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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2006 Volume III: Children's Literature, Infancy to Early Adolescence

Children's Literature for Students with Reading Challenges Using Pictures Books and Film

Curriculum Unit 06.03.11, published September 2006
by Jurline T. Franklin

Introduction

I teach Life skills at Ortiz Middle School, a Title One school, with a student body of appropriately 1,028 students. The student body has multicultural composition of the following: Hispanic, 64 percent; African American, 30 percent; Asian, 5 percent; White, one percent, and Native Americans, 0 percent. The Life Skills class has a total enrollment of 11 students who reflect the ethnic make up of the student body. My students enter the self-contained class in the sixth grade and go on to high school after they have completed the eighth grade.

The purpose for writing this curriculum unit, *Children's Literature for Students with Reading Challenges using Picture Books and Film*, is to provide my students who have developmental disabilities with access to the exciting world of children's literature, using vibrant, eloquently illustrated picture books that have been adapted into film either as movies, videos, or DVDs.

Developmental disabilities include mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, and spina bifida, among other disorders. Several of my students fall into three of these categories: mental retardation, Down's syndrome, and autism. For mental retardation, the student has to have an intelligence quotient (IQ) score of approximately 70 or below, with deficits in adaptive behavior, and the disability must occur before age 18. Down's syndrome students have an abnormal chromosomal arrangement resulting in mental retardation and a "Mongoloid" type appearance. Students with autism have mental disorders affecting communications and behavior.

Students who receive lifeskills services have moderate to severe developmental disabilities, and their Individual Educational Program (IEP) requires significantly off-level and modified functional academic instruction, and they need additional instruction in daily living skills. My students attend full-day sessions that are organized around functional academic and classroom routines that facilitate the development of daily living skills. The daily schedule reflects the overall activities of the school as well as the classroom's unique activities and daily routines.

Implementing District Standards

The Houston Independent School District uses the Functional Academic Curriculum for Exceptional Students (F.A.C.E.S.) for math, science, social studies, personal health and vocational instruction in lifeskills. Secondary teachers also utilize F.A.C.E.S. as their primary lifeskills Language Arts Curriculum guide. The Language Arts Module contains instructional objectives that are appropriate for students who range developmentally from 18 months to 8 years. With appropriate modifications, these objectives can be used with elementary through secondary students. The language arts objectives selected are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (T.E.K.S.) for pre-kindergarten through second grade. These curricula significantly modify the general curriculum to offer focused and functional instruction that enable the students to reach their greatest possible level of independence in all aspects of adult life.

The following skills for students at the transitional or exit level (2nd grade) to learn are found in the F.A.C.E.S. Language Arts Module:

- Know practiced consequences and problem solving strategies
- Read and make predictions and inferences
- Read and sequence information such as directions in a recipe
- Read and write using an extensive sight word vocabulary
- Use phonetic strategies
- Read environmental print in different contexts
- Read and write work and community related vocabulary in different contexts
- Write one to two sentences advancing to short paragraphs
- Write for specific purposes, such as e-mail, postcards, letters, stories, etc.
- Use assistive technology when appropriate

The IEP includes appropriate functional academic instructions in all areas of the general curriculum including independent community functioning, as needed. Off-campus, or community-based instruction (CBI) that is age-appropriate, is utilized as necessary, to ensure that skills taught in the classroom are generalized to the campus at large and to the general community setting. On a daily basis, students receiving lifeskills services have opportunities to interact with their non-disabled peers in age appropriate settings that may consist of ancillary or elective courses identified by the Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee.

The *F.A.C.E.S. Language Arts Module* quotes from *The Policy Statement on Literacy for People with Mental Retardation*, as follows:

Literacy is a major key to more effective self-government, self-advocacy, self-determination, quality of life, employment, healthcare, and participation as a citizen for all people, including individuals with mental retardation; ...Educational methods, materials, techniques, and technologies are readily available to significantly improve the literacy of the majority of people with mental retardation...A curriculum focus on daily living skills to the exclusion of meaningful literacy is inadequate for the majority of people with mental retardation... (Intro - 2)

Teaching children with limited mental capabilities to read and write presents challenges, but Katims in his 2000 monograph, *The Quest for Literacy: Curriculum and Instructional Procedures for Teaching Reading and Writing to Students with Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*, reports that "students identified

with mental retardation can learn to read and write and this has been documented in research literature for some time" (p 12). Katims also references research by Cegelka & Cegelka, 1970; Dunn, 1956; Conners, 1992; Orlando, 1973; Singh & Singh, 1986; and, Stanovich, 1985, (p. 12) that supports this fact.

