



*AMC Montessori Summer 2009
Hands-On Creative Lesson
Planning Newsletter*

The AMC Montessori Newsletter

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Heidi Anne Spietz, Editor

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<http://www.amonco.org>

The AMC resource participants have generously shared hands-on activities that you will want to use in coming months. You'll be impressed with the ingenuity and creativity expressed in the recipes and crafts they have chosen to share with you. Use their ideas to foster interest in science, social studies, art, mathematics, and other academic hands-on learning activities. Integrate the recipes and crafts into your multicultural lesson planning as well.

Hopefully, you will let the participants know how much you have enjoyed their recipe(s) and craft(s). Visit the websites listed throughout the newsletter. You'll find additional helpful lesson information at these sites.

American Montessori Consulting is not responsible for any of the crafts or recipes posted here. All of the crafts and recipes are copyrighted and are the property of the participating AMC resource organizations listed in this newsletter. For questions concerning their individual copyrighted material, you need to visit the website listed in association with the craft(s) and recipe(s) that interest you and obtain the telephone number and/or e-mail address of the contact person(s).

If you would like friends on special listservs to know of this newsletter, please request that they download the newsletter directly from

http://www.amonco.org/montessori_summer_handson.html

Use special precautions when involving children in any craft or recipe where there is a potential for harm. Some children have special food allergies and/or other medical conditions like diabetes. Small children need supervision. Scissors, hot glue, hot stoves and ovens, and other elements in making some of these recipes and crafts need to be considered. Please consider carefully the age and maturity level of the child before allowing him or her to participate.

Be sure to visit each resource participant's site to see the marvelous selection of educational offerings you can use right now in your school and home classrooms. You'll also find creative, unique educational gift items that are sure to be enjoyed by the special young people in your life.

The following creative ideas are from the AMC Montessori Resource Center <http://www.amonco.org/directory.html> participants. Visit their websites for additional innovative ways to reach your students throughout the school year.



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FunFelt

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Website: <http://www.funfelt.com>

Three Fun Recipes Submitted by Karen

Fun Felt for Kids - The Story Teller is a site offering unique educational felts for parents and teachers. In addition, we offer a monthly newsletter full of teaching ideas, craft ideas, snack ideas and more, based on a monthly theme. In our 15th issue we offered ideas for teaching the Pirates theme. To read that issue, as well as 30 others, visit the FunFelt.com - <http://www.funfelt.com> - page and sign up!

For a "taste" of the fun, here are some pirate snack ideas:

Treasure Chests:

Take a large tootsie roll (not the midgets!) and cut in lengths of about an inch. Slice lengthwise leaving a bit for a 'hinge.' Use tiny candies such as mini-M&Ms, Nerds, sprinkles, etc. and frosting to 'fill' the treasure chest! Kids love these treats.

Pirate Ships:

Take an orange and cut in half. Hollow out the insides of the orange and eat. (Yum!). Make orange jello using a little less water than usually called for, and fill into the orange half peels. Refrigerate according to the directions. When firm, use a toothpick and paper flags (kids can design them!) to insert into your pirate ship!

Cannonballs:

For about 20 cannon balls, you will need 1/4 pound of soft cheese, 1/4 cup of chopped walnuts, 1/2 cup confectioners sugar, 1/8 cup of cocoa powder, and some chocolate milk powder. Stir the cheese, nuts,

cocoa and sugar together until well mixed. Roll the mixture into small balls, each the size of a walnut. Roll each ball into the chocolate milk powder, chill, and serve!



About Fun Felt

For more teaching ideas, fun with felt boards, and information about our business opportunity. Or to request a FREE catalog and felt sample, please visit Fun Felt for Kids -The Story Teller at <http://www.funfelt.com>
Email me at karen@funfelt.com. Or call me at 1-877-643-5521



Garden Artisans

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Website: <http://www.gardenartisans.com>

Gardening Activities for the Summer Months

Visit <http://www.gardenartisans.us> and click on Gardening Newsletters. for some hands-on gardening fun this summer!
You'll find the following topics in this magnificent collection of online newsletters.

