

The Best New Books for K-3 Readers and Writers

JUDSON LITERACY IN MOTION CONFERENCE 2012

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BOOKS THAT SHOW THE READING-WRITING CONNECTION

Viorst, J. (2010). *Lulu and the brontosaurus*. (L. Smith, Illus.). New York: Atheneum.

Bratty Lulu wants a brontosaurus for a pet, so she runs away to the forest to find one. The tables turn when the brontosaurus decides he wants Lulu for his pet. Viorst interjects her author's voice throughout the book and offers readers three different ending options.

Teaching Ideas: Reading-Writing Connection, 2013 Monarch Award List

Mini-Lesson—Write a Book Review (Opinion Writing)

Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom (Walther & Phillips, 2012)

Let's Write a Book Review

- Introduce the book to your readers—Don't give away the ending!
- Talk about what you liked (or didn't like) about the book. Explain your reasons.
- Recommend this book (if you liked it) to your readers.

McKinlay, M. (2011). *No bears*. (L. Rudge, Illus.). Somerville, MA: Candlewick.

Ella wants to write the "prettiest, most exciting, scariest, and funniest book ever" and she believes that in order to accomplish this goal there must no bears. What Ella doesn't realize is that a helpful bear that appears in the illustrations saves the day so that they can all live happily ever after. Notice all of the other traditional tale characters in the illustrations!

Teaching Ideas: Reading-Writing Connection, Writing Genres—Stories, Traditional Tales

Willems, M. (2010). *We are in the book*. New York: Hyperion.

Elephant and Piggie realize that they are, in fact, inside a book and someone is reading them. Together they discover the joy of being read!

Teaching Ideas: Reading-Writing Connection, 2013 Monarch Award List

BOOKS TO SPARK COMPREHENSION CONVERSATIONS

Amado, E. (2011). *What are you doing?* (M. Monroy, Illus.). Toronto: Groundwood.

Chepito, who is hesitant to begin school, greets people around his neighborhood by asking, "What are you doing?" Soon Chepito learns that each person is reading for a different purpose, he then goes off to school to discover that reading is fun.

Teaching Ideas: Launching Reading Workshop—Reading Purposes

Cleminson, K. (2011). *Otto the book bear*. New York: Disney/Hyperion.

When no one is looking, Otto the Book Bear comes to life to explore, to read, and to write. When his family moves and he is left behind, Otto sets out on an adventure that leads him to a library full of new books and new friends.

Teaching Ideas: Launching Reading Workshop—Creating a Community of Book Lovers

Rocco, J. (2011). *Blackout*. New York: Hyperion.

When a power outage hits the city on a hot, noisy, busy night, a family discovers the joys of relaxing and having fun together. Notice that the author chose to use a graphic novel style for telling this story.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Making Connections, 2013 Monarch Award Book

Yee, W. H. (2012). *Summer days and nights*. New York: Holt.

Enjoy this poetic, rhyming book at the end of the school year or when demonstrating how making connections helps the reader. Readers who have experienced a hot summer day will be able to connect with the little girl in this book.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Making Connections

Kostecki-Shaw, J. S. (2011). *Same, same but different*. New York: Holt.

Elliot lives in America and Kailash lives in India, by exchanging letters and pictures the two boys discover that their lives are similar yet different.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Discovering Connections; Pair with *Mirror* (Baker, 2010)

Kettelman, H. (2012). *Señorita Gordita*. (W. Terry, Illus.). Chicago, IL: Albert Whitman.

Add this fun and fast-paced retelling of *The Gingerbread Man* to your traditional tale collection. The text includes Spanish words along with a glossary and recipe for gorditas in the back.

Teaching Ideas: Traditional Tales; Pair with *The Gingerbread Man Loose in School* (Murray, 2011)

Cecil, R. (2012). *Horsefly and honeybee*. New York: Holt.

A sweet story about a horsefly and honeybee that decide to nap in the same flower, have a fight, and each lose a wing. Later, when the bullfrog wants to eat them, they work together to fly away.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Inferring Big Ideas (K), Social Studies—Friendship, Teamwork

Rogers, G. (2012). *The hero of little street*. New York: Roaring Brook.

When a boy is being chased by bullies, he runs into an art museum and, along with the dog from the Van Eyck painting "The Arnolfini Marriage," steps inside the world of the Vermeer paintings "A Lady Seated at a Virginal," "The Little Street" and others set in Vermeer's hometown of Delft. There is so much to notice and discuss in this wordless book, it would be best to project it using a document camera.