Unit Objectives

The purpose of this unit is to accomplish the following objectives:

To develop literacy using picture books and film

To learn the importance of picture books in children's literature

To learn to "read" illustrations in picture books

To learn how the verbal storytelling relates to the pictorial storytelling in a book

To develop an appreciation of symbols in picture books

To learn how to use clues to put together pieces of information

To identify character, setting, plot, problem, solution, conflict and events using picture books

To identify themes in picture books and film

To identify the main idea in film adapted from selected picture books

To retell stories from picture books and film

To compare and contrast events in picture books and film

To recognize fantasy and folktale in fiction

Strategies

Katims (2000) suggest some strategies to use to help mentally retarded students acquire reading abilities. They are as follows:

- (a) Observations of people engaged in literacy (a teacher reading to her students);
- (b) Collaboration with others in performing literate acts (making a get-well card for a sick friend); and
- (c) Practice with literacy materials (looking at books and using writing materials).

I plan to develop the curriculum using picture books that have been adapted to film, either as movies, or videos. The unit will be taught during the second semester after the students have had some on the alphabet,

basic math, such as counting from 1 to 50, and learning to write their names. I think there needs to be prior knowledge of words and numbers established before undertaking the task of teaching the importance of children's literature using picture books and film.

Mercer and Mercer (2001) assert that "In an effort to acquaint youngsters with good literature and motivate them to read, some teachers use a literature based approach for beginning reading instruction. In this approach, trade books and children's literature books are leveled according to specific criteria." In order to help develop the student's literacy skills, I will provide reading materials at each student's level. The F.A.C.E.S. curriculum identifies the following literacy levels:

Pre-emergent

Emergent

Novice

Experimenting

Conventional

The picture books in the classroom library will have a variety of genres of children's literature. According to Sutherland (1997), "For preschoolers and beginning readers, picture books are enchanting." There will be books of fiction (made up stories) such as fantasy, fables, historical fiction, science fiction, myths, and poetry, together with non-fiction (informational) books about animals, famous people, sports and space.

The students will use centers arranged according to ability grouping so the student who has reached the novice and experimenting literacy levels can help the pre-emergent and emergent students. I will engage them in shared reading activities. We will use one of the picture books from the list located in the classroom activities section, starting with ones that do not have lots of words, and spend a week covering the words and pictures in an effort to connect these two forms of communication as concepts. It is important to read to the students so those who have not had the experience of travel or being read to as younger children can develop background information and appreciation of the alternative worlds in children's literature. As time progresses, students are expected to self select books to be read to them or to self read.

I will teach the unit with a focus on the genres of fantasy and folktales, using picture books with a variety of stories designed to hold the students' attention together with movies adapted from the picture books. I will also provide information about the talented and skillful illustrators of the pictures I will use with the students. By listening to me read the books many times, and looking at the pictures, they will discover the theme or big idea of the books and identify the various characters and the settings where the stories take place. I will ask them questions about the actions that take place in the story so they can come to understand what the "plot" is. This will help them understand the conflict or problem facing the characters. After they work through these areas, they will guess or understand how the problem was solved. I will use transparencies to show them how events develop, from the beginning to rising action to resolution or "climax" of the story and on to the ending. I will also use story maps to help them organize stories.

Students with developmentally delayed disabilities benefit from the same word recognition strategies at their non-developmentally delayed peers when learning to read; therefore I will use those strategies to teach my students how to read. They include the following:

Sight words: words that are known without using phonetic analysis

Phonetic analysis: using sound-symbol connection within words to sound them out.