[January 2001 - Vines](#)

[January 2002 - Planning an Herb Garden](#)

[February 2001 - Plants that Attract Birds](#)

[February 2002 - Create a Spectacular Floral Display](#)

[March 2001 - Designing Your Outdoor Room](#)

[March 2002 - Germinating Seeds & Seedling Care](#)

April 2001 - *Aurinia saxatilis* - Basket of Gold

April 2002 - Butterfly Gardening

May 2001 - Landscaping for Conservation

May 2002 - *Ipomoea alba* - Moonflower Vine

June 2001 - Xeriscaping

June 2002 - What Mulch Can Do For You!

July 2001 - *Monarda didyma* - Bee Balm

July 2002 - Stressors that Affect our Plants

August 2001 - Landscape Lighting

August 2002 - Sorry, no letter - we moved!

September 2001 - Collecting Seeds - Fun for the Whole Family

September 2002 - Harvesting Herbs

October 2001 - Quiet Places - Listing of Bulbs for all Seasons

October 2002 - Attracting Birds to your Winter Garden

November 2001 - A Winter Gem - Heaths and Heathers

November 2002 - Dwarf Conifers & Ornamental Grasses

December 2001 - Drip Irrigation

December 2002 - Gift Ideas

January 2003 - Planning an Outdoor Wedding

February 2003 - February Cleanup - Pruning Tips

March 2003 - What Spring Brings - Great Expectations

April 2003 - Shade Gardening

May 2003 - Creating Walls of Color and Ceilings
of Scent for your Outside Rooms

June 2003 - Daylilies - A Wonderful Addition to any Garden!

August 2003 - Creating the Desired Mood for your Outdoor Rooms

September 2003 - Remembering the Wildlife in our Fall Cleanup

October 2003 - Planting Bulbs for Spring and Summer Color

November 2003 - Collecting Seeds - Great Fall Fun!

December 2003 - *Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn'

January 2004 - House Plant Survival

February 2004 - Plant Dormancy - a brief respite

March 2004 - Bird Psychology

April 2004 - The Hummers are Coming!



About Garden Artisans

We all know the quality time we spend with our children is important. Whether it is learning about plants that attract birds and butterflies to your garden or spending time together with an arts and crafts project, children will always benefit from the time we spend with them.

Garden Artisans offers many helpful tips on how to bring nature's bountiful learning experiences to your own backyard:

Visit <http://www.gardenartisans.com/> and click on **Arts and Crafts**. This section has fun and easy projects parents and children can do together: weave your own basket, build a birdhouse, paint your own apron or create your own puppets.

Garden Artisans - Come Visit! <http://www.gardenartisans.com>
He who plants a garden finds happiness - Chinese proverb
Join our Mailing List. Visit <http://www.gardenartisans.com/contest.html> for details.



Cathie Perolman - Montessori Teacher

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Website: <http://www.joyful-noise.com/jnp/phonics.html>

A Recipe Contributed by Cathie

Cooking With Children Gingerbread Muffins

This recipe makes 12 mini gingerbread muffins and can be made independently by children as young as three.

Measure and level $\frac{1}{2}$ cup gingerbread mix (Washington Brand in small boxes works well as it only needs the mix and water).

Pour into bowl.

Measure $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water (We pour from a pitcher into a measuring cup that has a line on it. Then it is easier to get the water from the cup to the bowl without spilling.)

Pour into bowl.

Mix using a child sized wooden spoon.

Place mini biscuit cup papers in mini biscuit pan.

Ask a teacher to look at your mix. This helps ensure children did not forget the water or use too much of one ingredient or the other.

Ladle mix into mini biscuit cups using a small ladle.

Bake at 375 for 10 minutes.

Cool for 10 minutes.

Remove muffin by touching only the papers from pan and place in serving basket.

Invite a friend to do the dish washing using classroom dishwashing setup.

Serve muffins to other children (Only working children can be offered a muffin.

Children crowding the baker and asking for a muffin cannot be served.) and save the last one for the cook.

