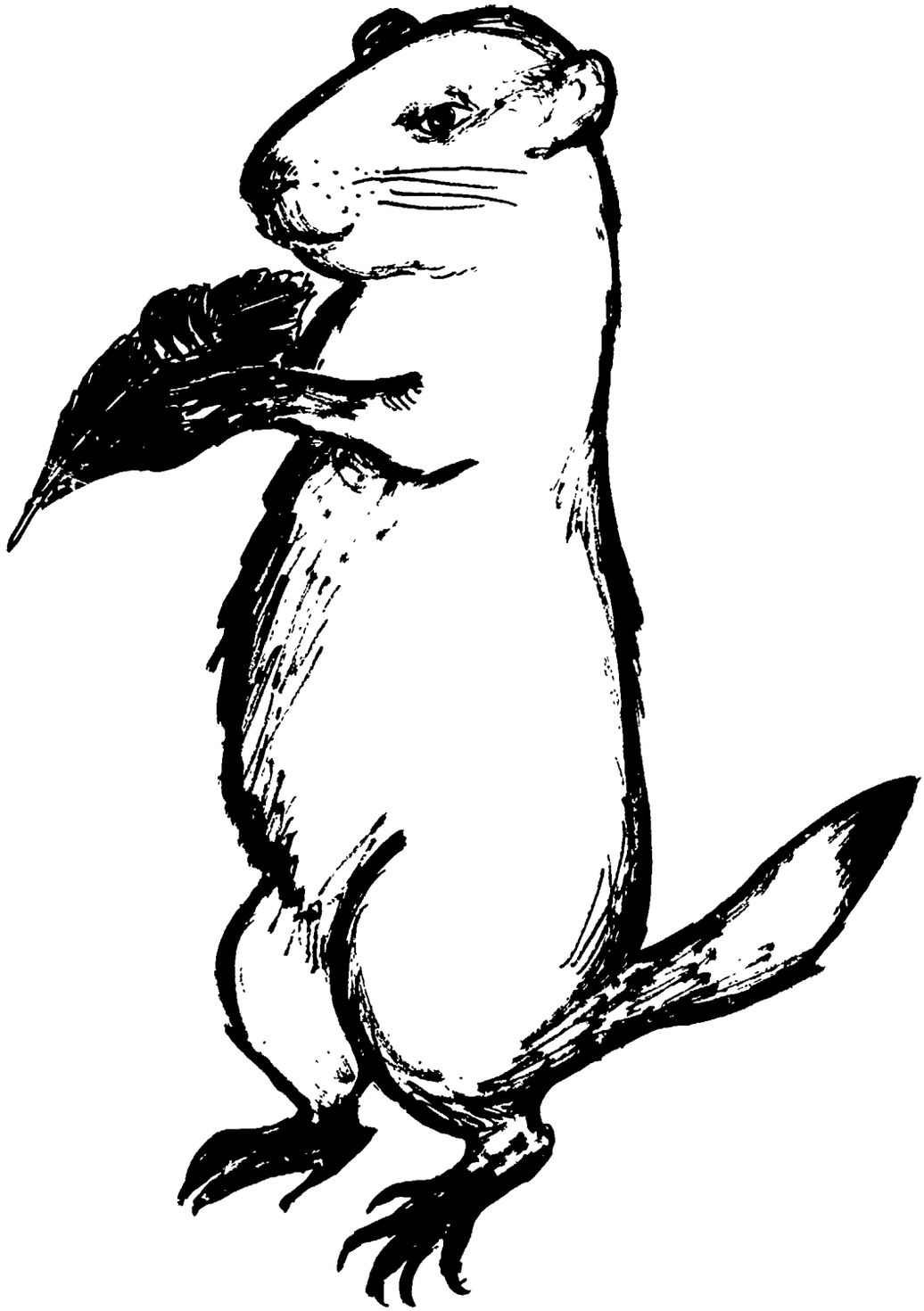
Take the students back into the classroom and have them write a monologue for the imaginary groundhog. Suggest they write what he would think and say as he poked his head up out of the ground at that particular time and spot. Ask them to think how he would describe what he saw. Would he decide to stay out?

---

[1] Groundhog Day is based on a custom that people from Germany and Great Britain brought to America. They believed that this particular day was a time for forecasting the weather for the next six weeks. According to legend, the groundhog or woodchuck, awakens from his long winter's nap on February 2. He sticks his head out of his home in the ground and looks around. If the sun is shining and the groundhog can see his shadow, he is frightened and crawls back to his hole. This is supposed to mean that there will be six more weeks of winter. But if the day is cloudy and the groundhog can't see his shadow he stays out of his hole, indicating that spring weather will soon come.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

Some of the students may tape record their groundhog monologues. If so, have them plan their presentation--how fast or slow a groundhog would talk and what expressions he would use.



SPRING

PURPOSE: To organize a story and present it orally.

RESUME: Students plan and tell a story about little people who live in flowers.

MATERIALS:

Tulips and/or daffodils (may be artificial)
2 or 3 tape recorders

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin this lesson by examining the flowers and analyzing their structure. Point out that both the daffodil and the tulip have centers hidden by petals and could be used by a very small person as a resting or hiding place.

Ask students to imagine a garden where flowers do hide tiny creatures. Discuss such questions as:

What part of the flower would the little people live in?
Could they live below ground and use the flower as a sundeck or lookout tower?
How might they travel from place to place? Might they use an animal for transportation? If so, which one(s)?
What materials might they use to make their clothing?
How would they protect themselves from cold? from rain? from danger?
What games might they play?
What foods might they eat?
What adventures might they have?

Give students a few minutes to plan a story about little flower people. Then divide the class into two or three groups (as many groups as you have tape recorders and sound space for) and let them tape record their stories as they share them with the group.

During free time on succeeding days, students may want to listen to their stories again or to listen to stories from another group. Some students may think of additional stories they wish to tape record.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Children might like to do an art activity in connection with this lesson. Paint, crayon, cut paper, etc., could be used to portray a garden and tiny people.

SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

In groups the children could plan and act out a scene involving a single experience for the tiny people. For example, an escape from a cat, what happens in a storm, or some other idea involving a conflict to be resolved.

APRIL FOOL ZOO

PURPOSE: To use humor in writing a story.

RESUME: The students create an imaginary creature and write a story about something that happened to it on April Fool's Day.

MATERIALS:

Drawing paper (one piece for each student)
Crayons

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Read this poem to your students.

APRIL FOOL ZOO

Have you ever seen a pink monkey that cries?
Or a polka dot dog start to giggle?
A shiny white tiger with tears in his eyes?
Or a blue pig who walks with a wiggle?

Have you ever noticed a lavender cat
Who smiled as he read a good book?
Or a short-necked giraffe with a baseball bat?
You could if you'd take time to look.

I've stared at a perfectly lovely green cow,
And a striking red porcupine too,
And if you want to view all these marvelous things,
Just visit an APRIL FOOL ZOO.

-- Margie Walkenshaw

Ask students why they think the poem is entitled "April Fool Zoo"? Let them tell what is unusual about each animal. If they can't remember, read the poem once more to help them. Pass out the sheets of paper and have students plan and draw their own unusual creature.

When the students have finished their animals ask them to think of something funny that might happen to their animal on April Fool's Day. Suggest they think about (1) what happened, (2) what caused it to happen, and (3) who else was there. Then have them plan and write an entertaining story about something that would only happen to their animal on April Fool's Day. Let volunteers show their animals and share their stories by reading them to the rest of the class.

Composition D
(Revised)

LOOK AT THIS

PURPOSE: To develop visual observation skills and to write clear description.

RESUMÉ: Students watch the interaction of oil and water and water-base paint and water and then write their observations.

MATERIALS:

Jars of water (one jar for each 3 or 4 students)
Salad oil
Liquid water-base paint

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Arrange students' seating into groups of three or four. Place a jar of water in the center of each group. Tell students that you are going to put something in the water and they are to observe what happens. Make certain they understand that they are to observe only; they are not to touch or move the jar. Explain that they will be asked to write something later but that during the observation they will need to keep their eyes on the jar in order to observe closely.

Drop a few drops of oil into each jar of water. Allow several moments for students in each group to observe and discuss what happens.

Then drop a few drops of paint in each jar, again cautioning students to keep their eyes on the jar. Don't rush the observation at this point--any paint that falls on top of oil will take longer to move.

When students have had an adequate time to observe what happened ask them to cooperatively write a description of what they saw. Tell them to be sure their description follows the sequence in which each thing happened. Suggest they try to think of interesting and vivid comparisons to use in their descriptions. (e.g., The paint drifted slowly downward like _____.)

After descriptions have been finished combine two groups and let them read their descriptions to each other. Have them listen for such things as sequence, clarity of description, effectiveness of comparisons, word choice, etc.

Call the total class together and discuss what makes a good description. Write their generalizations on the board:

A good description

_____

_____

_____

etc.

ICE-CUBE OBSERVATIONS

PURPOSE: To develop sensory awareness and description.

RESUMÉ: Students pass an ice cube around in a small circle. Students tell sensory observations, make comparisons and express feelings about the ice cubes. Then students write about ice in prose or poetry.

MATERIALS:

Ice cubes, about a dozen
Paper towels or napkins (optional)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

(This might be a good activity for a warm fall or spring day.)

Ask students to form groups of six to eight students each. Have the groups sit in a circle.

Tell students that you are going to give each group an ice cube. They are to pass it around the circle to the right. As each person gets the ice cube he is to examine it and tell something he observed. Urge students to use all their senses as they think about the ice cube. No one may repeat an observation given by someone else in his circle.

Pass out the cubes and let students begin stating their observations. (Examples: Ice is cold; Ice cubes are slippery; etc.)

After a few minutes, when everyone has had at least one turn, change the activity to making comparisons. Tell the students that this time they are to think of something to which they can compare the ice cube. Again, remind them to use their senses and to tell what the ice cube feels like, looks like, and so on. (It might be a good idea to pass out new ice cubes at this point.)

After a few minutes, when everyone has had a turn in making comparisons, again change the focus of the activity. Now ask students to tell how the ice cube affects them--how it makes them feel or what it reminds them of.

Then gather up the ice cubes and ask students to write down some of their thoughts and ideas about ice. Let them choose the form for expressing themselves. Some may write a series of sentences in list order, some may develop a paragraph and some may feel in the mood to write a poem. Encourage students to choose their words carefully to express their exact thought.

WHAT'S IN MY SACK?

PURPOSE: To choose words effectively in order to describe the feel of objects.

RESUME: Each student is asked to bring a paper sack containing three objects. They then trade sacks and (without looking inside) feel the objects and describe them to their partner.

MATERIAL: Paper sacks containing three objects (one sack for each student)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

A day or two before this lesson ask students to bring a paper sack with three objects in it--for example, a small brush, a piece of sponge, a string, a pebble, or a twig. Caution the students that the objects they bring should not be valuable or easily broken, should not be sharp or dangerous to touch, nor should they be perishable (such as jello or cake). Stress that the contents of each child's sack is to be his or her own "secret." (It is a good idea to have three or four extra sacks ready in case some of the students forget to bring theirs.)