Phonemic analysis: analyzing parts of words into sounds or phonemes

Syntactic analysis: using prior knowledge to decode unknown words

Semantic analysis: comprehending words in phrases and sentences that make sense

Learning these strategies does not automatically mean that the student comprehends what is being read. A test of determining comprehension is when the student is able to retell what he/she remembers from stories.

I plan to show the films adapted from the selected books after I have read the text out loud to the students, and after they have looked at pictures and understand some of the words from being exposed to the strategies I used to teach word recognition. I will stop the film from time to time as they watch and ask questions about what is happening in the scene or ask for an example of how the film differs from the picture book. They will use graphic organizers to complete this activity by scribbling, drawing or using cut outs from magazines or catalogs to represent the characters.

Historical Perspectives on the Genres of Fantasy, Folktales and Picture Books

Fantasy

Today's children, like children always, have vivid imaginations, beginning with daycare and (sometimes at home) when they have stories read to them about *Peter Cotton Tail*, *The Three Little Pigs* and the favorite, *Little Red Riding Hood*. In the case of developmentally disabled students, such stories can still appeal, but now the focus will be on teaching literacy instead of just for entertainment. In fantasy one often finds the magical aspects of characters such as talking animals, together with strong story lines. The stories must have striking features to capture their attention. Stories such as the *Curious George* series hold children's attention and teach a moral lesson. Fantasy stories may also hold children's attention with humor. Stories that are now considered classics have not lost their power to entertain, and have pictures by many great illustrators. All classroom libraries should have a selection of fantasies by early authors like Hans Christian Andersen, J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, and Lloyd Alexander. Their books provide humor, talking animal heroes, beauty, and magic. These are the sorts of stories I will draw upon. Lukens (1999) says, "... fantastic stories are about characters that are not people but are represented as people because they talk or live in houses like ours, have feelings like our own, or lead lives like those of human beings; these we might call stories of personification" (p 21-22). For developmentally disabled students who are at the stage of emergent literacy orientation, this type of literature provides first steps in the reading and writing processes. The progressive approach to instruction for the students included at this stage should focus on connected stories with short paragraphs, short sentences, few words, and simple letters, as in the alphabet books.

MacCann wrote, "One of the most characteristic features of fantasies for children is their sense of play. Although a feeling of mystery and foreboding can be the predominant mood (as in *The Jungle Book*...), more

often the tone is one of playfulness" (137). Examples of playful books include *Alice Adventures in Wonderland*, *Tom's Midnight Garden*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Children have enjoyed these books over the years and have found them to bring feelings of excitement and pleasure.

Folktale

Folktales are fast moving oral stories that have good characters and bad characters. They have provided satisfaction for adults and children for many years. The element of conflict is usually the substance of the story, and it is often between humans and personified animals. Folktales are usually retold stories that have the effect of recalling the words of an earlier teller. *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ear* is a West African folktale featuring animals that in the picture book are illustrated with bold lines and vivid colors. *The People Could Fly* and *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings* are very popular American black folktales.

Picture Books

Picture books are the first stage for young readers acquiring literacy. Picture books overlap two categories, literature and art. The pages of picture books are rich in color and carefully laid out (illustrations have to be reproduced multiple times; therefore they must be of excellent quality). Arrangement on the page is an important consideration as well. Some pictures are best at the top of a page; others work better on the bottom or the side. Some illustrations cover the entire page, while others have borders. Kuffner (2001) says, "Good picture books maintain high literacy and artistic standards" (p 4). She gives the following points to use when evaluating picture books:

A good picture book has brief text written in a simple and direct style; retains a child's interest after many readings, has solid characters; combines actions, wordplay, humor, and poetry; includes few concepts and only those a child will comprehend; contains high-quality art that perfectly complements the text mood and subject matter. A picture book's illustrations are very important; because young children usually pay more attention to its pictures than to its words, and the picture book stands the test of time by continuing long after its publication (p.4).

Some talented illustrators have made their mark in young children's picture books: Kate Greenaway, Jerry Pinkney, Ernest Shepard, Randolph Caldecott, Arthur Frost, and Howard Pyle, just to name a few. Their work is recognized as classic. Their life experiences influenced the way they represented illustrations, as I shall explain to the students. Some of them worked in black and white while others used delicate or vibrant colors.