Tips:

We practice measuring and leveling lentils and salt for a long time before doing this activity. We use a spoon to place the lentils into the cup and a wooden popsicle stick to level it.

We empty 5 or so boxes of mix into a large container for 5 pounds of sugar. (I use a Tupperware container.) Children measure and level inside the container for added control of error and mess. We practice in the exact container for a bout a month before.

Children set the timer but only adults touch the oven. Hot biscuits are placed on the counter and children are expected to refrain from touching them. We have never had a child get burned.

I give this lesson to the extended day 5's first and they each have a turn. Then, I give it to all the other children. If you are three, you must have a helper that is five or six. If you are four, you can choose to have a helper or not. Sometimes

two four year olds just bake together. We usually bake 2-3 dozen muffins in a day. Each dozen costs about 37 cents.

Then smell of gingerbread is a positive sensorial experience in our classroom and our school.



About Cathie Perolman's Hands-On Phonics

Montessorian Cathie Perolman provides our readers with an excellent overview of her Hands-On Phonics program.

“Joyful Noise is excited to announce the release of the third component in the Hands-On Phonics Program. Vowel Buddies covers long vowels created by two or more letters that stand next to each other in a word (ai, ay, ea, oa ee etc.)

This section contains 36 activities that practice reading, spelling and matching these all important vowel combinations. Check out our website at Joyful-Noise and then click on phonics to find more information.

Hands-On Phonics, The Short Vowels provides systematic practice in both Spelling and Reading of three letter short vowel words. The goal of the program is to move a child from struggling to blend sounds into words to being a fluent short vowel word reader. This comes from extended practice. Each short vowel is experienced in six separate ways, providing interest and variety to the student. The same six ways to practice words are repeated over and over creating a self-pacing, child- centered program. The final row of drawers mix the vowels and extend the skill to matching pictures and sentences and reading phrase booklets.

Home schoolers do not need the containers but can easily place the activities in zip lock bags that the children can select individually. Children with special needs can later combine two or more drawers that focus on a different vowel sound. Children enjoy mixing up the "a" drawer and the "e" drawer for instance.

The individual recording book contains 36 pages, one for each drawer, thus the child works with the concept manipulatively and then records his work. He keeps track of his progress by coloring in a section of the cover for each activity completed. Each vowel is assigned a color so the completed recording book cover resembles a rainbow when finished. This is a motivating factor and highly satisfying to the child. Once the child is working securely in the Hands-On Phonics Short Vowel Program, he is ready for phonetically regular readers such as Modern Curriculum Press or Primary Phonics.

The Hands-On Phonics Magic "e" Program extends the concept to four letter phonetically regular words ending in "e" and having a long sound. (cape, size) Many of the 18 activities are identical to the ones used in the Short Vowel Program but with new words. Other activities ask children to practice sorting words by short vowels and magic "e" as well as finding Magic "e" words within sentences. Work with matching pictures and sentences are included in this program also. The magic "e" program is printed on green index and the child feels his progress by being "on" a different color. A recording booklet is provided for this program also. Visit <http://www.joyful-noise.com/jnp/phonics.html>



North American Montessori Center

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Website: <http://www.montessoritraining.net>

Activity Submitted by Dale Gausman

Changing a Flower's Color

To discover how to change the color of a flower, and how water travels up plant stems.

Materials

- White carnation with a long stem.
- Small sharp knife.
- Small cutting board.
- Jug of water.
- Two small clear drinking glasses.
- Bottle of green food coloring.
- Bottle of red food coloring.
- Small spoon.
- Wooden clothespin.

Presentation

- This experiment can be presented to a small group of students or the entire class.
- Place all of the necessary material on a table.
- Explain to the students that this experiment demonstrates how, through capillary action and transpiration, the color of a white carnation can be changed to two different colors.

SAFETY NOTE: Instruct the students on the safe handling and use of knives.

- Place the two drinking glasses on a table, then fill both glasses one-half full of water from the jug.
- Put several drops of green food coloring into one of the glasses of water and stir

it well with the small spoon. Make sure the color of the water is rich and dark.