To begin the lesson ask students to take out a pencil and then close their eyes. Have students feel the pencil and think of as many ways as possible to describe the pencil by touch only. Elicit responses about size, shape, weight, texture, and material. Have students open their eyes and together make a list on the board of the kinds of things they can tell about an object just by feeling it. The list would probably include: how big it is, how heavy it is, whether it is rough or smooth, what it seems to be made of, and what it feels like.

Arrange students in pairs. Then ask them to trade sacks. Direct one student in each pair to feel an object in his bag and without looking describe it to his partner. He must tell at least three things about the feel of the object before he tells what he thinks it might be. If students have difficulty describing the feel of an object, suggest they look at the list on the board for help.

After the first student in each pair has described an object in his sack and guessed it correctly, direct the other partner to follow the same procedure in describing an object in his sack. Continue taking turns until all the objects have been described and guessed.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

Have each student choose one of his objects and write a "touch riddle" about it. The riddle can be neatly written on a half sheet of paper and pasted inside a folded sheet of heavy construction paper (like the verse in a greeting card.) Decorate the front cover with assorted scraps of textured materials arranged in an interesting design. Display the finished folders on a shelf or table where students may feel the design and read the riddles.

SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

See Lesson 1, Drama D

UNUSUAL SANDWICHES

PURPOSE: To stimulate the sense of taste; to develop uniqueness of thought.

RESUME: Students think of new and unusual types of sandwiches.

MATERIALS: Pictures of sandwiches (optional)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

As an introduction have the students name as many kinds of sandwiches as possible and list these on the chalkboard. The list need not be exhaustive; do not continue this activity more than three to five minutes.

Tell the students they are to pretend they are chefs. Ask each student to choose a sandwich filling (peanut butter, tuna fish, cheese, etc.) and think of ingredients to combine with it that will make a delicious and unusual sandwich. Caution them that all ingredients must be edible.

Have them write the recipe for their sandwich. They may draw it also, if they wish. Then they may share their recipes with the class.

If the interest is high, it would be possible to extend this lesson and plan to make a class cookbook. If this is decided, it would be best to bring a cookbook and read some actual sandwich recipes to the students, so that they would realize how to begin. This activity could culminate in a dittoed sandwich cookbook they could take home to their parents.

CLOUD WATCHING

PURPOSE: To write a descriptive paragraph.

RESUME: The students observe cloud formations and write a paragraph describing the appearance and movement of the clouds.

MATERIALS:

Water colors
Art paper
Opaque projector

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Since cloud formations are the basis for this writing assignment, you will have to select the appropriate time for the observation. Choose a day when there is a great deal of contrast between clouds and sky and when winds aloft are moving and changing the formations.

Take your students outside and let them sit or lie down to watch the movements of the clouds. Guide their observation with suggestions to look for variety in color, formations which look like people or animals, and any other interesting shapes. Be sure the students have ample time to watch the clouds, to see them move and change. (You may want to return to the classroom at this point to complete the lesson.)

Ask students to write a description of the clouds. Some may want to write poetry. If so, emphasize word choice rather than form; poetry does not have to follow a set meter or rhyme pattern. Stress the fact that they are trying to draw a picture using words.

Let students paint a water-color picture of the cloud scene they have described. Then using the opaque projector, let volunteers read their descriptive paragraphs or poems and show their pictures.

THE STORY OF AN OLD HAT

PURPOSE: Ob· ·ving and making inferences.

RESUMÉ: Students orally try to re-create experience of an old hat.

MATERIALS: A well-worn hat (any kind--dress, cowboy, engineer, straw, etc.)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Hold up the hat and let students observe it. You may want to pass it around for closer observation. Discuss what kind of hat it is, who might wear a hat like this, and how it is different from its new condition. Write on the board the words or phrases the students use in describing the old hat.

C ntinue the discussion with such questions as:

Where do you think this old hat has been?
What kinds of experiences do you think this old hat has had?
What might have caused this hole (or spot, or other sign of wear)?
What experience of the old hat do you think was most exciting? Most enjoyable?

Ask students to pretend the old hat is telling them episodes from its life. Have them listen carefully to their imaginations for the interesting things it has experienced or places it has been.

Allow a few m o ments for thinking and then let volunteers tell stories of the old hat's life. If many students volunteer,, you may want to limit each story to one adventure or episode. The stories could be tape recorded and replayed later by individuals or for the whole class.

HOW DOES STEAM WORK?

PURPOSE: To predict, observe, and then describe a demonstration.

RESUMÉ: Students see the materials for a science demonstration, and are told how these materials will be used. They predict what they think will happen. Then they observe the demonstration and describe what actually happened.

MATERIALS:

An empty spice can
A nail
Water
String
Cellophane tape
A bunsen burner or other type of heat source

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Beforehand, punch a hole on each side of the can about one-half inch from the bottom, and on opposite sides. Add about two tablespoons of water and seal the top. Tape a piece of string to the top.

Hold the can so the students can see it. Tell them you are going to hold the can by the string over the open flame, and ask the students to write down what they think will happen to it.

Then ask the students to observe carefully as you hold the can over the flame. Direct students to keep their eyes on the can and to try to remember exactly what happens and in what order it happens. The escaping steam should make the can spin.

After an adequate demonstration, set the can down, turn off the burner and ask the students to describe what they saw. Then ask them why they think the can moved. Finally, have them silently read their prediction and compare it with what actually happened. Did they make an accurate prediction? What did they predict that actually happened? What was different? Why?

Composition D
(Revised)

WHAT COLOR IS THAT?
(Optional lesson in lieu of HOW DOES STEAM WORK?)

PURPOSE: To predict, observe, and describe the mixing of colors.

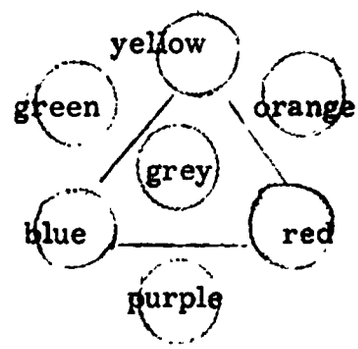
RESUMÉ: Combinations of primary color paints are mixed to produce secondary colors. Then orange and blue (opposites) are mixed. Before each combination of paints is mixed students are asked to predict what color it will make and to be aware of associations that come to their minds. After the discussion-demonstration students individually write about their favorite color.

MATERIALS:

Small jars of yellow, red, and blue liquid tempera paint
4 small empty jars
7 paint brushes
A large sheet of tagboard or poster paper

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Show the class the three colors of paint and paint a circle of each color in triangular formation on the tagboard. Then ask students what they think will happen when you mix yellow and red. Hold up an empty jar and pour in equal portions of the two colors. Stir gently and then paint another circle on the tagboard between the yellow and red. Discuss whether their predictions were correct and talk about what the new color (orange) reminds them of. Continue in the same way with red and blue and with blue and yellow.



Have the class take a good look at the colors you now have on the chart. Tell them that yellow, red and blue are called primary colors and that every other color can be made by mixing just those three colors together in various amounts. The colors you have just made are called secondary colors. (Students may have already talked about this during the previous discussion. If so, make appropriate summary statements.)

Now ask students to predict what will happen if you mix directly opposite colors. Follow the same procedure as before using orange and blue paint and then paint a circle in the middle of the color wheel.

Discuss how different colors make them feel, which ones they associate with spring, winter, Halloween, Christmas, happiness, rain, sleep, etc. Then ask each student to write about his favorite color, to describe it and tell why he likes it.

POPCORN THROUGH THE SENSES

PURPOSE: To use all the senses in making observations.

RESUME: Students observe popcorn before, during, and after popping and make observations. They write their observations on appropriate shapes of paper and make a bulletin board.

MATERIALS:

Popcorn and electric oopper
Art paper--white and light brown (scraps may be used)
Scissors (one pair for every two or three students)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Tell your students that today they are to try to discover as many things as possible about popcorn by using all five of their senses. Point out that often when we describe things we are limited to telling how it looks, because we aren't able to use the other senses in our observations. (It may be too far away or be displayed under glass; it may not make a sound; or it may be poisonous; and so on.) But looking is only one of the five senses, and whenever we can safely use other senses in observing something we will be able to give a far more complete description of it.

Have two or three people come to the front of the room and ask them to observe popcorn before it is popped. If they only look at it, ask the rest of the class to suggest other ways they can find out what unpopped corn is really like (tasting, feeling, biting on kernels, smelling, listening). Write their observations on the board.

Pop the corn, asking students to quietly observe with all their senses. When the popcorn is finished, pass it around so that everyone has some. As the popcorn is passed, urge students to think of ways to observe it other than by tasting it. Make a new column of their observations on the board. Give students time to thoughtfully examine the popcorn and take turns giving their observations. (You may want to have another popperful going while they are doing this, both to keep the aroma before them and to replenish their dwindling supply.)

Plan and make a bulletin board to graphically display students' sensory observations. Divide the bulletin board space into a section for observations about unpopped corn and a section for observations about popped corn. Have part of the class cut pieces of light brown paper into the shape of unpopped kernels and write an observation from the list on the board on each "kernel." Pin these in a mound shape in the section of the bulletin board designated for observations about unpopped corn. Have the rest of the class cut white paper into shapes of popped corn, write observations on them, and pin them to the other section of the bulletin board in such a way as to suggest the motion of popping corn. Decide on a suitable caption for the project and let a small committee prepare the lettering.

WHAT IS IT? YOU DECIDE

PURPOSE: To use imagination in creating a line drawing and a story.

RESUMÉ: Students are given a partially-completed line drawing and asked to complete it and then write a story about it.

