

## My Favorite Thing

Literacy Skills / Writing



### Materials

1. Samples of different types of poems - try to find poems written by children at your grade level or compose poems about your favorite thing

2. Drawing paper

### Procedure

1. Writing should relate to students' lives. We should encourage them to write about what they know. Often, what "they know" is a memorable moment, experience, or favorite thing. During April, National Poetry Month, students can compose a series of poems about their favorite thing. Select standard poem structures (concrete, list, acrostic, quatrain, etc.) and conventions (repetitive verse, sound words, rhyme, sensory images, etc.) appropriate to your grade level.
2. An easy way to begin is by students illustrating a cover for their collection of poems. The cover should be a large picture of their favorite thing. Writing a list poem is a good scaffold to more difficult poem styles!
3. Students may perform a selected poem at an open mic or poetry cafe event for your class.

## Name Bags

Literacy Skills / Writing



### Materials

1. Plastic bags
2. Any type of manipulative letters such as letter cards, magnetic letters, letter tiles, etc.

### Procedure

1. Place the letters of a child's name in a bag. Make a bag for each child.
2. The children write their names on an answer card and include it in the bag. The child uses the letters to spell his/her name.
3. The children can switch bags to spell a friend's names, too.

## Mystery Title

Literacy Skills / Writing



### Materials

1. A new read aloud covered in construction paper
2. Select picture books previously read aloud to class

### Procedure

1. Select a picture book and cover it in construction paper. On the construction paper cover, draw multiple question marks and include the author and illustrator's name.
2. Using picture books familiar to the students, briefly reflect on the story and do a picture walk. Then ask, "Does the title match the story?" Demonstrate that the title of a book reflects the story and gives the reader an idea as to the topic and type of book.
3. Read the mystery title book aloud. While you read, prompt students to be thinking of a good title for the book.
4. Once finished, take recommended title options from the class. Then give students four pre-prepared options from which to choose. Two of the titles may be appropriate, but one will be a clear best fit (and the actual title). The other two choices may be silly to emphasize more clearly that a title must match the story.
5. Students vote on which title they believe is the real title of the book. Remove the construction paper cover and reveal the title!

## Use a Space...Man!

Literacy Skills / Writing



### Materials

1. Clothespins or popsicle sticks decorated as astronauts or a "spaceman"
2. Googly eyes or astronaut stickers; offer variety for students to be creative
3. White paint

### Procedure

1. To encourage students to leave proper spacing between words, allow students to use a spaceman. Students create a spaceman using a popsicle stick or clothespin. Paint the sticks white and decorate to resemble an astronaut. This is their "spaceman" for leaving spaces.
2. Model how to use a spaceman during a shared writing activity. Place the spaceman after you complete each word and begin the new word to the spaceman's right.
3. VARIATION: Another great reminder for students to use spaces is imagining words as spaghetti noodles and in between words are meatball spaces. You can illustrate a Morning Message by underlining words in the letter with a squiggly line/noodle and color in the spaces between words as big red meatballs.

## Squiggle and Write

Literacy Skills / Writing

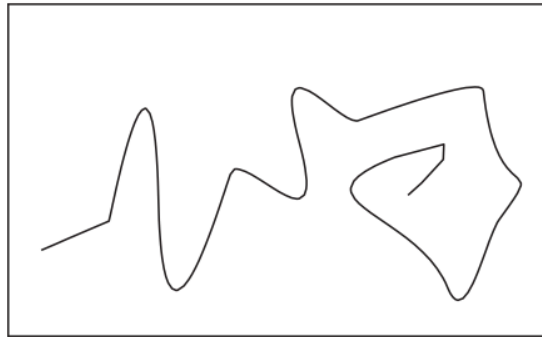


### Materials

1. Writing paper
2. Black marker
3. Squiggle cards

### Procedure

1. Squiggle and write helps students when experiencing writers block. When students are stuck and just can't think of anything to write, encourage them to select a squiggle.
2. Prepare squiggle cards by making a black line squiggle on an index card. Maintain 30 cards in the basket at a time, replenishing when low.
3. Students take the squiggle cards and must turn the squiggle into something - a setting, main character, animal, event, etc. Children glue the squiggle card to the writing paper or in their journal. Students illustrate the squiggle to build a story and then begin writing about the squiggle.