- Put several drops of red food coloring into the other glass of water and stir it well with the small spoon. Make sure the color of the water is rich and dark.
- Place the cutting board on a table. Place the carnation on the cutting board and cut at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) off the bottom of the stem.
- Starting at the bottom of the stem, cut the stem in half lengthwise by cutting up the stem just until the mid-point of the stem is reached, then stop cutting.
- Place the two glasses of colored water next to one another so that they are touching.
- Insert one half of the cut carnation stem into the glass of green water and place the other half of the stem into the glass of red water.
- Clip the clothespin onto the stem of the carnation just below the blossom. Slide the clothespin down on the stem until it rests on the rims of the two glasses. The clothespin will add stability to the stem.
- Ask the students to observe the carnation and record their observations.
- Let the two glasses of colored water and the carnation stand for a period of forty-eight hours.
- After the forty-eight hour time period has elapsed, observe the carnation.
- Ask the students to record their observations and conclusions.

Activity Submitted by Dale Gausman

Making a Simple Friendship Bracelet

To follow steps and practice skills involving memory, pattern and shape recognition and fine motor movements while making a knotted bracelet from colored thread; to practice social skills by giving the bracelet to someone special.

Materials

Tray containing: embroidery thread in three different colors; adhesive tape; scissors.

Presentation

Most Montessori teachers present this activity in Years 1 and 2. In advance, place all material on the tray and place the tray on a shelf.

PART 1: GETTING READY

- Announce that students will have an opportunity to make a beautiful bracelet with colored thread.
- Bring the tray from the shelf and place it on the worktable or mat.
- Explain the activity: The students will make a beautiful bracelet from colored thread that they can give to a special person, and for this reason it is called a friendship bracelet.

PART 2: MAKING THE FRIENDSHIP BRACELET

- Invite a student to stretch out her/his arm. Demonstrate how to measure a piece of embroidery thread the length of the student's arm. Cut the thread with scissors.
- Measure and cut two more lengths of different colored thread in the same way, then lay the three pieces of colored thread side by side (vertically) on the table.
- Join the three threads by tying them together in a knot about 2 inches (5 cm) from the top end of the three pieces (see illustration).
- Remove a piece of adhesive tape and place it over the threads just above the knot, then stick the tape to the table (this will hold the threads in place on the table).
- Separate the three pieces of thread against the table, and hold the piece of thread on the right in your right hand.
- Bring the thread from the right to the left over the other two pieces to form the shape of a number "4." Hold the "point" of the 4-shape with left index finger (see illustration).
- With the right hand, take the end of this same thread and bring it back toward the other two threads lying vertically on the table, then tuck the end underneath these two threads. Pull this thread through with the right hand, creating a knot, and slide the knot to the top.
- Continue as above, creating a 4-shape with each piece of thread, pulling the right end of the thread under and through the two vertical threads each time, and sliding the knot to the top.
- Continue in the same manner, inviting students to take turns making several knots each (assist if necessary) until the three threads become a length of knots forming the friendship bracelet.

PART 3: FINISHING THE BRACELET

- When the bracelet seems long enough for a child's wrist, remove the tape and gently lift the bracelet off the table.
- Place the bracelet around a student's wrist and see if it is long enough. If the bracelet is long enough, complete it by tying a knot with all three threads. If it is not long enough, tape it back to the table and make more knots.

- When this first bracelet is finished, invite the students to make friendship bracelets on their own, whenever they choose. Encourage the students to make their friendship bracelets for a special friend or family member.
- Remind the students to clean the work area, and to place all material back on the tray and return it to its proper place on the shelf when they are finished the activity.



About North American Teacher Training Center

- **Infant/Toddler** (3 months-3 years)
- **Preschool/Kindergarten** (ages 3-6)
- **Elementary** (ages 6-9)

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Wildridge Education

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Website: <http://www.wildridge.com/>

Planning a family vacation to Europe or Washington D.C.?