MATERIALS: One copy of line drawing for each student.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

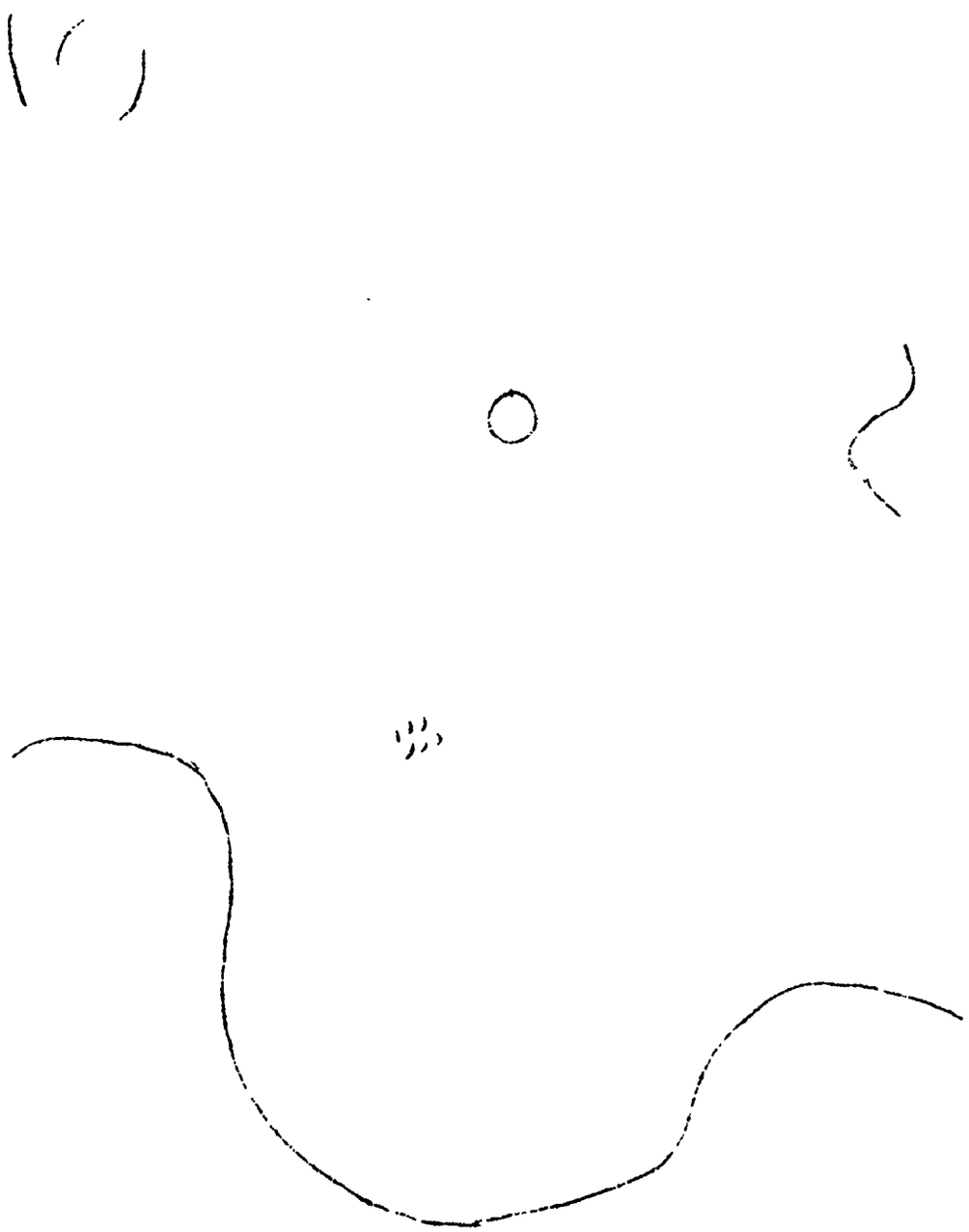
Pass out copies of the unfinished drawing. Ask students to look at the lines and to think how they could add to the lines to make a picture. The lines may suggest a familiar animal or scene, or something new and different. Have them look at it in different positions; they may turn the paper in any direction they wish.

When students have some ideas, direct them to draw in the necessary lines to complete the picture. Urge them to draw something no one else will think of; to be as original as possible.

After the drawings have been finished, ask the students to write a short story or description of it. Again urge them to be original.

Ask volunteers to share their drawings and stories with the class, either orally or on the bulletin board.

WHAT IS IT? YOU DECIDE



THE MAGIC BICYCLE

PURPOSE: To use imagination in writing.

RESUME: Students imagine that they are riding a magic bicycle that travels anywhere by itself, and cannot be controlled by its rider.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Read or tell the following:

> Imagine that one day you are out riding your bicycle near your home, when suddenly a funny-looking old man appears. He points a crooked finger at your bicycle, mumbles a few words, and then giggles, "Tee-hee-hee!" and disappears.
>
> All at once your bicycle begins to jump and shake, and then it leaps through the air, higher, and higher! You can't control it! You seem to be glued to your seat, and your hands are glued to the handlebars! No matter what you do, the bicycle keeps on going, higher and higher, farther and farther from home!
>
> What do you think will happen? Where does the bicycle eventually land? What do you do there? How will the adventure end?

Ask the students to write an ending for the story, telling about their adventures on the magic bicycle and how they finally return home.

When all have finished, ask for volunteers to share their stories with the rest of the class. Students might like to make corrections on their first copy after reading it to the class and recopy their story neatly. Illustrations could also be added and the stories fastened together to make a book.

ALTERNATE IDEAS:

1. Let each student make a picture book of his story by drawing the story in a series of pictures and writing an appropriate sentence or two under each picture. Fasten the sheets together to make an individual book.

2. Let the class decide on a fictional character to ride the bicycle. Give him or her a name and establish his or her age. Rewrite the opening story to fit the character and then have each student write a separate adventure. Combine the various adventures as separate chapters in a book using the rewritten original situation as the first chapter. Have the class decide how the person got home and write an ending chapter to the book as a group composition. Someone could be the artist to illustrate the book.

SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

Play out what happens to the rider and magic bicycle. Ask questions before the playing such as:

Where does the bicycle land?
Is it an unusual place?
Are there any people there?
What will you do?
How will you get home?
Etc.

TALKING ERASERS

PURPOSE: To write conversation in dialogue form.

RESUMÉ: Students are asked to imagine that chalkboard erasers can talk, and are asked to tell what they might say.

MATERIALS: Two chalkboard erasers

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Hold up two erasers and ask students to imagine what it must be like to be an eraser. Encourage thought and discussion with such questions as:

What are these erasers used for?
(Students may think of uses - such as throwing - other than that for which erasers were designed.)
How would you describe the appearance or looks of these erasers?
How much work do you think these erasers do every day?

Then ask the students, "If erasers had thoughts and feelings, would they enjoy being erasers?"

Ask the children to pretend it is after school, and two erasers, Chalky and Dusty, are talking to each other. What kinds of tales might two erasers tell to each other about what went on in the classroom?

Divide the class into pairs, and ask the pairs of students to write a dialogue between Chalky and Dusty. Show them how to write conversation in play form - stating the name of the speaker, and following it by a colon at the beginning of each speech.

To share their work let students choose a partner and practice reading each other's dialogue. Discuss the need to read with expression so it will sound like a conversation. Perhaps a few volunteers would like to read their dialogue to the whole class.

TURN ON THE DARK

PURPOSE: To use imagination and logic in carrying a fantasy idea to its conclusion.

RESUME: Students are asked to pretend they can, by a switch, turn on dark as easily as light. They then write advertisements introducing the new product and urging people to buy it.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

The concept of "turning on the dark" is pure fantasy without any scientific justification. It may be easy for most students to grasp, but there may be a few students who will need further explanation and motivation.

Begin by saying something like the following: "Today we are going to use our imaginations. Suppose a weird old inventor has just invented a 'dark' switch that will turn on the dark just like you turn on a light. In other words, you can flip a switch and suddenly it is dark in the room, like night, even though it is bright and sunny outside and the curtains are still open."

Discuss the idea of a 'dark' switch, using such questions as:

Would such an invention be useful?
What would you do if you had a "dark switch" in your home?
How might other people use it?
When might people use it?
Would you want one in every room?

(List their ideas on the board.)

If students have difficulty thinking of ideas, suggest uses with such questions as "Have you ever tried to sleep on a bright sunny day, and found your bedroom was too bright, even if you pulled the curtains? How would the dark invention help people who work nights and must sleep during the day?"

After students have grasped the concept, ask them to imagine this invention has been put on the market. Ask them to pretend to be salesmen and to think what they would say to make people want to buy it.

Divide the class into groups of two to four students and ask them to write advertisements for the invention. (You may need to discuss advertisements or have students analyze a newspaper, TV ad, or radio advertisement before they plan one. Consider such questions as "How long is an ad? What is shown? What is said? How do ads start? etc.") Groups could write newspaper, radio, or television advertisements. Have them share their projects by acting them out or reading them to the rest of the class.

Or, suppose the clothes you had on didn't shrink.
What problems would that create?
Imagine going on a trip. What problems would you have?

Ask students to think of something interesting, funny, or sad that might happen to a little person one foot tall, and write a story about it.

SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

After the questioning period, divide the students into groups of 3 or 4 to act out a scene involving a conflict between foot-tall humans and their use of normal-sized environment. The teacher could determine the problem they are to solve, or the students could figure out their own problem--such as being late for school unless they can get the door open on time, etc.

A TV DOOR

PURPOSE: To write a persuasive advertisement.

RESUMÉ: Students are asked to imagine that a new invention is about to be announced. They discuss its possible value and write a commercial to introduce the product.

MATERIALS: Tape recorder

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Ask students to imagine that a new invention is soon to be announced. Explain that it appears to be an ordinary wooden door but that it actually contains a secret television device which allows the person on the inside of the door to see who or what is on the other side just as if he were looking through an open doorway.

For example, when the doorbell rings, if you want to see who is there before opening the door, you simply push a button and the entire door becomes a TV screen. At the same time, the picture and sound are recorded on video tape which can be played back at another time if you wish. The person on the other side of the door is completely unaware that he is on television. In fact, he won't even know that anyone is home unless you open the door.

The TV door comes in a variety of sizes and styles and can be used to replace any existing door or may be installed in new construction. It is slightly thicker than an ordinary door because all the equipment is inside it. It is extremely sturdy and practically indestructible.

Ask students to imagine having such a door to their house or apartment. When might they want to turn the TV unit on? What advantages can they think of for having a TV door?

Continue the discussion by asking them to think of situations outside the home where a TV door might be useful. (Doctor's or dentists's office? Bank? School?)

Ask students to plan and write the script for a radio or television commercial announcing the new TV door. Suggest that students choose a name for it. In writing the commercial, remind students to use words and phrases that will make their listeners want to rush right out and order a new TV door. Point out that advertising time on radio and television is expensive, so they will probably want to make their commercial fairly short.

Students may work either singly or in pairs for this assignment. As they complete their copy let them tape record their commercials. Share the commercials later with the entire class.

TREASURE MAP

PURPOSE: To write specific directions.

RESUME: Students use a map of an island and choose a place to bury an imaginary treasure chest. Then they write specific directions for finding the treasure.