## Wall Stories

Literacy Skills / Writing



### Materials

1. A former read aloud enjoyed by your class appropriate for adaptation and collaborative writing
2. Chart paper
3. Post-it notes

### Procedure

1. Wall Stories are a great shared writing experience! Using a story familiar to students, rewrite each page on chart paper leaving out key details (in a *clozed* fashion) or open-ended sentence starters to which students can contribute.
2. Begin by rereading the familiar story.
3. Then present the first page of your Wall Story. Read it aloud to students. Explain to students that they will rewrite the story as a class. Post the first page at student level on the wall or an easel. While at work stations, students contribute their ideas on post-it notes and stick them to the page. Encourage students to think on their own, be creative, and to even be a little silly.
4. Collect the post-it notes and select the best three to four ideas. Students vote on the choices and you fill in the blank or sentence.
5. Re-post the page at the art work station for students to illustrate. Since there will be at least five to six pages for the story, there will be many opportunities for students to illustrate at the art station and take turns.
6. Remove the story page from the art station and post it where there will be enough room for the remaining pages. Thus, it becomes a Wall Story. Leave the story on the wall for use during a Read Around the Room station.

## What Are They Thinking?

Literacy Skills / Writing



### Materials

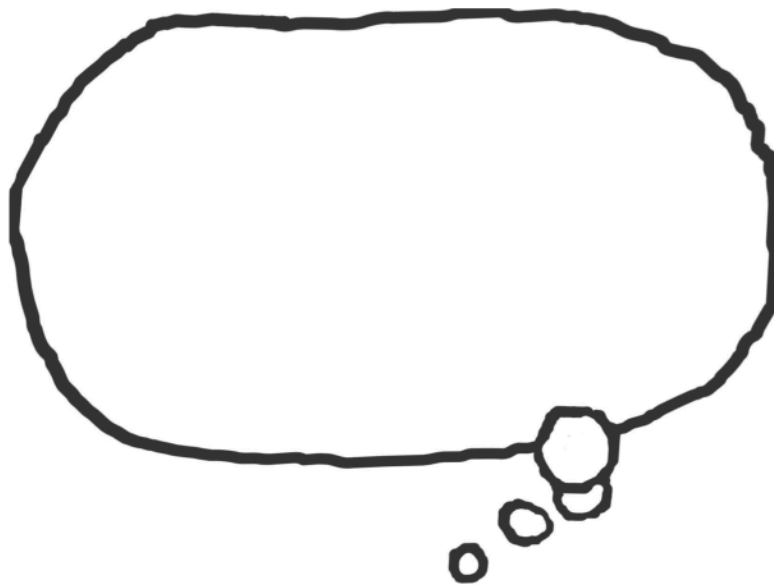
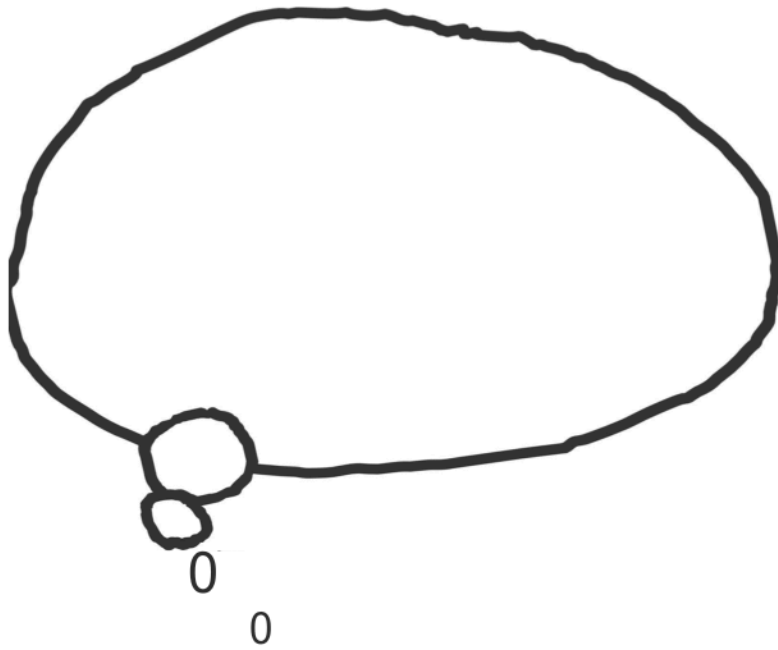
1. Thought bubble cut-outs or post-it notes
2. Big books
3. Cut-out of characters from a book for modeling purposes; may re-use these for a Reader's Theatre work station

### Procedure

1. Read a big book aloud. Using cut-outs of the story's characters, re-tell the story from the characters' perspectives. Focus on what specific characters might be thinking or feeling during different parts of the book.
2. Select one character from the story. Reread the story. Before reading, encourage students to focus on what that specific character is thinking and feeling. Stop after each page and ask students to help you create thought bubbles for the identified character. Write a thought bubble and stick it in the book.
3. Give each student a big book that s/he can read independently. Have the students read their book one time for basic understanding. Then ask students to count and name the characters in their respective books. Students should reread the book one time for each main character. For instance, if there are three main characters, students read through the book three times. Each reread focuses the students on a different characters thoughts and feelings. You may want to provide guiding questions to students, such as, "What is the character feeling?" or "What would your character say when...?"
4. Students use the thought bubble (or text balloon) cut-outs to compose the characters' thoughts and feelings. Students post the bubbles in the book. Students can read their book aloud to a partner, including the newly added text. These adapted big books will be a popular work station for weeks.