"It is sometimes claimed that the picture book is the one genuinely original contribution that children's literature has made to literature in general," writes Peter Hunt in *Children's Literature*, "all its other genres being merely imitative" (288). There are many reasons to teach picture books. The pre-school child only recognizes the pictures, so their placement is important. Only after they get older do they begin to focus on the text. Children with disabilities are more like preschoolers and resemble preschoolers also in being willing to be educated through pictures. Young children enjoy looking at picture books that focus on families, so books about birthday parties, picnics, babies, and pets hold their attention. Picture books about school activities are also popular with young children. Picture books are also helpful for coping with the painful aspects of life, such as the death of elder family members. Grandparents, aunts, uncles and older neighbors are vital parts of the child's life and they need help to understand such relationships. This process should start before a situation occurs requiring the need. Picture books that help the child relate to events outside the family are also instrumental in the growth process. The pictures can be of real people or fictional characters depending on the age of the child. Another important area is play time. Children can be taught teamwork

through picture books featuring children in cooperative activities. Diversity is another of concern for teachers, and during classroom instruction picture books can help children to understand themselves as well as others.

I can think of numerous ways in which picture books can help developmentally disabled students overcome or understand difficulties. Friendship can be taught using picture books. The old saying, "Pictures are worth a thousand words" is true. Picture books can provide entertainment for hours on end. Children enjoy looking at animals, and colorful illustrations can bring them to life. But while enjoying the pictures, they can start getting interested in the words. With daily intensive academic, developmentally disabled children can learn and appreciate the text as well as the pictures.

Classroom Activities

I will use the following picture books, in no particular order, to teach the students about a character, one of the people or animals in a story; setting, the time and place in which a story occurs; plot, the action that makes up the story, following a plan called the plot line (problem, a conflict or dilemma facing the character(s)); solution, the outcome of a problem; conflict, a problem or struggle between two opposing forces in a story. A brief description of each book and its main characters will be given as well as identification of the illustrator.

Picture Books That are Valuable Resources

Charlotte's Web, 1952:

Author: E. B. White

Illustrator: Garth Williams

Main Characters and plot: Fern, the farmer's daughter who rescues Wilbur the runt pig from the being killed by her father. After she feeds him and he gains weight, she sells Wilbur to her uncle, Mr. Zuckerman, but she visits him everyday. Fern's uncle plans to take him to be slaughtered; Charlotte, a spider who has befriended Wilbur, works miracles with her web messages and saves his life. Charlotte dies after laying many eggs and Wilbur keeps his promise to her to look after her offspring. The conflict of the book is person-versus-society, as Fern saves Wilbur from being killed, which is what happens to pigs on a farm.

The Jungle Book, 1894

Author: Rudyard Kipling

Illustrator: John Lockwood Kipling

Main Characters and plot: Mowgli is a human boy who is raised in the jungles of India with the help of Baloo, the bear and Bagheera, the panther, who fight the tiger, Shere Khan, to save the boy. The book, with its moral tone, is used by the Boy Scouts as a motivational book. The conflict in this book is person-versus-nature. Mowgli is pursued by the tiger.

Stuart Little, 1945

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Author: E. B. White

Illustrator: Garth Williams

Main Characters and plot: Stuart Little is the second child born to the family of Frederick C. Little, and he appears to be no bigger than a mouse, just two inches high; he has the features of a mouse, so he must be a mouse. The family cat, Snowbell, does not like him. In spite of his small size, Stuart gets around fairly well and has many adventures. The conflict in this story is person-versus-himself, because Stuart struggles between his feeling of family responsibility and his longing for adventure.