MATERIALS:

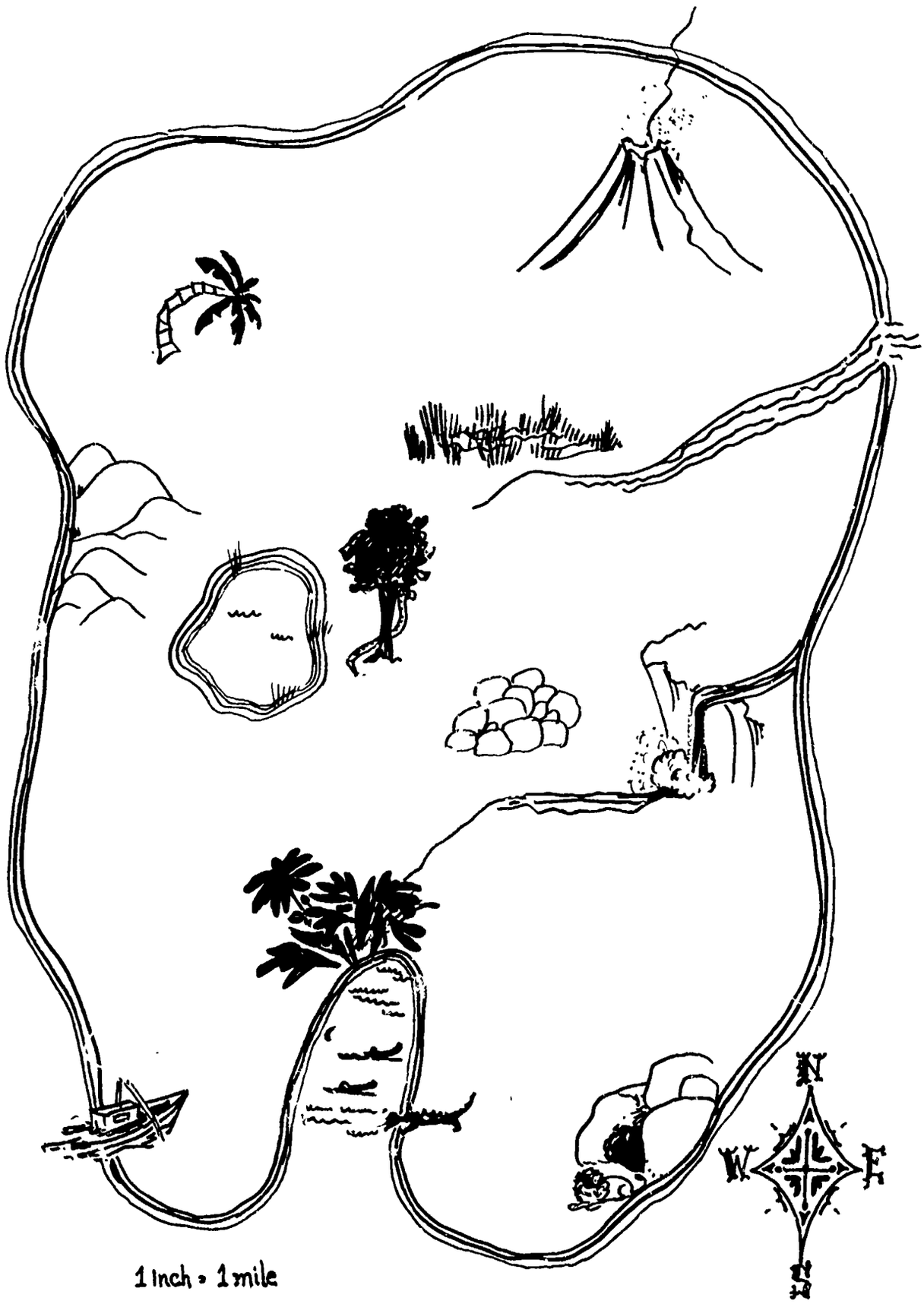
Treasure map (one for each student)
Rulers(one for each student)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Give each student a map of the island. Look the map over together and give the students an opportunity to identify the various landmarks. Discuss directions on the map and explain the way a scale is used.

Ask the students to imagine they each have a treasure chest that they are going to bury somewhere on the island Have them study the map closely and then choose a place. They may choose any spot they like. Wait a few moments while they make their decision. Then ask the students to write directions for finding the treasure. First have them tell where to start the treasure hunt and then plan the route to the treasure. They can direct the searcher in any direction from the starting place but they must tell the number of miles, the direction the searcher should travel, and the landmarks he would pass.

When the students have completed their work let them choose a partner. Have partners exchange papers and read the directions. Then have them show on the map where they think the treasure is buried. If a student has written directions carefully, his partner should be able to discover the treasure.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1 inch = 1 mile

RIDDLE AND RHYME

PURPOSE: To think of comparisons; to write simple rhymes.

RESUMÉ: Students choose an object, and write a riddle in simple rhyme form for other students to guess.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Tell students that they are going to play a riddle-and-rhyme game today. Explain that they will write rhymed riddles and then try to guess each other's riddles.

First, do a rhymed riddle together as a class. Choose an object in the room, such as the clock. Ask students to think of ways to describe the clock--its size, shape, color and use. Suggest that comparing it to other things is one way of describing. Write their ideas on the board.

From these ideas, try to make a rhymed riddle about the clock. Caution students to include clues without giving it away. For example, you might come up with something like:

One-eyed glasses
Cover its face;
Round it goes
But keeps in place.

Then ask each student to choose an object (you may wish to limit objects to those in the room). Have each student make a descriptive list of their object's size, shape, color, use, and things to which it might be compared. Then have them try to make a rhymed riddle from their list of ideas. Keep the form flexible--let them use any rhyme scheme they wish and suggest that they might add other interesting comparisons.

Give encouragement and help to students who have difficulty writing a riddle. If necessary, gather together a group of non-productive students and write a riddle together so they too will have something to share.

To share the rhymed riddles, you might play "21 Questions" and let students ask clarification questions that may be answered with "yes" or "no" until they are able to guess the object.

A VERSATILE PET

PURPOSE: To share ideas and responsibility in writing a group composition.

RESUME: Students imagine their dog or cat can change size, shape, and color, and write about such a pet.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin by reminding students of a chameleon, which can change color to match its surroundings.

Then ask the students to imagine that their pet dog or cat has the ability to change its color, as well as its size and shape, whenever the owner wishes. Ask:

> What advantages might there be to having a pet like this?
> What disadvantages can you think of?
> What would you do with your pet, if you had one like this?

Have the students use some of their ideas to write a story. Divide students into groups of three or four with at least one capable writer in each group. Encourage everyone to contribute ideas to the group composition.

When stories are finished, type them on dittoes and duplicate, so that every student can have a copy of every story.

MICE WITH HORNS

PURPOSE: To write an imaginative story.

RESUMÉ: Students imagine what might happen if mice had horns like goats and were the size of a cat.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin a discussion of mice.

Where do they live?
What do they do?
How do they act?
Why do they dart here and there?
How do they behave when they see a person? A cat?
Is anything afraid of a mouse?

Ask students to imagine that all at once mice changed, that they became the size of a cat and grew horns on their heads--like goats. Then ask students to think how changing size and having horns might change the life of mice.

How would they feel about themselves?
How would they use their horns?
What might happen if mice were bigger and had horns?

Talk over ideas and then have students write a story about a cat-sized mouse who has grown horns. It might be an adventure with a cat, a dog, a hawk, a human, or something else. Students may want to illustrate their stories. When they are finished, divide the class into groups of four or five students, and let each student read his story to the others in his group.

PEANUT ANIMALS

PURPOSE: To create imaginary creatures and describe them.

RESUME: Students construct animals (and people) with peanuts and toothpicks and then describe them.

MATERIALS:

Unshelled peanuts (two or more for each student)
Toothpicks--round type preferred (four or more per student)
Glue

TEACHING THE LESSON:

This lesson is in two parts: (1) Construction of the peanut animals and people, and (2) Writing about them. You will need to provide a longer class period or two class periods.

Construction:

Use a problem-solving approach and let students discover how to make the peanut animals on their own. Pass out the materials and ask, "How can you use these materials to make an animal or a person?" Encourage experimentation. One possible procedure (for your information) is:

(1) Break the toothpicks in half.
(2) Insert pointed ends of toothpicks into peanut shells, for legs. (Glue may be necessary to keep them in place).
(3) Add features with pens or pencils.

Peanut animals are easier to construct than peanut people, because of the difficulty in getting peanut people to stand, and in adding heads.

If students break the shells in half evenly, the nuts may be removed (and eaten!) and the shells reglued or cut and glued to each other to make heads and longer animals. Centipedes work out well this way.

This will be slow and difficult work for some students and you will need to allow for breakage.

The more ambitious students may wish to use shoe boxes and create cages, pens, and backgrounds for their animals.

Composition:

When students have completed their animals, ask them to write a paragraph telling about the animal or animals they have created. To stimulate writing, suggest questions such as:

What kind of animal is it?
How would you describe it?
What is its name?
Where does it live?
What does it eat?
What does it like to do best?

Then they may show their animal and read their description.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

Some students may be stimulated to write a story or play about their animals.

RICHEST DOG IN THE WORLD

PURPOSE: To cooperatively produce an imaginative story.

RESUME: Students are asked to imagine and describe one day in the life of the richest dog in the world.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Ask the students if they have ever seen a stray dog. (Show the picture if you have one.) Probably several children will have had such an experience and will be eager to tell about it. If so, focus the discussion on how the dog looked and what he did. It might be a good idea for you to have a personal experience in mind to share if needed. Ask the students if they think stray dogs have a good life and why. Tell the students you are going to tell them a story of a stray dog and what happened to him. Read or tell the following:

> Oscar was a poor little brown and white dog who did not have a home. He wandered from door to door. Sometimes a kind person would toss him a bite to eat, but this did not happen very often, and he was usually very hungry. Sometimes he was cold, and sometimes wet.
>
> One day Oscar came to an old, two-story house sitting back in a large wooded lot. An old man opened the door and saw Oscar whimpering and shivering there. "Come on in, dog," the old man said. "You look lonely. I am lonely, too. I need company. I'll give you a home and something to eat."
>
> So Oscar had a home at last. He grew fat and healthy.
>
> One day the old man told Oscar, "You may not know it, little dog, but I am a great wizard. You have been good company to me. But I must go now on a long, long trip that will take many years and I cannot take you along. So I have decided to use my magic and leave you lots and lots of money. You will be the richest dog in the world."

Divide the class into groups of two to five students and ask each group to imagine Oscar's new life and what it would be like. Then have them write a group composition entitled, "A Day in the Life of Oscar, the Richest Dog in the World," and tell what happened to Oscar after he became a rich dog.

If some students have difficulty freeing their imaginations, it might help to talk about Oscar's unusual abilities--understanding human language, desire for money, etc. Perhaps the students can think of other unusual things about Oscar that will help them develop a story.

When the groups have finished, let them share their compositions with the rest of the class.

SUGGESTED DRAMA ACTIVITY:

The groups who are to discuss Oscar's new life might want to act out a scene from his life and then write it up.

ZOO HOMES

PURPOSE: To solve a problem and to present the solution clearly.

RESUMÉ: Students describe a model zoo, in which animals live naturally.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin a discussion of animal homes. If there are pets in the classroom, ask the students what these pets need to be happy. (If there are no classroom pets, ask the students to think of pets at home.) List their suggestions on the chalkboard. The list should include: food, water, ventilation, heat, light, an exercise area, bedding, and so on.

Then lead to wild animals. Ask:

Do wild animals need the same things?
Do they need anything more?
(Are they happy if they are penned up in cages?)
Where would wild animals be the happiest?
Why are some animals kept in a zoo?

Ask who has been to a zoo and call on volunteers to describe the pens and cages of the various animals. Ask the students if they think the animals they saw were happy in each situation.

Tell the students that many zoos now are trying to provide places where wild animals will be healthy and happy, and people will still be able to see them. But the problem is how to provide a natural setting for them and still assure that people who come to see or care for them will be safe.