You'll find the following well written, informative articles available at the Wildridge Education website <http://www.wildridge.com>, http://www.wildridge.com/hs_bicycle3.html, http://www.wildridge.com/hs_aislands.html and http://www.wildridge.com/hs_bicycle4.html

Bicycling for Education - Part I
Family Bicycle Adventure Across Europe
Bicycling From Gettysburg Battlefield To Washington D.C.
Adventure Stories
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About Wildridge Education

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One user writes, *“We are a family with children that love music. Math, on the other hand, has been a struggle. Math & Music is just what we have needed to spark greater interest in mathematics. Lawrence Bangs is gifted in communicating in a way that all of us understand, and the bridge to musical scales and harmony have increased our interest and enthusiasm in mathematical arenas yet undiscovered.”*

For a FREE product demo call Toll-free: 1.888.244.4379 or sign-up online
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Website: <http://www.literature.com>

The following articles are contributed by

Rita Arpaia

Product Manager and

Marketing Literature Resources Online LLC

Howls with Owls!

Most people think of owls as being very serious creatures...with their big and curious eyes that never seem to stir. That's not the case in *Owls in the Family*, by Farley Mowat, who sees owls in a very different and hilarious light! If you're looking for some summer howls, then try this book for a group read-aloud...you and your children will have a laugh-aloud at the antics and uproarious behavior of Wol and Weep as they adjust to humans!

Story Summary

The story is set in the Saskatchewan River Valley, where Billy and his friend, Bruce, keep lots of pets: gophers, rabbits, pigeons, even rats and snakes. When the boys get Wol and Weeps, the young owlets, the real fun begins! Wol and Weeps seem to think they're human. Wol is quite surprised to learn that he can (almost!) fly. The bolder of the two, Wol, has humorous run-ins with almost everyone: the maid, the minister, the mailman, and even Billy's faint-hearted French teacher. Wol enjoys teasing Mutt, Billy's dog, and protecting timid Weeps from mean cats and canine. When Billy's family moves to the city, Wol and Weeps make a new home on Bruce's farm.

Story Related Activities

Here are some activities adapted from our **Bookfolio Activity Guide** for *Owls in the Family* that your children might enjoy doing before, during or after the read-aloud. The activities are designed to appeal to a variety of learning modalities, with a focus on the communication skills. It is important that children select the activity that most appeals to their interests and skills level. They should also feel free to modify the activity and even come up with their own ideas.

For the artists: Billy describes a funny, yet touching moment with Wol when three of the newly hatched prairie chickens mistook the horned owl for their mother: "When the four other babies also joined the first three, Wol began to get nervous. But finally he seemed to resign himself to being a mother, and he fluffed his feathers out and lowered himself very gently to the ground." Draw an illustration of this charming scene. Try to capture Wol's bewildered expression.

For the actors: (Note: You might do this activity before the book is read, and select someone who enjoys dramatizing an oral reading.) The descriptions of the preparations for the parade and the wild uproar that takes place when the 'surprise pet' is unveiled are wonderful scenes to dramatize. Prepare to read Chapter Six aloud to the rest of the group before the book is read. You should "set the scene" by briefly explaining who the characters and animals are. During the reading, you should pause on page 62, right after the judge says, "That's what I call smart merchandising." Then ask the group if they can imagine what might happen next. Then continue with the story.

For the naturalists: Plan to make a mural of the Saskatchewan prairie and sloughs based on the descriptions in Chapter One. When the landscape is complete, populate it with prairie inhabitants drawn by group members. Among the animals you want to include are prairie chickens (page 77), magpies (page 10), various ducks (page 92), and, of course, owls. Then write an index card to 1) identify each type of animal and 2) briefly describe its life on the prairie based on information you found in other references. Attach the card beside each species on the mural.

For the researchers: In the beginning of *Owls in the Family*, you learn what and how wild owls eat. Wol and Weeps really must have thought they were humans

because they preferred table food, even vegetables! Using online or offline references, find out more about wild owls' eating habits and other habits. Before you begin, think of five questions you want to answer. Write a report about what you have learned. If you wish, draw a picture of Wol and Weeps on the cover page of your report. Share your report with your friends.

For the writer: It is a May morning in Toronto. Gazing outside the classroom window onto the busy city streets, Billy daydreams about the gentle breezes in the Saskatoon, "blowing across the distant wheat fields and smelling like warm sun on the soft mud."