Teaching Ideas: Wordless Picture Books—Inferring, Visual Literacy

Williams, L. E. (2010). *The can man*. (C. Orback, Illus.). New York: Lee and Low.

When Tim's parents can't afford to buy him a new skateboard for his birthday he is looking for ways to earn money. Along comes Mr. Peters, a homeless man dubbed "The Can Man" for collecting cans, giving Tim an idea. Soon, Tim discovers that he has taken away Mr. Peters' only source of income.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Inferring Big Ideas; Social Studies—homelessness; Pair with *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting

Woodson, J. (2012). *Each kindness*. (E. B. Lewis, Illus.). New York: Penguin.

Chloe learns a life lesson when her teacher points out the power of kindness. After this compelling lesson, Chloe wishes she would have shown kindness to the new girl, Maya, instead ignoring her because she was less fortunate and different. Unfortunately, Chloe never gets the chance to show kindness because Maya moves away.

Teaching Ideas: Comprehension Conversations—Inferring Big Ideas; Social Studies—accepting differences, friendship

BOOKS TO BUILD VOCABULARY

Stead, P. C. (2012). *A home for bird*. New York: Roaring Brook.

In this quiet book, Vernon the frog finds a wooden bird that fell from a moving truck and is determined to find his new friend a home. Be sure to notice and discuss the moving truck on the first page.

Teaching Ideas: Three Read-Aloud Words: *journey, unknown, determined*

BOOKS FOR WRITERS

Lichtenheld, T., & Fields-Meyer, E. (2012). *E-mergency!* San Francisco, CA: Chronicle.

When the letter E gets injured, the alphabet decides to have O take his place. So, the words in the illustrations and the words spoken by the characters all have O instead of E with humorous results. Only the narrator continues to use E until the letters make him stop.

Teaching Ideas: Read Like a Writer—Discuss detailed illustrations, word play, and much more!

Holub, J. (2012). *Zero the hero*. (T. Lichtenheld, Illus.). New York: Holt

Zero wants to be a hero, but the counting numbers don't appreciate him until he saves them from the Roman Numerals.

Teaching Ideas: Read Like a Writer—Funny details, speech bubbles; Math—multiplying zero, Roman Numerals

Rosenthal, A. K. (2012). *Wumbers*. (T. Lichtenheld, Illus.). San Francisco, CA: Chronicle.

"What do you get when you combine a word and a number? A number!" You and your students will have a lot of fun reading this creative book by an award-winning author-illustrator team. Written as a tribute to CDB! by William Steig, this book will keep your readers guessing!

Teaching Ideas: Read Like a Writer—Word Play

Long, E. (2011). *The book that Zack wrote*. Maplewood, NJ: Blue Apple Books.

If your students write in a composition notebook, then this is the book for you! In his composition notebook, Zach pens an action-packed cumulative story that echoes "The House the Jack Built" about all the animals that appear in his book. Notice that all of the past-tense verbs are highlighted when they first appear in story.

Teaching Ideas: Writing Genres—Cumulative Pattern Books, Writing Ideas

Czekaj, J. (2012). *Yes, Yes, Yaul!* New York: Hyperion.

In the sequel to *Hip and Hop Don't Stop* (2010), Hip and Hop meet a prickly porcupine named Yaul who says "No" to everything. After trying, without success, to discover what Yaul likes, Hip and Hop throw Yaul a birthday party where he finally discovers that saying "Yes" is much more fun.

Teaching Ideas: Writing Traits—Sentence Fluency

BOOKS FOR POETS

Heard, G. (Ed.). (2012). *The arrow finds its mark: A book of found poems*. (A. Guilloppé, Illus.). New York: Roaring Brook.

A found poem is a text that exists in a form other than poetry. The poets were encouraged not to change, add, or rearrange words, but some stretched the guidelines a bit. They could change capitalization, punctuation, tense, plurals, and create their own title.

Teaching Ideas: Writing Workshop—Poetry Immersion

Salas, L. P. (2011). *BookSpeak! Poems about books*. (J. Bisailon, Illus.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Laura Purdie Salas has created a book of poems told from the perspectives of the books themselves. When teaching nonfiction features, share the poem "Index." The poem "This is the Book" offers a succinct description of the process of creating a book.

Teaching Ideas: Beginning of Year, Books, Reading

Hopkins, L. B. (2011). *I am the book*. (Yayo, Illus.). New York: Holiday House.

