

Literacy Centre and Classroom Library Development

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Introduction

Today literacy cannot be defined as the traditional reading and writing activities designed for classroom instruction¹Antonacci & O'Callaghan, 2004: 16. Children observe how literacy is used at home, e.g. reading of newspapers and magazines, sms texts on the cellphone, making of grocery lists, ID documents, and usage of Bank cards. Children construct and reconstruct the use of print in their cultural and social lives based on their experiences with printed matter. Therefore the educator or teacher should accommodate the broader scope of literacy development

Classroom Literacy Development (Focus: Reading)

In the early grades teachers should read TO children/learners regularly, because the teacher models expressive and fluent oral reading. The children/learners get exposed to a variety of books and reading materials, as well as connect to the emotions, incidents and information provided by books. Children can participate by turning pages, analyzing illustrations and actively respond by, e.g. miming, summarizing, responding to questions, making predictions and actively react to certain phrases or words in the story. As part of a balanced reading programme, teachers should also read WITH learners to guide and direct children to acquire effective reading strategies. In addition, reading and

exposure to books should also be done BY the children/learners²Reutzel & Fawson, 2002.

A classroom library serves various functions³Reutzel & Fawson, 2002:

1. Supports literacy instruction such as reading and writing development
2. Helps children/learners learn about books and reading materials
3. Provides a central place for learning resources.
4. Provides opportunities for independent reading
5. Provides a place where children/learners can talk about and interact with books and reading materials.
6. Provides opportunity for children to learn to handle books with appreciation.
7. Learn to replace books as they were organized by the teacher

Some ideas to be included in the classroom library or literacy corner⁴Reutzel & Fawson, 2002: 23⁵Metcalfe, Simpson, Todd, & Toyn, 2013. These provide opportunities for learners to respond to reading and create reading matter.

- Recipe cards
- Various forms
- Stationery
- Cardboard boxes
- Note cards
- Post-it notes
- Envelopes in various sizes
- Assorted papers in different sizes
- Business cards of various companies
- Stickers
- Poster paper
- Paper clips
- Puppets

- Simple costumes and props to act out stories.
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Shop advertisements of specials
- Old computer and key board



- Examples of icons e.g. for writing and discussing.
- Old telephone,
- Old telephone directory
- Old microphone
- Old camera

In many government schools there are not many reading resources. The dedicated and enthusiastic teacher will have to make plans, e.g. request books from affluent persons in the community, collect magazines, let the learners create stories and big books, old birthday cards and such like. Make literacy inviting and fun.

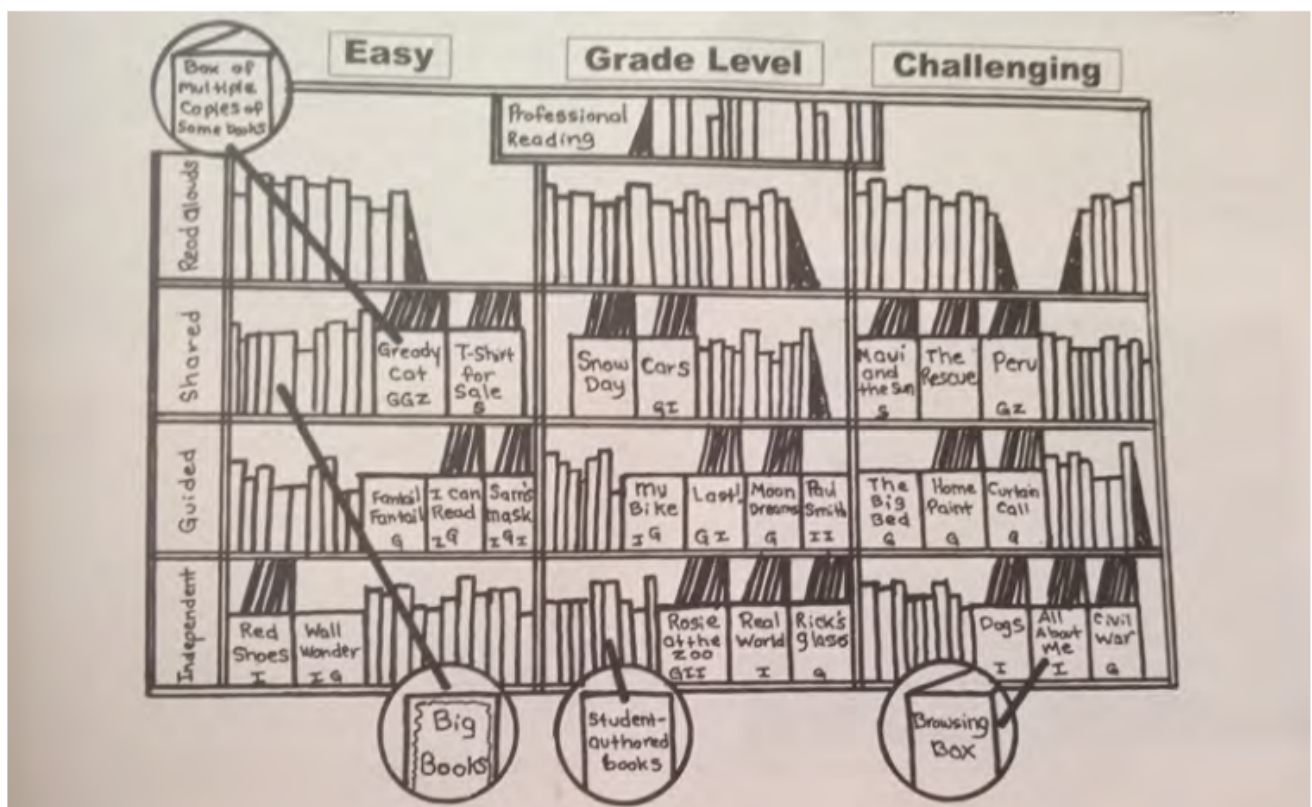
A great idea to make reading fun in the classroom:



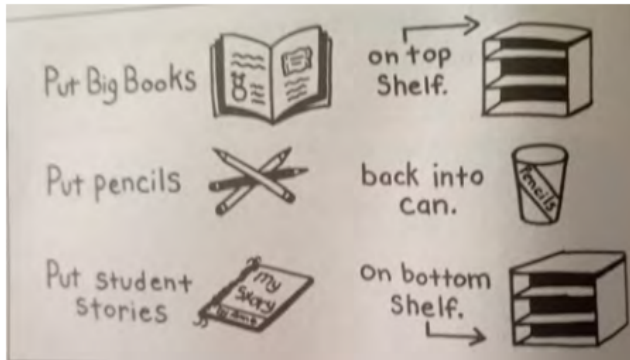
[Source.](#)

In an ideal situation a classroom library can be organized as suggested below⁶ Reutzel & Fawson, 2002: 25.

Preferably display books with the covers visible.



Instructions also support a literacy environment.



Teachers can teach learners how to select and replace books⁷Reutzel & Fawson, 2002

- Pull the book from the shelf and put your marker where the book was
- Read the title
- Look at the cover
- Open the book and look at illustrations, flip through the pages, read selected text
- Make a judgement
- Select or reject
- Return the book to where your marker is

Criteria for levelling books for beginning reading⁸Cooper & Kiger, 2009: 64.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Levels 1-4 Pre-Primary | Consistent placement of print Repetition of 1-2 sentence patterns (1-2 word changes) Oral language structures Familiar objects and actions Illustrations provide high support |
| Levels 5-8 Appr. grade 1 | Repetition of 2-3 sentence patterns (phrases may change) Opening, closing sentences may vary Varied simple sentence patterns Predominantly oral language structures Many familiar objects and actions |

| | |
|---|--|
| | Illustrations provide moderate to high support |
| Levels 9-12 Appr. Grade 2 | Repetition of 3 or more sentence patterns Varied sentence patterns with repeated phrases or refrains Blend of oral and written language structures Illustrations provide moderate support |
| Levels 13-14 Appr. Grade 3 | Varied sentence patterns (may have repeated phrases or refrains) Or repeated patterns in cumulative form Written language structure Oral structures appear in dialogue Conventional story, literary language Specialised vocabulary for some topics Illustrations provide low-moderate support |
| Levels 16-20 Appr. Grade 4 | Elaborated episodes and events Extended descriptions Links to familiar stories Literary language Unusual, challenging vocabulary Illustrations provide low support. |

Encouraging free writing

(Remember the focus is not on correct spelling or punctuation, but the joy of expressing thoughts in writing).

Writing prompts

Name _____

Narrative Writing

A day with My Dog



I am going to spend a day with my dog.