Imagine that you are Billy. Write a letter to Bruce telling him about the things you miss most about springtime in Saskatchewan. Of course, you'll also want to ask about the owls and tell him about your new home. Or you can be Bruce, and write a letter to Billy telling him about Wol and Weeps in their new home. Read the letter to a friend, one who hasn't read *Owls in the Family*. Does your letter interest your friend in reading the book?

For the reporter: After her encounter with Wol, Billy's French teacher had to go home for the rest of the day! Imagine that a reporter is waiting in her classroom to get the scoop when she arrives the next day. With two other people in the group, decide who will be the reporter, the French teacher, and Billy. Work together until you are ready to go "live" with the interview. Arrange to conduct the interview in front of your group. Note: "Qu'est -- ce que c'est?" is a French expression meaning, "What is it?" Incorporate this expression in your interview.

For the poet: Write a poem in the shape of an owl. Your poem may be humorous or factual. Read your poem to the group.

For the cartographer: Until the author revealed that *Owls in the Family* is a true story, did you realize that Saskatoon, Saskatchewan is a real place? It is a city in Canada. Read more about Canada. Draw or trace a map of the country. Then, label the ten provinces and two territories and the places Billy talks about in *Owls in the Family*: Saskatoon, the Saskatchewan River, Dundurn and Toronto. Label Ottawa, the country's capital, with a star. (Note: if you are a hockey fan, feel free to indicate the home towns of the Oilers, the Maple Leafs, the Canadians, the Canucks, the Flames and the Nordiques!)

At <http://www.literatureplace.com>, we view children's books as their windows to the world...as a place to go back to deeply and to go beyond broadly...to wander in a multitude of directions...to extend and enrich their experience...to bring the book into the reader's world. This view is the primary criteria used by our Bookfolio writers.

We invite you to visit our website where you can preview our 150 Bookfolios and access our online catalog. We have just introduced a Charge-and-Download option which enables you to purchase a Bookfolio for \$3.95 each using Visa or MasterCard. A print version options is also available, along with our Bookfolio collections.

Taking your class on a literature journey?

Start with the classics! But where do you begin when there are so many great books from which to choose... so many reading lists to review. Consider starting with a focus on one literary type...the *genre* approach. This model has always been popular with adult book clubs...a forum where they could interact with others who share the same love of mysteries, science fiction, nonfiction, folklore, biography, and so on. It's never too early to begin the genre approach with young readers.

At <http://www.literatureplace.com> we started with the *genre* approach because it gave us the structure and guidelines necessary in building our Core Collection of 150 titles, most of which are classics and award-winning books. Using the literary characteristics of each genre as our criteria proved not only important in our selection process, but it became even more important in generating the quality and variety of projects and activities that supported each title. The selected book became the springboard for all that followed in its literature study guide, the **Bookfolio**. These same criteria might serve you in both selecting books and in knowing where to go with them, particularly if you are embarking on a literature program for your students and/or are planning a Book Club with a genre focus.

The following reflects the five genres that we feature at literatureplace.com and the criteria we used in our selection process.

1. Broaden the reader's view of history with historical fiction. Writers of historical fiction add to our understanding of what life might have been like for the people who lived during a particular historical period. *Setting* is the most important factor when sharing and discussing titles for this genre. Authenticity of setting goes beyond place to include well-crafted language that reflects the period, characters that behave according to the standards of the times, and worthwhile themes that have universal appeal. The reader must be able to see the place and recognize accurate geographical and historical detail. Mildred Taylor describes the rural South so vividly that readers can see Cassie Logan walking along the country roads in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. They feel cramped and frightened as they share the crowded attic space with the girls hiding from the Nazis in *The Upstairs Room*.

