

The Primary Success Notebook



From Primary Success Publications

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Inside

Classroom Aides	3
Classroom Organization	6
Groundhog Day	10
It's 100 Day!	8
Literature Response	4
Math - Subtraction	9
Odds and Ends	12
Poetry	5
Reading in Kindergarten	2
Time Management	7
Valentine's Day	11

I Love February!

The days are long and dark and gray in January, but February comes along to cheer us up! In the classroom we have Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day and 100 Day to celebrate.

The school year is half over, and it is time to take stock - to celebrate those areas in which we excel and to consider how to improve the subjects in which we feel our students could improve. As we improve our teaching methods, our students' learning improves. Lessons which are sequential and well planned, daily review of the concepts and student participation and discussion help to do this. It is never too late to improve our lessons!

Enjoy February! Decorate for Valentine's Day and plan a party. Celebrate 100 Day with a whole day of activities centered around this. Graph the weather, and see if the groundhog knew what he was doing.... Predict what the weather will be like and graph the predictions. Have lots of fabulous February fun with alliteration!

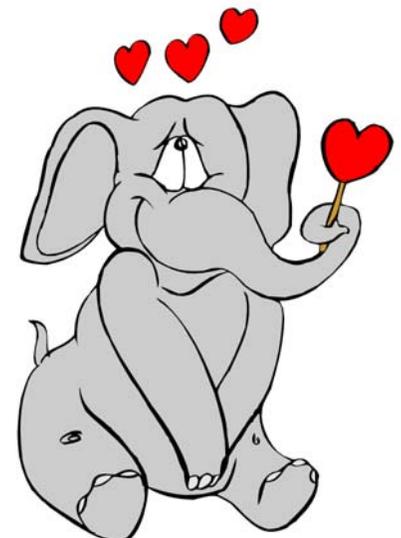
Jean

About Primary Success Publications....

We are a Canadian company, based in B.C. on beautiful Vancouver Island. We have been producing resources for primary teachers since 1995. Teachers appreciate the practical easy-to-teach programs in sight reading, phonics, spelling, writing, math, science and social studies. A high percentage of our orders come from teachers or schools who are using some of our other items, and we get many new customers because teachers share their pleasure with their colleagues.

If you enjoy 'The Notebook', pass it on to your friends. They can join the e-mail list from the website and receive all the freebies, too!

Go to the website for great free booklets and ideas. Just click on 'The Notebook' link and the 'Freebies' link on the home page.



Reading in Kindergarten

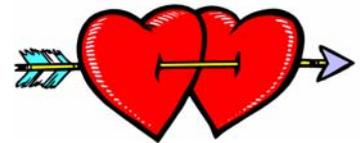
Why Not?

Many of your children will be ready to learn to read at this time in Kindergarten. You will have students who would be in Grade One if they were a few months older and who just missed the cut-off dates for registration. You will have some very bright lights, too, who are really ready to learn to read no matter the age.

Of course you will also have students who are immature and who do not yet know the letters or the concepts of print. In days past, it was not considered developmentally appropriate to teach reading to children who were 'not ready'. This has been proved to be inaccurate. There is something in the learning of words, the remembering and understanding of the abstract that improves the readiness much more quickly by actually reading than by trying to teach readiness, and in some studies has even raised the IQ of students who were taught to read early. What better way to learn letters than to make them useful? The best way to teach the concepts of print is to learn to read basic words, and read short sentences and very simple books.

How to Teach Reading in K

As in Grade One, students should be taught to read three ways. The difference is in the specificity of the lessons. In Kindergarten the teacher will go slowly with the concepts, with lots of hands-on exercises and oral practice.



- ◆ The children should have guided reading lessons with simple, interesting books that they can 'read' themselves by looking at the pictures or memorization after the teacher has read it through with the students. They should be encouraged to point to each word as they read to solidify the concepts of print and the directional skills. This helps the less mature children to understand the concepts of words and spacing.
- ◆ The children should be taught the letter sounds and beginning blending. Give them practice in blending simple words. The children will begin to see the letters and sounds in the words and understand that these help them read unknown words in the books. The letters need to be specifically taught, one at a time, and after teaching the sounds and letters should be reviewed daily. If this review is not done some children will not retain the knowledge. Teach blending with hand motions - saying each letter sound and then sliding the sounds together to make the word. Be careful that the letter sounds are made without the 'uh' on the end - it is almost impossible to blend buh /a/ tuh.
- ◆ The students should be sequentially taught a sight vocabulary. You may only teach perhaps 20 to 40 words in Kindergarten, but these are the building blocks to beginning reading. Words can be taught with lots of hands-on exercises and motions. Kinesthetic exercises really help the memory. For example, when teaching the word 'red', take a word card around the classroom touching red things and then the word each time. For the word 'you', say and touch the word and point to another person. Read little books that use only the words that you have taught.

You will find that your brighter children will pick up these concepts and may go on to learn more on their own. The less mature students may not remember all the things that you teach, but enough of the basic concepts will be there to considerably increase the chances for success in Grade One - and this is the goal. Try to have simple books and reading materials that may go home - after the child has been successful with these at school. Don't send home reading work that is too difficult for the child.