Have students try to design a safe new zoo that would provide for all the needs of wild animals. Divide the class into committees and ask each committee to design an enclosure for a different animal in a model zoo (or several animals if they could be in one enclosure).

When students have carefully planned the ideal situation, have them draw the design and present their plan to the class. As students concentrate on their animal or animals, raise these questions, and perhaps list them on the chalkboard:

What kind of surroundings would the animals be happiest in?
What are some ways the animals could be kept in one place so they couldn't harm people?
Considering the needs of the animals and the visitors, what should the cages (or enclosures) be like?
How could the animals be fed and cared for in such a cage?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

(1) As a class project, draw a model zoo on a huge sheet of paper (on a bulletin board), using the committee reports, and tell where each type of animal would live.
(2) Make a model of a zoo "cage" or enclosure.
(3) Visit a local zoo on a field trip.
(4) Collect pictures of model zoos.
(5) Ask a speaker to describe a model zoo.

THE ANIMAL THAT WAS DIFFERENT

PURPOSE: To write an imaginative story about an obstinate animal.

RESUMÉ: Students write a story about an animal who does not want to do the things he should do.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Have the class name three or four familiar animals. Then discuss the activities of each animal. For example, if students have named a beaver you might ask what activities they would expect to see if they were observing a beaver.

How does he move about?
How does he get his food?
What else does he do?

List activities suggested by students for each animal on the board.

Then ask students to think what would happen if an animal didn't want to do what was expected of him. For instance, suppose a little beaver couldn't learn to swim and didn't like to build dams. What are some other things he might want to do instead? (Fly? Live in a nest in a tree? Dig a warm hole in the ground like a rabbit? etc.)

After a number of ideas have been explored, have each student choose an animal and write a story about its adventures when it decided to be different.

Questions such as these could be used to help students develop their imaginative tales:

What things does the animal usually do?
In what way does your animal want to be different? Why?
What happens to him when he chooses to be different?
Does he ever decide to do the things he is supposed to do? What causes him to change?

When the stories are completed you might arrange to have students read their stories to a group of first or second graders. If so, caution your students to practice reading their stories so they can do a good job. Sharing their work gives students an opportunity to experience a different audience reaction.

CAVEMAN THUMBS

PURPOSE: To use imagination to create an explanation.

RESUME: Students discover the importance of their thumbs and then write an imaginative story of how humans got thumbs.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Tell students that some scientists believe one important reason man has developed a civilization is because he has thumbs. Students can see why thumbs make a difference and can gain some understanding of the importance of them by experimenting and discussing findings.

Ask students to take a good look at their hands, especially their thumbs Ask them to pick up a book and to notice how their thumbs help hold it. Then have them pick up a pencil and again notice how they use their thumbs. Continue the discussion with such questions as:

> Could you pick up a book without using your thumbs? Try it.
> Could you pick up a pencil without using your thumbs? Could you write? Try writing your name without using your thumbs.
> Could you tie your shoe without using your thumbs? Try it.
> If we didn't have thumbs, what are some things we couldn't do as easily as we do now? Are there some things we couldn't do at all? What are they?

Don't spend too long a time compiling a list; the important thing is for students to understand that thumbs are useful and desirable. When you feel this has been accomplished, move on to the next step of the lesson.

Ask your students to imagine they are living a long time ago in the days of the cave man Have them try to imagine what it would be like to live then. Then ask them to pretend they are cavemen who do not have thumbs -- just four fingers on each hand and that is all. Ask them to think and discuss (1) what their life would be like, (2) what might cause thumbs to gradually grow or suddenly appear on their hands, and (3) how their life would then be changed.

Then plan and write imaginary stories. Students might like to make their stories stretch out over several pages with appropriate illustrations on each page in storybook format. This would allow you to help the less skilled child write his story and share the joy of seeing his words in print.

THE GOSSIPS

PURPOSE: To make inferences; to become aware of essential parts of a story.

RESUME: Students view a cartoon series of a group of students passing gossip about another student. When the gossip finally reaches the person talked about, he shows anger at the person who started the gossip.

MATERIALS: Cartoons (a copy for each student, see Supplementary Mat.)

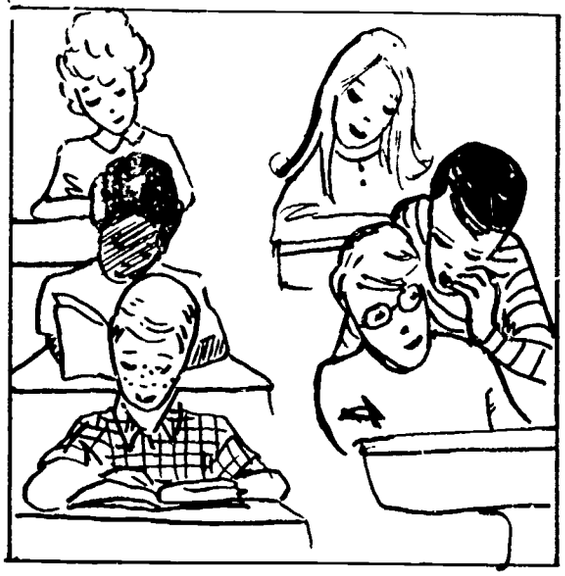
TEACHING THE LESSON:

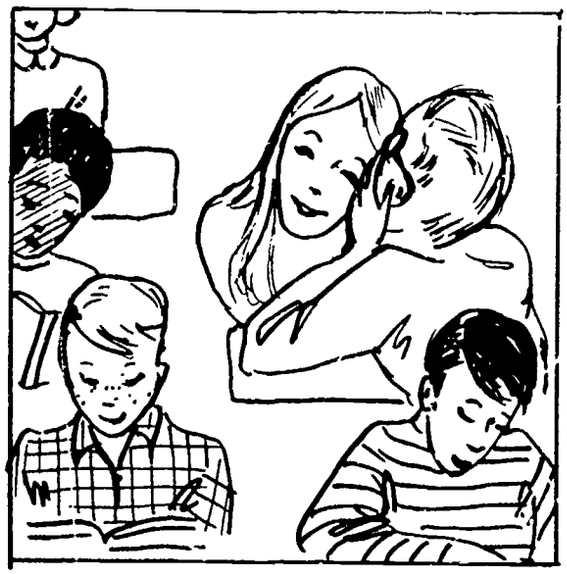
Distribute the student lessons and then ask the students to tell about and interpret the scene.

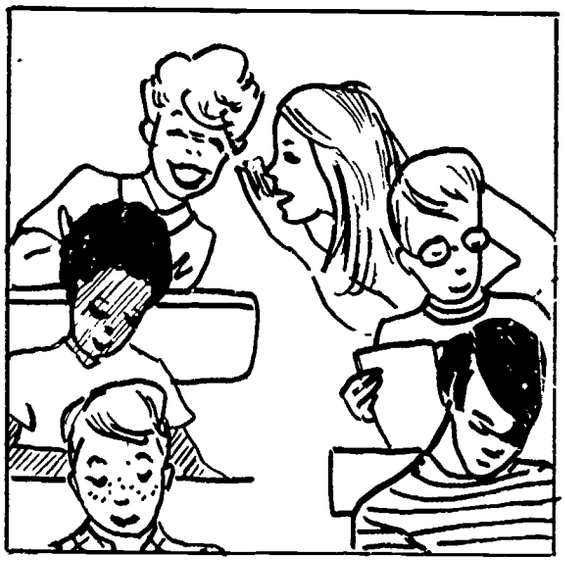
Coach them by such questions as:

Where did the scene take place? Describe it.
Tell step by step what happened.
Was the message serious or funny? Why do you think this?
Why do you think the boy started the gossip?
What do you think the message was?
How do you think the victim felt? What did he do?
Was this the end of the incident? What might happen next?

In small groups have students plan a story about the cartoon scene. They may either present their story to the class orally or put it in writing. Before allowing students to begin to work as a group, discuss what they will need to include in their story. Write the list on the board and later use the list to evaluate each story.







BILLY TAKES A WALK

PURPOSE: To choose words and details effectively in developing an imaginative story.

RESUME: Students are given a dittoed copy of a story framework. They use their imagination to complete the story and fill in the blanks with their choice of words and phrases.

MATERIALS: Dittoed story for each student (see Supplementary Material)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Prepare students for this lesson by playing a game in which they respond to "If. . ." situations. The following examples may be used:

If you cut down a tree with one blow of an ax who might you be? Why?
If a giant in a polka dot suit lassoed a white elephant, what might he do next?
If a bear came into your living room, what might he like best? Why?
If a genie suddenly swirled out of your ball-point pen, what would you do?
If you ate a piece of the most unusual pie in the world, how would you describe it?

Pass out the dit toed stories and tell students they are to complete the story by filling in the blanks. Tell them to think a moment before writing anything so they will have time to get good ideas. Point out the importance of choosing words that make clear pictures. Point out too that their choice of words and phrases will make their stories different from all the other stories.

If students find the story difficult to read, read one sentence at a time allowing time for students to think and write. Don't be too concerned with correct spelling at this point as emphasis on perfect spelling may reduce the flow of creative thought and attention to effective word choices.

BILLY TAKES A WALK

Billy was walking in the woods. It was _____ time and the trees were _____. They looked like _____. Under his feet the _____ grass _____.

He stopped a moment to look at an interesting _____. As he looked it began to change. It grew bigger until Billy thought its _____ would surely pop. Then it began to slowly twist and turn. Suddenly it became a _____ _____. It looked _____.

Billy was _____. He _____ and _____ _____ but the _____ still _____. He wanted _____.

Just at that very moment a green and white striped cloud drifted down around him. He couldn't _____ or _____. But then the cloud _____.

Billy felt like stretching and yawning. So he did. He looked about him. The _____ was gone and in its place was the _____ that he had stopped to look at. He looked at it closely once more. There was something different about it now. It was _____ _____.

IF I WERE. . .

PURPOSE: To use imagination and empathy.

RESUMÉ: Students tell what they would do if they were one of the adults employed at their school.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Ask the students if they have ever wished they were someone else at school. If so, who, and when? If not, who would they rather be?

Encourage them by asking such questions as:

What would you do if you were _____?
What changes would you make at school?
How would you make them?

Ask the students to list the categories of various adults at their school. The list might include principal, teacher, cook, custodian, aide, counsellor, librarian, secretary, and so on. Write these on the chalkboard.

Then ask the students to choose one of these categories, and to write a short essay entitled "If I Were Principal" (or Teacher, Cook, etc.) Allow for the fact that some students might prefer being themselves. If so, they might want to write something on the topic "If I Were in Sixth Grade," "If I Were in High School," or "Why I Like Being Me."

After students have finished, ask for volunteers to share their essays with the class.

ROADS TO ANYWHERE

PURPOSE: To use vivid description; to relate events in sequence.

RESUMÉ: Students list kinds of roads, their uses and features, and discuss the street leading to their school. Then students choose one kind of road and write a story of an imaginary trip on it.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

To begin the discussion, ask students to name as many different kinds of roads as they can and write the list on the board. Elicit a wide variety: freeways, winding country roads, gravel roads, logging roads, fire roads, deer or sheep trails, etc.