Language changes over time and although writers avoid archaic expressions that contemporary readers would not understand, they retain the flavor of the period's speech. Dialogue in Rosemary Sutcliffe's *The Light Beyond the Forest* reflects the dignity and courtesy of King Arthur's day. Characters in historical fiction must be believable; they portray feelings and concerns that the reader would have felt under similar circumstances. For example, when Matt is left alone in a pioneer cabin facing danger and fear in *The Sign of the Beaver*; the reader shares his pain as he learns to cope with danger and loneliness. Anna and Caleb hope that the mail-order bride, *Sarah, Plain and Tall*, who comes to the Nebraska prairie, will stay with their family. The reader shares their hope.

2. Invite the reader to identify with story characters in realistic fiction. Characters in realistic fiction behave in ways that cause readers to say, "She /He acts just like I do." They are characters who could live next door to the reader, but who become interesting because the reader becomes involved in their cares and concerns. Believability of characters, settings, and events is central to realistic fiction. The reader must be able to accept the characters as real people and events as real places when reading realistic stories; they must be able to imagine a boy like Jesse and a girl like Leslie as they race across the field in *A Bridge to Terabithia*. They must accept as possible Claudia and Jamie's trip to the Metropolitan Museum, where they took up residence for a week in *The Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*.

The ordinary people who fill the pages of realistic fiction speak in ordinary ways. The language of high-quality realistic fiction must accurately portray the characters the author describes. Dialogue is sometimes more informal and

conversational than other genre since it deals with contemporary times and people. Regional dialects ring in the ear when *M. C. Higgins, the Great* speaks about his Appalachian Mountain home. The reader hears a mixture of Spanish and English as Nicholosa Mohr's *Felita* speaks about living in Puerto Rico and New York. Stories of contemporary times and characters with normal human powers continue to be among the most popular with young readers. Many titles that have won children's choice awards' programs come from this genre.

3. Open the reader's world through folklore. Stories in this genre include the myriad of legends, myths, and folktales from all over the world that have come to us through generations of storytellers. Long before humans had created a writing system, storytellers practiced their craft around the hearth fires. Humans have an inherent need for stories; they need them to explain their world, the workings of nature, and the struggle between good and evil. Folktales, myths, and legends were created to fulfill those needs. The values, mores, and conventions of a cultural group can be observed through the screen of fiction; they are embodied in the stories' characters. These stories are retold so often that many versions of the same tale are available.

The key criteria for folklore selections featured in this collection stem from the recognized body of work acknowledged as outstanding by the community of readers; they represent the consensus of literary critics. The language of these retellings retains the authentic flavor of the oral form characteristic of folklore. Natural language rhythms reflective of the cultural origins of a folktale dignify the version chosen. For example, *The Jack Tales*, retold by Richard Chase, retains the Appalachian dialect used by the people who shaped the tales. Isaac Bashevis Singer's retelling of Jewish folklore in *Zlateh the Goat and Other Stories* is couched in the vernacular of its creators. Doris Gates' retelling of *Lord of the Sky: Zeus* maintains the dignity of the Elysian fields in which the stories grew.

4. Stretch the reader's imagination with fantasy and science fiction. The writers of fantasy and science fiction depend entirely upon language to create their images. Therefore, the language of the telling was among the primary criteria used in selecting books for this genre. Fantasy and science fiction writers expect their readers to suspend belief; therefore, the logic of the fantasy world created has to be convincing. Similarly strong characters that are well developed are necessary for a believable fantasy world. The books chosen had to have memorable and well-delineated characters that develop, grow and change during the time period of the story.

More importantly, the titles had to have themes that are worthwhile--themes that would raise the sights of a reader to more ennobling thoughts—stories that are uplifting and values that are worthy. For example, in *Charlotte's Web*, children can identify with the friendship among barnyard animals that talk with each other. They can envision a world found by walking through a wardrobe where it is always winter, as in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. They can imagine how super intelligent rats would organize their lives as in *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*. Fantasy and science fiction have earned the distinction of being the most favored by both children and adults. Of all genres, titles in fantasy and science fiction appear more frequently than other genres on lists of children's classics.