The Wizard of Oz, 1900(The book has been in the public domain since 1956)

Author: L. Frank Baum

Illustrator: W.W. Denslow

Publisher: George M. Hill

Main Characters and plot: Dorothy and Toto, her dog, lived in Kansas, but were swept away during a great storm and ended up in the Land of Oz. Along the way she meets the Scarecrow who wants brains, the Tin Man who wants a heart, and the Cowardly Lion who wants courage. Dorothy meets many creatures along the way, including good witches and bad witches whom she destroys. Dorothy's wish is to return to her aunt and uncle in Kansas. The conflict in this story is person-versus-society. Dorothy has to overcome the forces of evil to get back to Kansas.

Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears, 1975

Author: Verna Aarderna

Illustrator: Leo and Diane Dillon

The main characters are talking animals in a forest in West Africa. They are discussing why mosquitoes buzz in people's ears. The conflict would be person-versus-nature. It is a person whose ear the mosquitoes buzz in.

One Hundred and One Dalmatians (101 Dalmatians), 1961

Author: Dodie Smith

Illustrator: Ronald Kidd

Main Characters and Plot: Roger and Anita marry, and so do their dogs, Pongo and Perdita (Dalmatians), which and have 15 puppies. A friend of Anita's, Cruella De Vil, wants to buy the puppies so she can make herself a coat from the puppies' fur. Anita refuses to sell the puppies so Cruella hires two henchmen to steal them. Pongo and Perdita, with the help of their animal friends, must rescue them. They succeed and also free other animals captured by Cruella De Vil. The conflict is person-versus-nature. It really should be nature-against-person, since the animals (nature) are the protagonists and person is the antagonist.

Film Adapted from Picture Books Listed Above

Charlotte's Web, 1973

Adapted from book by the same name written by E. B. White

Directors: Charles A. Nichols and Iwao Takamoto

Produced by Paramount

Main characters and plot: Charlotte, a spider, and Wilbur, a pig, become friends. They live on a farm owned by Mr. Zuckerman. Mr. Zuckerman plans to sell Wilbur at the County Fair until Charlotte works magic with her webs and saves his life. Templeton, a rat, helps Charlotte with her plan to save Wilbur. As Charlotte is dying, Wilbur decides he must take steps to save her egg sac with five hundred and fourteen little spiders in it. Templeton helps him and together they are able to get the egg sac back to the farm. In the spring, Charlotte's eggs hatch and all but three of her offspring leave the farm.

Charlotte's Web 2: Wilb[u]r's Great Adventure (2003)

Director: Mario Piluso

In this movie, 30 years later, Wilbur, Templeton, and three of Charlotte's daughters, Nellie, Aranea, and Joy go on an adventure. Wilbur remembers Charlotte's friendship and does the same for a black lamb, Cardigan, who lives on the Zuckerman farm. He shows Cardigan around the farm and introduces him to the other animals on the farm. But things take a turn for the worse when Cardigan is sold to another farmer. Wilbur, Templeton, Nellie, Aranea, and Joy go on a journey to find him. They experience some interesting adventures but are successful in their quest to find Cardigan.

The Jungle Book, 1967 Animated Version, Film versions on Videos and DVD

Adapted from the book by the same name written by Rudyard Kipling

Director: Wolfgang Reitherman

Produced by Walt Disney Productions with Buena Vista Distribution

The animated version differs from the book in that the human boy, Mowgli, is raised by wolves and when the wolves learned that Shere Kahn, the tiger, is nearby in the jungle, they decide to send Mowgli to a local "man tribe". The boy meets many animals along the way to the village while being tracked by Shere Kahn.

Stuart Little, 1999 (There have been two releases since 1999)

Adapted from the book of the same name written by E. B. White.

Director; Rob Minkoff

Screenplay: M. Night Shamalyan and Gregory J. Brooker

Production Companies: Columbia Pictures, Franklin/Watermans, Global Medien KG

Main Characters and Plot: Stuart is adopted by the Little family. The Littles oldest son wants a little brother but not a mouse, so Stuart Little has to win him over as well as the cat, Snowbell. Stuart is very caring and helpful within his family. He exhibits human qualities, wears small tailored clothing, takes public transportation, and sails a boat. His adventures while trying to find his friend, Margalo the bird, take him to very dangerous places.

The Wizard of Oz, 1939(There have been numerous version made over the years)

Adapted from book of the same name written by L. Frank Baum.