Lee Bennett Hopkins has compiled a collection of thirteen different poems to celebrate books and reading. Consider using the poem "What Was That?" by Rebecca Kai Dotlich to introduce the comprehension strategy of questioning or "Poetry Time" by Lee Bennett Hopkins to launch your poetry time. The poem "This Book" by Avis Harley is ideal to share when you are discussing just right books.

Teaching Ideas: Beginning of Year, Books, Reading

BOOKS FOR HISTORY BUFFS

Brown, M. (2011). *Waiting for the Biblioburro*. (J. Parra, Illus.). Berkley, CA: Tricycle.

Monica Brown tells the story of the Biblioburro from the perspective of a book-loving girl named Ana. Connect this title to other library-related biographies like *The Librarian from Basra* (Winter, 2005), *Biblioburro* (Winter, 2010), *Miss Dorothy and Her Bookmobile* (Houston, 2011), and *Librarian on the Roof! A True Story* (King, 2010).

Teaching Ideas: Writing Genres—Biography; Compare/Contrast with *Biblioburro* (Winter, 2010)

McDonnell, P. (2011). *Me . . . Jane*. New York: Little, Brown.

Meet young Jane Goodall who loves being outside and dreams of a life in Africa studying, writing about, and helping the animals. As we know, those dreams came true and her discoveries made the world rethink what makes humans different from animals.

Teaching Ideas: Writing Genres—Biography; Compare/Contrast with *The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps* (Winter, 2011)

Malaspina, A. (2012). *Touch the sky: Alice Coachman, Olympic High Jumper*. (E. Velasquez, Illus.). Chicago, IL: Albert Whitman.

A motivational biography written about the first black woman to win an Olympic Gold Medal in the 1948 Summer Olympics.

Teaching Ideas: Writing Genres—Biography, Social Studies—Black History

Kalman, M. (2012). *Looking at Lincoln*. New York: Penguin.

A fresh biography of Abraham Lincoln with some lesser-known facts in both the words and the illustrations. After enjoying the biography, take a moment to read the interesting notes in the back of the book.

Teaching Ideas: Social Studies—Lincoln

Shelton, P. Y. (2009). *Child of the Civil Rights Movement*. (R. Colon, Illus.). New York: Schwartz & Wade.

The author, Paula Young Shelton, is the daughter of civil rights leader Andrew Young. In this book, she looks at the civil rights movement through the eyes of a child. Readers will learn about Jim Crow Laws, sit-ins, the historic march from Selma to Montgomery and much more.

Teaching Ideas: Social Studies—Black History, Civil Rights

Kittinger, J. S. (2010). *Rosa's bus: The ride to civil rights*. (S. Walker, Illus.). Honesdale, PE: Boyds Mills.

In 1948, Bus #2857 rolled off the assembly line at the General Motors factory in Michigan. Travel along as you learn the story of Rosa Parks and the bus boycott from a unique point of view. The bus is now on permanent display at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI.

Teaching Ideas: Black History—Rosa Parks

Evans, S. W. (2012). *We march*. New York: Roaring Brook.

A family joins the March on Washington on August 28, 1963. Evans' shares the story with few words and simple yet compelling illustrations. It would be helpful if children had a bit of background knowledge about the march to fully appreciate this powerful text.

Teaching Ideas: Social Studies—Black History, Martin Luther King, Jr.

PROFESSIONAL BOOKS ABOUT USING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM

Fuhler, C. J., & Walther, M. P. (2007). *Literature Is Back! Using the Best Books for Teaching Readers and Writers Across Genres*. New York: Scholastic.

ISBN: 978-0439888752

Walther, M. P. & Phillips, K. A. (2009). *Month-by-Month Trait-Based Writing Instruction: Ready-to-Use Lessons and Strategies for Weaving Morning Messages, Read-Alouds, Mentor Texts, and More Into Your Daily Writing Program*. New York: Scholastic.

ISBN: 978-0545066938

Walther, M. P., & Fuhler, C. J. (2010). *Teaching Struggling Readers With Poetry: Engaging Poems With Mini-Lessons That Target & Teach Phonics, Sight Words, Fluency & More—Laying the Foundation for Reading Success*. New York: Scholastic.

ISBN: 978-0545156820

Walther, M. P., & Phillips, K. A. (2012). *Month-by-Month Reading Instruction for the Differentiated Classroom: A Strategic Approach With Comprehension Mini-Lessons, Vocabulary Building Activities, Management Tips, and More to Help Every Child Become a Confident, Capable Reader*. New York: Scholastic.

ISBN: 978-0545280693