To the right of the list of roads, make two columns. Head one Use and the other Ways to Travel. Considering one kind of road at a time, discuss the use or purpose of the road and how people would travel on it (bus, bicycle, etc.). Write responses under the appropriate heading. Discuss what each road would be like--its width, surface, overhead and side clearance, and scenery.

Ask students what kind of road runs past the school? (Identify it on the list.) Continue with such questions as:

Who uses the road?
What do they use it for?
How do people travel on it? (by foot, bicycle, car, etc.)
(List under ways of travel.)
Would you say the street is a busy one?
Compare it with other roads you have traveled.

Summarize the information recorded on the chart. Ask students what kind of road would they take if they were going to take a bicycle trip? a hike? a trip in a car?

Then ask students to imagine: "If you could go anywhere on any kind of road you wished, which kind of road would you choose? Would you walk, ride a bicycle, or go in a car? (Pause) Think about the interesting road you have chosen. What is it like? How could you describe it so others could imagine it too?" Allow time for students to think about describing it. Then have them turn to a neighbor and tell about it, checking to see if the description allowed the listener to form a clear mental picture.

Continue the imaginative thinking: "Picture yourself going somewhere on that road. What might you see as you move along? What interesting and exciting things might happen?" Again give students time to think and then ask them to write a story about their imaginary trip.

A NEW VIEW

PURPOSE: To explain a game from a different point of view.

RESUMÉ: Students are asked to write a story about space creatures watching an Earth game.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

We are so used to viewing sports events in the context of our own civilization, that it is refreshing to see some of our human endeavors from a different point of view. The following story is given to introduce students to an outsider's viewpoint. Most students will readily grasp the concept, but the discussion at the end will give you a chance to help those who do not.

Read or tell the following:

The spacecraft had its invisibility screens on as the space creatures flew low over the Earth city. They watched the funny two-legged creatures with their tiny heads. How odd these Earth-creatures were!

"Oh, look at all the Earth-creatures seated in that oval-shaped thing!" exclaimed Alpha I.

"What are they doing?" asked Alpha II.

"They seem to be watching something that is happening in the green part there in the middle, the part with the white lines on it," answered Alpha I.

"What is going on?" wondered Alpha II out loud. "A concert? A battle? I'll turn on the sound. There! Listen to those Earth-creatures roar! Are they happy, or are they mad?"

"I don't know, said Alpha I. "I wish we could understand their language. Let's watch the creatures in the middle and see if we can figure out what they are doing. Look! They have funny shiny heads. And the different Earthmen of opposite colors seem to be pushing and chasing each other."

"Yes, look, they line up, facing each other, and then suddenly they are all mixed up. Then one color lines up and the other forms a circle and then they line up too," added Alpha II.

"There they go again," said Alpha I. "What do you think they are doing?"

Initiate a discussion of questions like:

What were the space creatures watching?
Could the space creatures see the football?

What would they think of the referees? Of the goal posts? The cheer leaders?
Do you think they would ever figure out what was going on?

When the students have grasped the concept of space creatures trying to interpret what they saw, ask them to write about some game the students play or something else they do from the point of view of the space creatures (baseball, tether ball, ceramics, orchestra, etc.).

The students could pretend the space creatures are watching such an event and radioing back to their parent ship what they see.

Plan a time to share stories with the class.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

(1) Students might want to draw pictures of a game in progress as viewed from the spacecraft.

(2) Students could write a play to present to the class, with conversation between the space creatures watching an Earth sporting event.

CARTOON STORIES

PURPOSE: To recognize humor in a situation and to relate it effectively.

RESUME: Each student is given a cartoon and asked to write a fitting caption for it. Then he develops the humorous situation in the cartoon into a story and shares it orally in small groups.

MATERIAL:

Published cartoons
Cartoon sheets (see Supplementary Material. Although there are six different cartoons, each student will have only one of these.)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

A few days before teaching this lesson, display humorous situation cartoons (single panel) in the room--Dennis the Menace, The Family Circus, etc. Encourage students to bring and share others they think are funny.

To begin the lesson, briefly discuss the cartoons on display--why they are funny, who might not think a particular situation was funny, and whether or not the situation was planned to be funny or just turned out that way. Spend a few minutes thinking of other captions that might have been used. Point out that captions may be comments made by an observer or they may be direct quotations from the characters in the cartoon.

Pass out the full page cartoons to students. (Give out approximately the same number of each one for the sake of variety.) Ask students to look for the humor in the situation and to think of a caption that would make the cartoon even more enjoyable. Suggest that students think of several possible captions and write them on another piece of paper. Then instruct them to choose the one they like best and write it neatly under the cartoon.

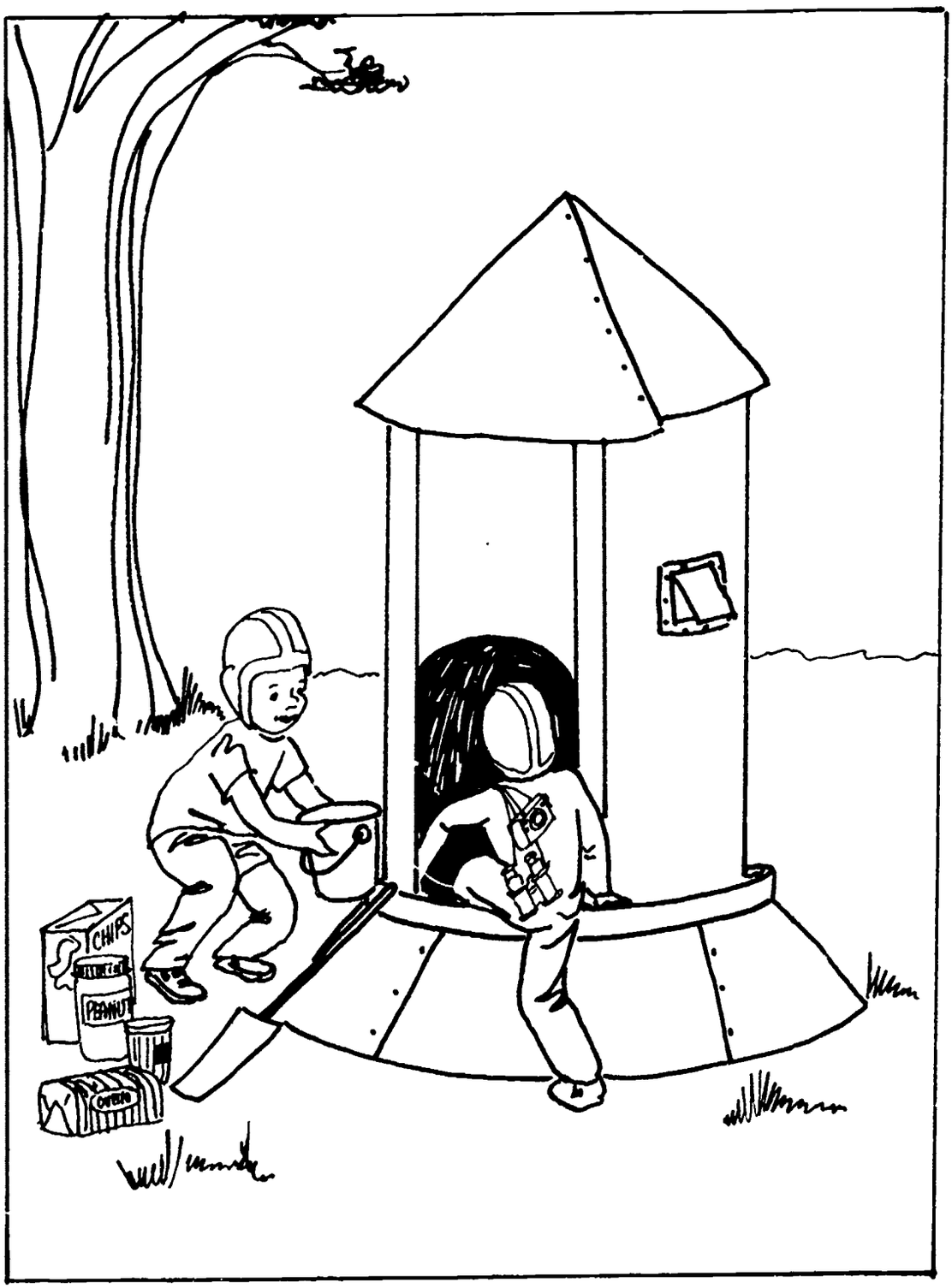
For the next step, you will need to help students think about the story of the cartoon. Have them study their cartoon and think quietly to themselves as you ask the following questions. (Pause after each questions to allow time for thinking.)

How did this situation come about?
Whose idea was it?
Do you think the situation you see was planned? If so, who made the plans? What were they?
What do you think happened next?
How did it end?

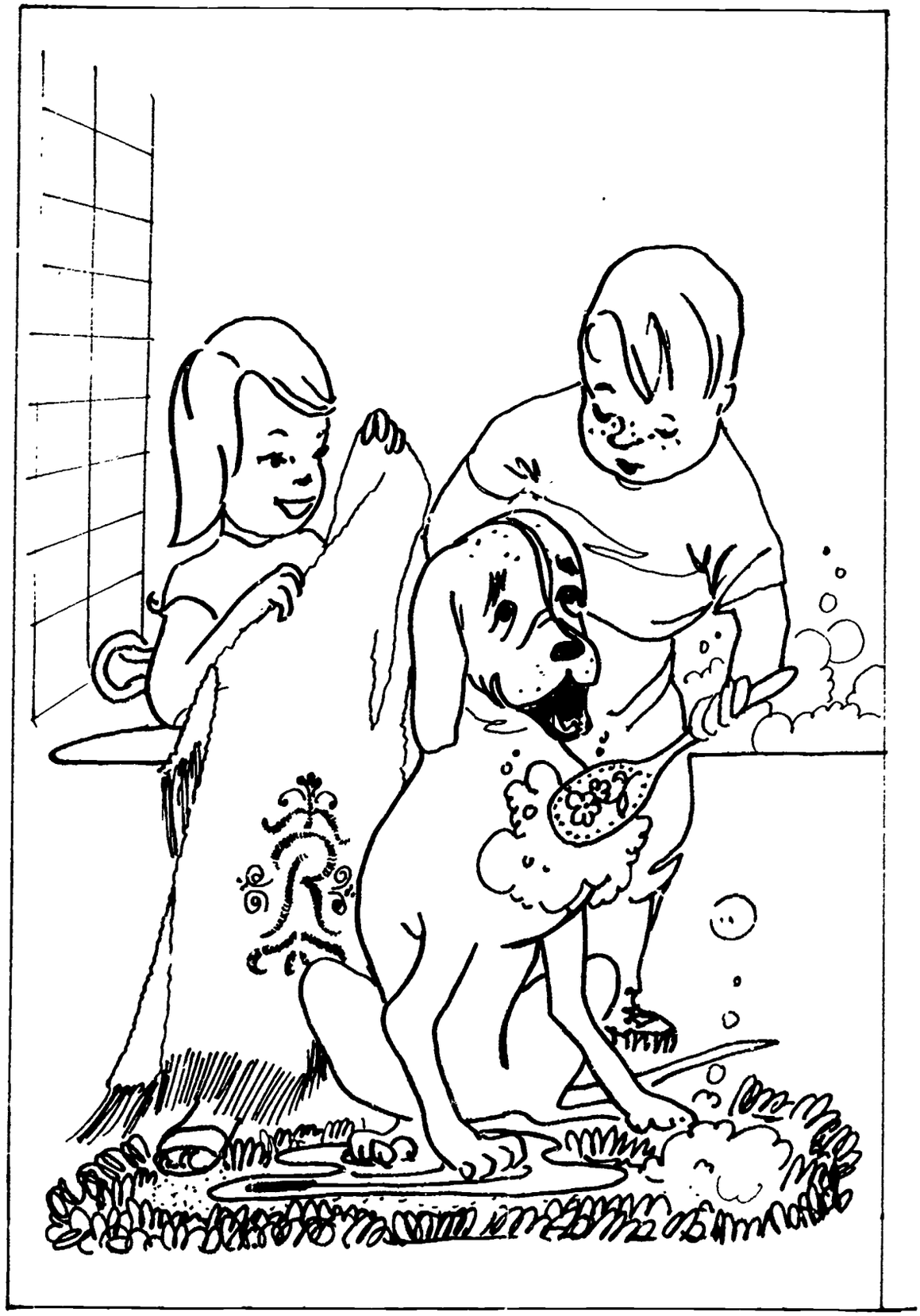
Then ask the students to think through the whole story of the cartoon.