Screen Writers: Noel Langley, Florince Ryerson, and E. A. Woolf

Producer: MGM Studios

Main Characters and Plot: Dorothy is a lonely farm girl who has a dog named Toto and lives in Kansas. Dorothy is very unhappy and plans to run away to a happier place to escape a hateful neighbor. During a terrible tornado, Dorothy is struck on the head and she and Toto are transported to a magical land where she meets mysterious characters who exist in Kansas and in this magical land. They travel down the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City, and eventually she destroys the Witch of the West. Her friends have their wishes granted and Dorothy is able to return home to Kansas.

Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears,

Adapted from the book of the same name written by Verna Aarderna

Produced by: New Video Group, Inc., from Animal Kingdom Studio

Narrated by: James Earl Jones

The DVD offers visual interpretation of novels including *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears*.

101 Dalmatians, 1961(a live action version was made in 1996)

Adapted from the book of the same name written by Dodie Smith

Produced by Walt Disney Productions

Buena Vista Distribution

Main Characters and Plot: This is an animated version of a playful film for children where 15 Dalmatian puppies and other animals are rescued from the wicked Cruella De Vil who steals them in order to make herself a spotted coat from their fur.

In the animated version, the animals talk but they do not in the live action version, in which Glenn Close plays the evil Cruella.

This is a partial list of picture books and films that have been adapted from them. It is not exhaustive; many such books and films will be used in the classroom. The picture books listed often have different illustrators in

different reprints, and I plan to use as many as necessary to compare and contrast. Some of the films are animated and some are live action. In some of them the animals talk while in others they do not. It will be interesting to let the students discover the differences on their own. I do expect my students to be successful because I plan to make the activities fun and interesting. There is no reason why developmentally disabled students cannot learn to appreciate children's literature using picture books and film.

For instance, *The Jungle Book*, which does not have many pages and does have a lot of colorful pictures, works well. I will sit in a circle with them and each will have their own copy of the book. We will talk about how it might feel to live in a jungle with wild animals. I will ask them if they have pets or if they have ever visited the zoo. This will be done in order to establish prior knowledge, so everyone feels comfortable as we go through the book. We will take time for the students to draw animals or color them using clip art of tigers, bears, elephants, and other wild animals. This exercise should also help them to understand who the main characters are and to discuss where they are or what the setting is.

Some questions I will ask the students to help them with clues to scan for characters will be:

What does the character do?

What does the character think?

What does the character say?

What do others (narrator, other characters) say about the character?

I will have clue words or phrases available on the board and help them read them. Hopefully by this time some of the students can read simple sentences. The clues will be:

(table 06.03.11.01 available in print form)

We will discuss friendly animals and not so friendly animals such as the tiger who is trying to kill the human. We will emphasize safety among strangers and how to stay away from danger. This exercise will be designed to introduce the plot, which involves protecting Mowgli from danger. I will ask them if they have ever been in a situation where they felt unsafe and what did they do. If they have not, we will discuss what actions they should take if they ever were, and they will learn that avoiding dangerous situations helps to resolve conflict.

As we are going through these exercises, I will show them how to complete a problem/solution graphic organizer that I will draw on the board. This requires them to identify a problem and think about how many ways the problem can be solved. They will answer who, what and why questions to complete the graphic organizer. They will dictate their answers to me or, in the case of for those students who have mastered short sentences, they can write the answers themselves.

The students will also complete a plot line using facts from *Charlotte's Web*. I will read the story and they will watch the film before attempting this skill. I will model a plot line on a transparency and use the overhead projector for them to copy it. They will start with the beginning of the story, by stating who the characters are, where the setting is, and what the problem is. Next, they will discuss the events which belong to the rising action. Then they will talk about the resolution or the peak of the plot line where the problem is resolved and then the declining slope, the falling action, which indicates the end. They will use construction paper and colored markers to draw their own plot line.

I will select some of the words from the story and put them on the word wall. As we read and reread the story, I will ask the students to identify words on the word wall that are in the picture book. After completing these activities with one picture book, they will understand how to repeat them with other picture books. The goal is to get them to be able to read the picture book independently.