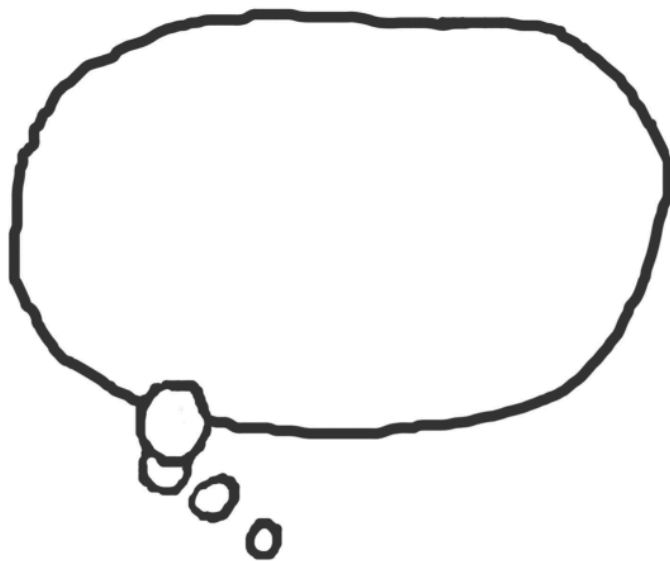
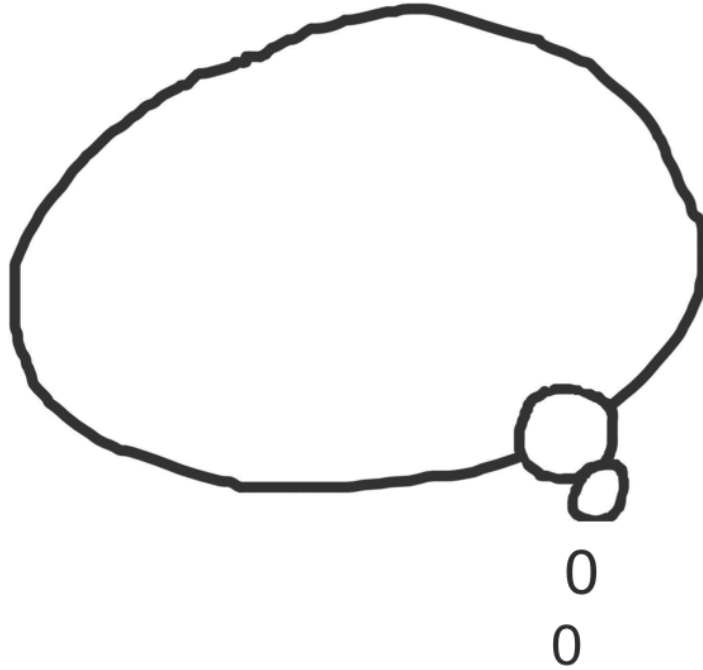
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## Thought Bubbles

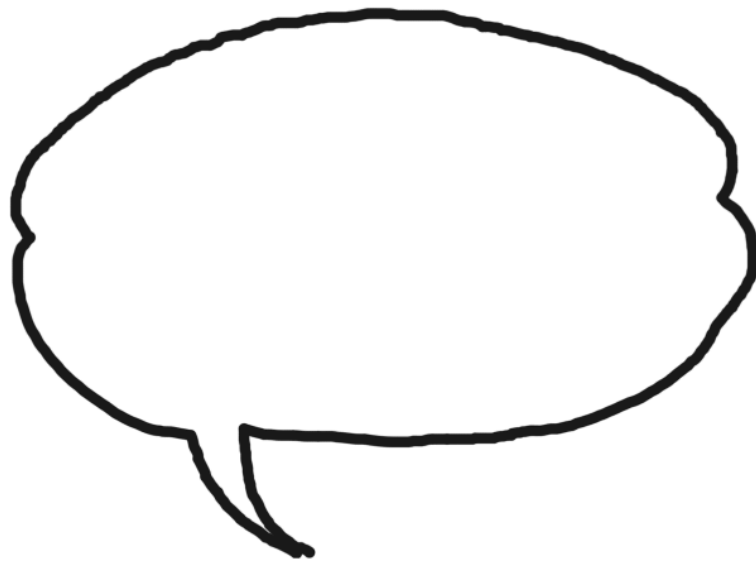




# Thought Bubbles



## Dialogue Balloons



## Dialogue Balloons