Divide students into groups of 4 - 6, being certain no two people in a group have the same cartoon, and let them take turns telling their stories to the group.

Cartoon Stories
Supplementary Material



Cartoon Stories
Supplementary Material



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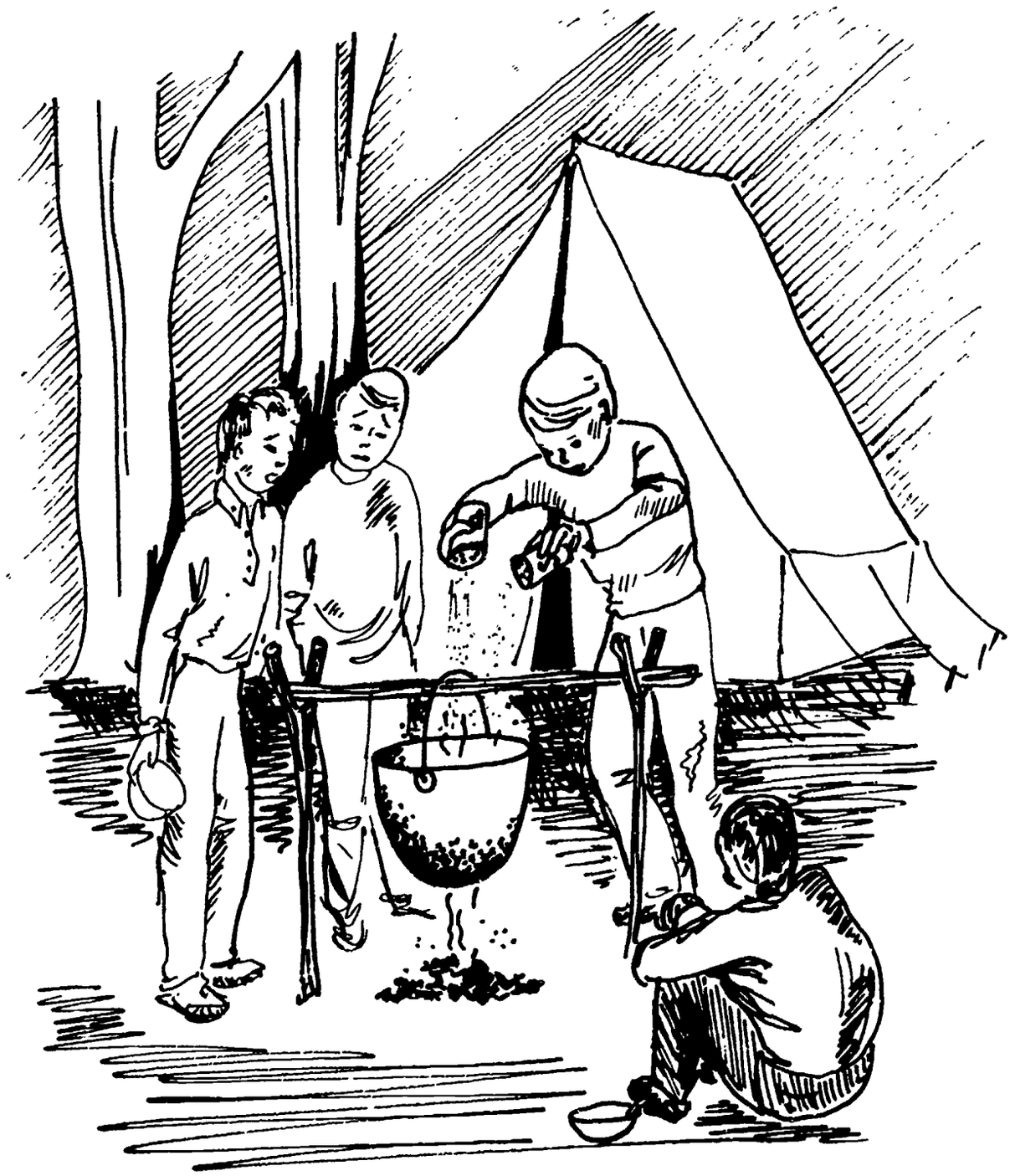

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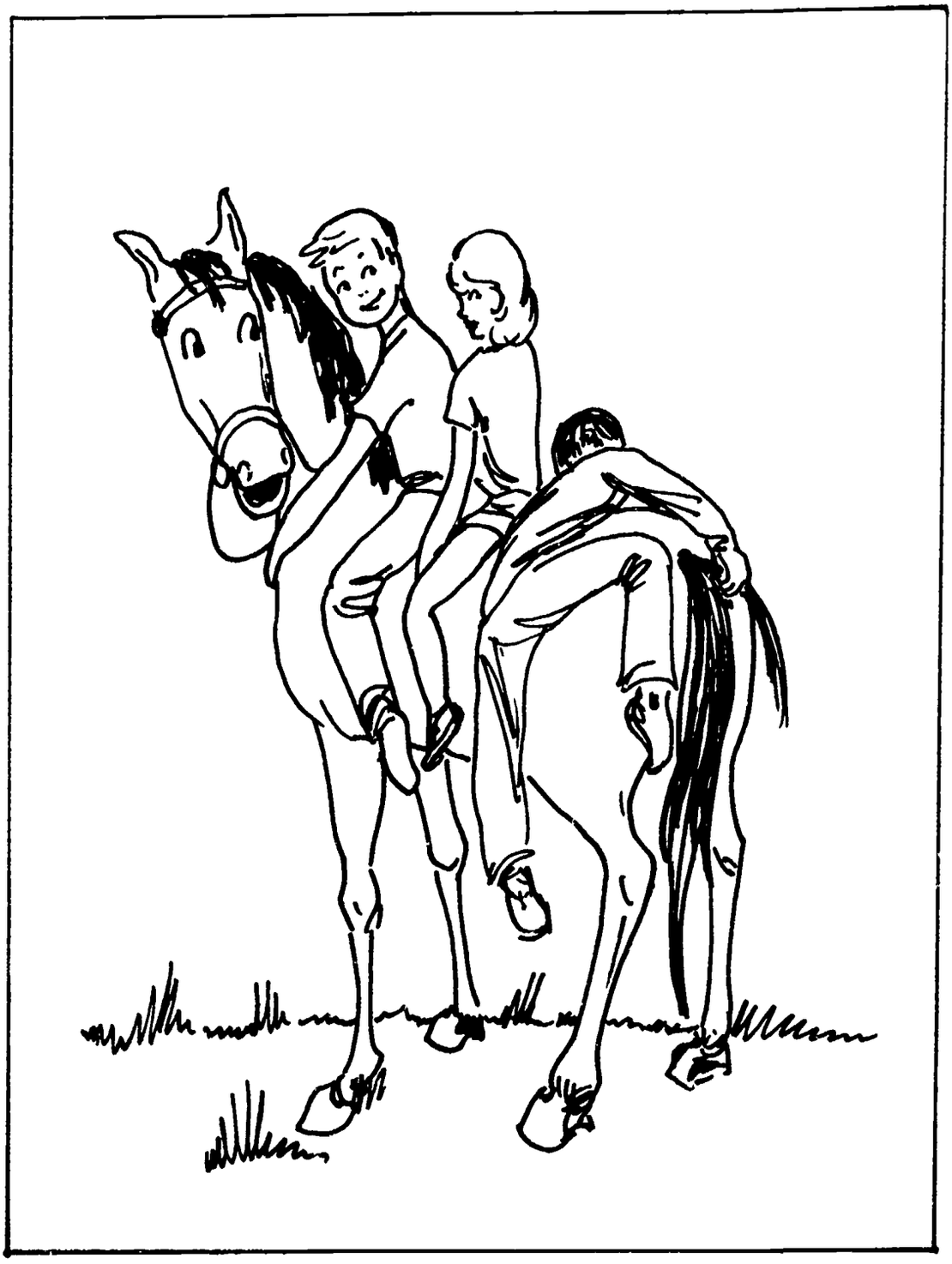

AUTUMN

PURPOSE: To create a picture in the mind through vivid description.

RESUME: Students describe the colors and activities of the autumn season and write an autumn poem.

MATERIALS: Pictures of autumn scenes

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Display the autumn pictures for a day or so before presenting this lesson. To begin the lesson focus attention on the pictures and ask students what season they think the pictures show. Then ask why they think these are autumn pictures.

Discuss the colors we see in autumn and make a list of them on the board. Then elicit picturesque phrases to describe each color and add the phrases to the list. The following is a suggested sequence:

> How could you describe the red of autumn? (brownish red, bright red, etc.)
> To what could you compare the red of autumn? (blood--blood red or red as blood; holly berries--holly berry red or red as holly berries, etc.)
> How does the red of autumn make you feel? (hot, restless, like I want to go barefooted, etc.)

Continue expanding each of the color words, pressing for more vivid descriptions. Then ask students to think of phrases to describe the autumn colors as a whole (a sunset, jars of paint spilled together, a fire, etc.)

Shift the focus of the discussion to activities of autumn with the questions, "What things are fun to do in autumn?" Accept and list all ideas but encourage students to think of specific words to create vivid pictures in the mind. For example, if they suggest walk in the leaves, ask, "How do you walk when you walk in leaves? What would be a good word to use to tell about walking in the leaves? (scuffing through the leaves, crunching the leaves underfoot, etc.)