Another classroom activity is to make personal picture books. The class has a digital camera and a color printer that they can use to make picture books. The class goes on community based instructional trips as indicated in their IEPs, and they can take the digital camera and take pictures in the stores, at the zoo, in the museum or at the school and use them to develop their personal picture books. They can use writing software to produce simple words or they can dictate to me and I will type and print the captions for them. I feel that the more they are involved with print, the sooner they will learn to read.

The picture books listed previously are not the only ones I plan to use to teach children's literature. I will expand the picture book approach to other subjects that I teach, such as math. I will be on the lookout for books that have corresponding software with DVD quality. I believe picture books can be useful in science, social studies, vocational education and health as well as language arts and reading. It is going to be a matter of researching and obtaining the resources appropriate for the students I teach.

Pictures come in varying sizes and shapes so I am going to use posters for commercial products such as Coca Cola, Toys "R" Us, MacDonald's and others to help students toward literacy. This may not seem appropriate for introducing my students to children's literature, but I think it will create interest in colors and print, and from there an interest in other print materials and colored images will follow. Any opportunity to get their interest and hold it is worth taking.

Lesson Plans

Lesson one

Objective: To complete a story map of the picture book, *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in*

People's Ears

Materials: *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears* picture book, graphic organizer of a story map, colored pencils, erasable transparency pens, transparency, overhead projector.

Procedures:

1. Students will listen to the book being read and look at the illustrations.
2. The students will be told that there will be three parts of the story they have to listen for; the beginning, middle, and ending.
3. They will name the important characters in the story.
4. The students will have to retell what happened in each part of the story.
5. I will translate their dictation on a transparency shown on the board using the overhead projector.
6. They will also have graphic organizers and will write their answers in short sentences depending on their writing skills.

Lesson two

Objective: To learn about animals and plants in the jungle. This lesson will be taught in the science class.

Materials: Picture book, *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears* and video of book. Picture books of animals found in the jungle, images on web site of jungle photos, coloring sheets and games from web site about insects.

Procedures:

1. The students will listen to the story being read while looking at the picture book of the animals in the story.
2. Students will answer questions about what they think is going to happen on the next page and give the reason for their answer.
3. Students will look at pictures of African animals, including mammals, birds, reptiles and insects.
4. The students will watch the video of *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears*, and listen to the sounds of the animals.
5. The students will choose from activities on a web site that has coloring pages of animals, clip art of insects, craft games, insect games, and insect songs and poems.
6. The students will visit the school library and self select books of jungle animals.

Lesson three

Objective: To compare and contrast the elements of the picture book, *The Wizard of Oz*, with a film version of the book.

Materials: Picture book of *The Wizard of Oz*, a film adapted from the book, a large wipe off compare/contrast graphic organizer, erasable markers.

Procedures:

1. The students will listen to the reading of the classic tale of *The Wizard of Oz*, and look at the magical pictures before watching the film. This will take several days, so the students can absorb the text before looking at the film.
2. The students will be asked to look for scenes in the film that are different from the pictures in the book and scenes that are the same as the pictures in the book.
3. I will fill in the information on the graphic organizer if necessary.
4. The students will do oral presentations following the completion of these activities.

Lesson four

Objective: To explore the friendship theme in the *Stuart Little* film and the *Charlotte's Web* film.

Materials: Films adapted from the *Stuart Little* and *Charlotte's Web* picture books, *Stuart Little* and *Charlotte's Web* books, construction paper, markers.

Procedures:

1. The students will view the two films on separate days and discuss them as they are being shown.
2. They will answer questions and compare the friendship Stuart has with Margalo and the friendship

Charlotte with Wilbur.

3. They will be asked questions about friendship such as: what makes a good friend, can boys have girls as friends and can girls have boys as friends, what do friends do for each other, and do friends always get along?
4. The books will be read after the films are shown and discussed so the students will listen for details during the parts where Stuart meets Margalo and saves her and become aware of Charlotte's efforts to save Wilbur. Each of these characters shows how friends save friends.
5. The students will use construction paper and markers to make a friendship poster.

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