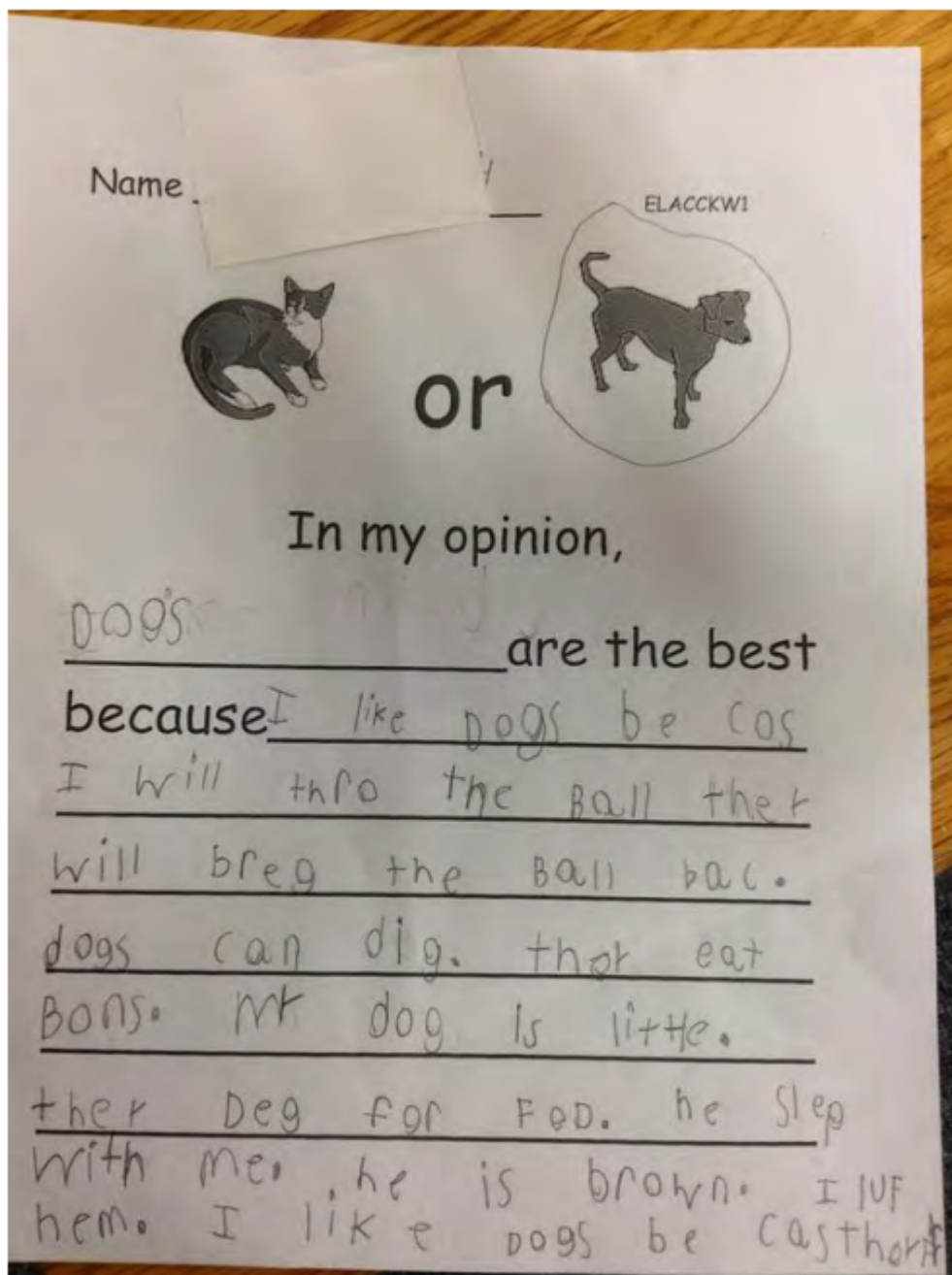
First, _____

Second, _____

Last, _____

☐ Capital letter ☐ Spaces ☐ Punctuation ☐

[Source.](#)



[Source.](#)

Other meaningful free writing ideas

- Making invitations
- Making cards for sick friend
- Making mother's day, father's day cards
- Create shopping lists
- Creating rules for friendship
- Write about a story they liked
- Create own story from a drawn picture
- Collect information from friends about what fruit/food/car/colour they like

Resources

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