Conclude the discussion phase of the lesson by commenting that the students suggested many interesting ways to describe autumn and that many of the phrases sound as if they came from a poem. Then tell your

students that you want them to try writing an autumn poem. They may use any of the ideas from the board as well as new ideas that pop into their heads as they think about autumn.

Remind students that poetry doesn't have to follow a particular form and it doesn't even have to rhyme. All they need to do to write a poem is to write down the way autumn looks and feels to them in poem-like lines. Encourage them to think of words that will create a vivid autumn picture in someone else's mind.

Plan a way for those who wish to share their poem with the rest of the class. Volunteers may read their poems to the class during a quiet or rest time; they might print autumn pictures to illustrate their poems and display them together on the bulletin board.

OLD BOOK--NEW BOOK
(Book Week)

PURPOSE: To write imaginatively about an inanimate object.

RESUME: The students pretend to be an old book and write about their experiences.

MATERIALS:

An old, well-worn children's book
An attractive new children's book

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Display the two books in your classroom for several days. Encourage each student to handle and closely examine them.

Begin the writing assignment by suggesting that the two books might have had some interesting conversations lying there side by side. Perhaps the old book might have told the new one that he once had a shiny cover and that all his pages were clean and unsmudged. Hold the old book up, calling attention to faded colors and dog-eared corners. Ask the students how they think the old book got that way. Pose questions to help them think about its interesting history:

How many children have read the book?
What were some of their comments about it?
Did all of them take good care of it?
Did any child lose the book on the way home from school? Where?
What could have happened to it before it was found and returned?
Was the book misplaced at a child's home? Where was it found?
Which child liked the old book best? How did the old book know this?
Was the old book happy because he had left the library so many times? Why?

Then have students write a story about the old book. Tell them to imagine the old book is talking and telling things about his life. The stories could be shared with many other children by displaying them on a bulletin board in the school library.

Note: Some children who have difficulty writing stories might draw a comic strip about the old book.

A HALLOWEEN MEETING

PURPOSE: To finish a Halloween story.

RESUMÉ: Students are asked to complete a story about a black cat that met a witch on Halloween night.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Read the following unfinished story:

> Gray clouds covered the moon, and a thick fog had risen from the ground. It was a dark night, even for Halloween--a perfect night for ghoulies and beasties and those bumping noises no one makes. Two yellow-green eyes slid through the fog and came to rest at the trunk of a gnarled oak tree. It was Anthracite, the coal-black cat, the only creature brave enough to venture out among ghosts and goblins. As he sat down to rest, he heard swirling, whirling, whooshing noises above his head.
>
> He looked up to see a dark witch gliding through the mist on her broom. It was Matilda, the hag; he could recognize her anywhere, for they had long been enemies. Her long, black cloak fluttered in the wind as she settled her broom to the ground. She glanced around once, twice, three times. And then she saw Anthracite.
>
> "So," she cackled, "it's you again. Hiding in the shadows, slinking in the dark, cowering from me."
>
> "I was not!" Anthracite hissed. "I hide from no one! Certainly not from you, you withered hag of a witch, you!"
>
> "Withered, is it? Well, take this, then." And with that, Matilda raised her arms and wiggled her bony fingers at Anthracite. "I'll turn you into a stone toad!"
>
> "You don't scare me, snag-toothed Matilda. You know a black cat can't be touched by your witch's spell!" Then, Anthracite began to circle around her, his eyes glowing in the dark and his hair bristling.
>
> "Bah!" Matilda said, and she conjured up a dark chair and sat on it. She stared at Anthracite, and Anthracite stared back. . .

Ask students to imagine what happened next and write an ending for the story. Stimulate ideas by asking such questions as:

> What do you suppose happened then?
> What might a witch and a cat do on Halloween?
> Could they become good friends? How?

Students may work individually, or two or more students may plan and write together. A group may want to act out the parts of Anthracite and Matilda before they begin writing.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

PURPOSE: To write an entertaining story.

RESUMÉ: Students pretend they are an imaginary character and tell about their favorite Christmas gift.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

This lesson may be used after Christmas. Begin by listing a number of familiar characters on the board such as:

Mooreek, the Halloween witch
Paul Bunyan
Santa Claus
a grandmother
a pet spider
the postman
the school bus driver
(current comic strip characters)
(current TV characters)

Ask students to imagine what kinds of gifts various people on the list might have received for Christmas. If they have difficulty getting into the make-believe spirit, ask them what present they would give Paul Bunyan, Mooreek, etc. Remind them that hand-made gifts are often favorites.

After a discussion pass out sheets of drawing paper and tell students to pretend they are one of the characters on the board and to draw themselves with their favorite Christmas present.

When they have finished the drawing, have them write a story about their picture. Remind them to tell who they are pretending to be, what they got, and who gave it to them. They may tell other things about the present if they wish.

Stories may be pasted on the back of the pictures and the whole collection fastened together to make a book of Favorite Christmas Gifts.

THE FIRST VALENTINE

PURPOSE: To form a plot and write a short story.

RESUMÉ: Students imagine how a cave boy might have sent the first valentine to a cave girl.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Begin by asking if anyone can remember when he cut his first tooth. Continue to quiz for memories of other firsts: the first haircut, the first ride in a car (or on an airplane), the first trip to the zoo, or the first Christmas.

Explain that we cannot always remember many "first things," but that it is sometimes fun to try to imagine what a "first time" might be like.

Tell the students that you want them to try to imagine a first valentine, way back in the days of the cave men.

Set up a scene by agreeing on a location, and names of the cave boy and cave girl. Then ask the students to imagine Valentine's Day in that setting. Some questions might be:

What might a cave man's valentine look like?
What kind of writing materials would he use?
How would it be delivered?
What would the girl think when she got it?
What would she do?

Ask the students to write a story in which the cave boy sent a first valentine to the cave girl.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

(1) Students might try to draw the valentine.
(2) Students might read a history of Valentine's Day and find out what first valentines were like, if interested.

THE PEPPERMINT TOUCH

PURPOSE: To use the sense of taste as motivation for writing a story; to use cause-and-effect thinking.

RESUMÉ: Students discuss the story of King Midas and the Golden Touch. They pretend they have been given the "peppermint touch" and write stories about what happens.

MATERIALS: Peppermint candy (one piece for each child)

TEACHING THE LESSON:

After students have read (or heard) the story of King Midas and the Golden Touch (see Literature Curriculum), give each student a piece of peppermint candy to eat. Tell them to imagine that they are eating a "magic" peppermint and that they now have the "peppermint touch." Everything they touch will turn to peppermint. Ask them to think about what this would mean.

What would happen when they climbed on the jungle gym at recess time or tagged their best friend?
What would happen when they picked up their lunch tray?
What could happen on the school bus or while they were walking home?
What about turning on the television set or petting the dog?

They will also need to think about how they could break the magic spell if they got tired of peppermint.

Ask students to write a story about their imaginary experiences. The stories could be illustrated and fastened together to make a book.

WHAT ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT?

PURPOSE: To develop and write a story about the possible consequences of curiosity.

RESUMÉ: Students try to guess what is in a wrapped box, list things they are curious about, and write a story about a curious person.

MATERIALS: One wrapped cardboard box of any size, containing anything from a paper clip to an orange.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Curiosity is a childhood trait that should be encouraged. Students should not feel it is wrong to be curious. The myth of "Pandora's Box" seems to say that curiosity leads to bad things. But in reality, scientists and researchers rely on curosity to find out many useful things.

Bring in the box, saying something like, "I wonder if anyone can guess what is in the box?" Shake it and ask for guesses, keeping the time short. Then, in an air of expectancy, unwrap and open the box.

Tell the students that they were all curious about what was in the box and write the word curious on the board. Continue by saying that people are curious about many different things.

Then write "WHAT ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT?" on the chalkboard, and ask students to tell things they sometimes wonder about as you list them on the board. If students have trouble thinking of things, ask such questions as:

What do you wonder about when you are alone?
What would you like to learn more about?
Do you ever wonder what is behind a closed door? Or inside a trunk?
Or if you saw a postman delivering a package, would you wonder what was in it?

When there is a considerable list of ideas, ask students what they do when they are curious about something. Elicit answers to specific ideas listed such as--open it and see, ask somebody, look it up in a book, and so on. Comment that sometimes curiosity leads to interesting adventures. Again referring to the list on the board ask, "What might happen if you tried to find out _____?" Repeat this for several

ideas listed and then ask the students to write a story about a curious person and an adventure that his curiosity led him into.

Plan to share the stories. Have each student go over his story carefully, checking for errors that might make his story difficult for someone else to read. Stories may need to be recopied. When all stories are in best form, have a silent sharing time in which papers are circulated around the room, a student reading a story and then passing it on.

AN IMPOSSIBLE WISH COMES TRUE

PURPOSE: To consider cause and effect in writing.

RESUMÉ: Following a discussion about wishes, students write a story about an impossible wish that they imagine comes true.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

After reading "The Fisherman and His Wife" (see Literature Curriculum) ask the class, "Has anyone ever wished for something that didn't come true?" Call on several students to share their wishes with the class and ask students why they think their wishes didn't come true. Elicit the point that many people make wishes that are either impossible or extremely unlikely to happen. You might mention wishing to find a lot of money, wishing a good fairy would do your work, and wishing you had magic power, to illustrate the point.

Then ask students to think of something they would like to have or do that seems impossible. If students have difficulty thinking of such wishes you may need to elicit ideas from the class and write them on the board. When a number of ideas have been suggested, ask students to choose a wish, imagine that it comes true, and write a story about it. Help students develop their ideas with such questions as:

What might happen to cause your wish to come true?
Would it be magic?
What would happen when it came true?
How would it affect you?

When the students have finished writing let them share their stories with the rest of the class.

IT'S MAGIC

PURPOSE: To write an imaginative ending for a story.

RESUMÉ: Students listen to the first part of an Arabian Nights tale, discuss various ways to develop the story, and then write an ending to it.

TEACHING THE LESSON:

Ask your students if they have ever heard or read any stories from the Arabian Nights. They might mention a few. Tell the students that you are going to tell (or read) them the beginning of one of the more familiar tales and let them write an ending for it.

> Once there were three handsome princes who were brothers. The three brothers had a problem--they all wanted to marry the same lovely maiden. The maiden's uncle, the Sultan, thought of a way to decide who should marry her. He sent the brothers out to travel far and wide, searching to find the most wonderful gift in the kingdom. The Sultan promised that the girl would marry the prince who returned with the finest gift.
>
> The oldest prince found a flying carpet that could carry you anywhere in the world. The middle brother discovered a tube made of ivory that you could look into and see anything your heart wished to see. The youngest prince found an apple that could cure all diseases.
>
> Each brother returned to the Sultan's palace, certain that he had found the most wonderful gift and eager to marry the princess.

At this point, ask students to think how they would end this story, but tell them to keep their ideas in their heads for now. Pose questions to stimulate thinking:

> Which brother do you think brought back the most wonderful gift?
> Why do you think so?
> Would the Sultan agree with you?
> Which brother do you think the Sultan chose to marry his niece?

Have students write an ending to the story. You may want to reread the last sentence of the story so they can remember where it stops.