5. Let the reader visit the lives of others through biography. Titles in this genre are usually classified as nonfiction. The events of an actual person's life are portrayed through a writer's eyes, often presented as an informative narrative. The writer selects from the information available those fragments that can then be shaped into a cohesive story. Biographies vary in the degree of fictionalization and liberties that an author takes. Some use only documented facts; whereas other writers may choose to embellish the facts to create a believable account of a person's life. Some biographies, such as *I, Juan de Pareja* and *Tituba of Salem Village*, are so fictionalized that they are no longer considered to be nonfiction and are labeled as juvenile fiction. Robert Lawson in *Ben and Me* took fictionalized biography to the fanciful level in his account of Ben Franklin's life as seen by Amos the mouse, giving the reader another perspective on biography. Russell Friedman's *Lincoln: A Photobiography* conveys new insights into this historical leader with photographs that reveal the degree of his struggle over the issue of slavery and the Civil War.

Autobiographies, stories of one's own life, give an even closer view inside another person. Readers of *Little by Little: A Writer's Education* will empathize with Jean Little's account of her difficult years growing up with a serious visual handicap and share her triumph when her first poem is published. Jean Fritz, another noted writer, shows us what her life was like as she grew up in China as a missionary child in *Homesick: My Own Story*. While this "autobiography" is highly fictionalized, it is included in this collection to demonstrate another author's approach to sharing her experiences. A glimpse of the biography titles included in the Core Collection will reveal a balance between sung and unsung heroes and heroines, each of which will provide positive role models for young readers. .

And most important, the reader should enjoy the journey! Whatever genre

you choose, if you start with the classics, activities that reflect the literary merits of the book will surface readily. These literature-based activities will take the reader more deeply into the book and nourish extensive reading experiences with intensive exploration of the text; will encourage readers to revisit a book many times and for different reasons; will provide readers with a variety of narrative forms and text structures unique to a genre; and will promote the integration of literature in everyday life. A **literatureplace** is an attitude, a mindset; it is any place - the school, the classroom, the library, the home - wherever teachers, parents, and children interact with books. What may begin as a journey into one literary genre can spread into many ventures into other genres...opening up literature experiences that will take readers soar to higher levels. That is our mission at **literatureplace.com**. **We invite you to visit our site <http://www.literatureplace.com> and discover the many resources that are available...Bookfolios for 150 titles, 72 of which are classics, and free access to many online resources, free sample Bookfolio, and more.** Our reward is in knowing that our resources may play a role in making your school a **literatureplace**.

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The Classics at **<http://www.literatureplace.com>**

The following titles from our Core Collection of 150 Bookfolios are included on several book lists for children's classics.

Bunnicula: A Rabbit Tale of Mystery

Charlotte's Web
The Cricket in Times Square
The Enormous Egg
James and the Giant Peach
Peter Pan
Pippi Longstocking
Winnie the Pooh
The Cabin Faced West
Caddie Woodlawn
The Courage of Sarah Noble
Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes
Sarah, Plain and Tall
Call It Courage

The Hundred Dresses
The Hundred Penny Box
Philip Hall Likes Me. I Reckon Maybe.
The Secret Garden
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing
Amos Fortune, Free Man
Ben and Me
Homesick: My Own Story
I, Juan De Pareja
Lincoln: A Photobiography
The Upstairs Room
Abel's Island
The Borrowers
The Children of Green Knowe

Freaky Friday
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Tuck Everlasting
The Twenty-One Balloons
The White Mountains
The Wizard of Oz
Across Five Aprils
Dragonwings
My Brother Sam Is Dead
Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
The Sign of the Beaver
Tituba of Salem Village
Bridge to Terabithia
Felita
From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E.
Frankweiler
Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl
Carry On, Mr. Bowditch
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
The Book of Three
Enchantress from the Stars
Half Magic
The Hobbit
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh
The Wind in the Willows
A Wizard of Earthsea
A Wrinkle in Time
The Sword in the Stone
Adam of the Road
The Door in the Wall: Story of Medieval
London
The House of Sixty Fathers
Island of the Blue Dolphins
Johnny Tremain
The Light Beyond the Forest
The Stronghold
...and now Miguel
Hatchet
One-Eyed Cat
The Pinballs
The Talking Earth
Where the Red Fern Grows

End of Part 6

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