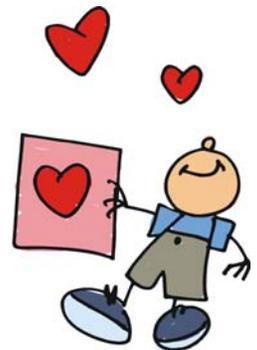
Classroom Aides

You are very lucky if you have a good classroom assistant! Classroom aides or paraprofessionals come in many forms..... there are teaching assistants, personal aides for special students or even volunteer parents. Some will have had extensive training and experience and will need little supervision. Some will be new to this and will need much assistance in order to be helpful. Some will be very useful in your classroom and others may need a lot of direction. Some teachers are uncomfortable having another person in the classroom in the beginning, but become accustomed to it quickly.

All assistants in your classroom are under your supervision. You are the 'boss'! Because it is your responsibility, you must direct and delegate them appropriately and assess their work. You are also the coach and trainer of inexperienced aides. There will be directives on the work that your aides are able to do. In most provinces, districts and schools they will not be allowed to actually teach children, except the one-on-one teaching that a aide to a special child can do and tutoring a child one-to-one. In other words, the assistant would not be allowed to teach a reading group unless there were special circumstances.

Proficient, well trained aides may:

- read to students - oral reading is a learned skill - make sure your aides are able to read with enthusiasm, good phrasing and expression.
- provide one-to-one instruction to help a student who is having difficulty.
- assist a group of students who are doing independent work.
- work with a special needs student, following the IEP that you and the other members of the school-based team have developed.
- work with a group of children who need help with skills. A well-trained aide may take a group of children in the Learning Assistance room, following the teacher's directions.
- assist handicapped students with personal needs and personal care, communication, etc.
- keeping records of the student(s) for whom the aide is helping.
- attend team meetings and help with program development when applicable.
- assist with the daily and weekly plans for a special student or small group of students, under the teacher's supervision.



Aides with less training, ability or experience may:

- take attendance, collect lunch money and other beginning of the day assistance.
- listen to students read - the aide should understand the cues that you use to help the children with difficult words.
- correct work to your specifications.
- photocopying, filing, running errands, collecting materials and equipment.
- prepare flash cards, exercise sheets, art supplies - all the 'cutty, cutty, paste, paste, print, print, print' jobs. Make sure the aide prints using the correct form.
- doing computer work for you and helping in the computer lab.
- taking the class down the hall to another classroom or the gym.
- assisting in the classroom during art lessons or classroom projects.

Remember, you are a team! Here are some strategies to promote this:

Meet regularly (at least once a week) with your aide in a private structured meeting.

2. Teacher aides need and deserve to feel a sense of belonging, purpose and pride in their jobs. Use praise when warranted and include them in making decisions.

3. Discuss and outline goals and responsibilities and your expectations of him/her.

4. Give constructive feedback during your face-to-face meetings. Be kind and professional - and truthful.

5. Be supportive and give assistance when necessary.

6. The aide should be made aware of your goals for students, your behaviour management system and his/her part in it, and why particular techniques are used with certain students.

Literature Response

A Reading Journal

Give your students an appropriate length of time to read silently on a book of their choice. Then ask them to take their reading journals and write a few sentences or a paragraph (depending on the level of writing expertise) telling about what they have just read. Put in a heading first of the book title and the page numbers of the part read on this day.

Then it is very encouraging to have the children go in small groups and talk about the book they are reading and tell why others might like to read it. The other group members can ask questions.

Responding to Reading

The following responses can be used on short stories in a basal, on picture books or on longer chapter books. Most teachers vary the questions so that the exercise is interesting.

Who are the main characters?

Write a paragraph about the main character in the story.

Draw a picture of an important setting in the story.

Write three sentences - the first that tells about the beginning of the story, one about the middle and one about the ending.

How did the book you read end?

Do you think the book could have ended differently?

What could have happened to change the book?

Was this story real or make - believe? How do you know?

Write 5 interesting words from your story. Put them in different sentences.

Print a sentence that is a statement, one that is a question, one that shows surprise or enthusiasm, one that is spoken.

Write a paragraph about the animal in the story.

Did you like the way the book ended? Why?

In what ways are you like the main character? In what ways are you different?

Draw a picture to advertise the book and tell another student about it and why they should read it.

Write about a funny part of the story.

Tell someone about the exciting parts of the book.

Draw a map showing where the main character went.

Make a comic strip about the story.

Write a letter or a 'pretend' e-mail to one of the characters.

Make a list of words that you did not understand and look them up in a dictionary.

Make connections to yourself (personal experiences)

Make connections to other text and/or media (This reminds me of another story/movie/TV program)

Make connections to things in the real world...

Reading Rap

Read in my classroom,
 Read at home,
 Read a long chapter book,
 Read a poem,
 Read in my family car,
 Read in a tree,
 Read in my cozy bed,
 And in the library,
 Read when it's raining,
 Read in the sun,
 Read to learn things,
 And to get your homework done,
 Read for a reason,
 Read for none,
 Best of all...
 Read for fun!



Teaching Poetry

"Poetry and Hums aren't things which you get, they're things which get you. And all you can do is to go where they can find you." Winnie the Pooh

"My students each have a scrapbook for their poetry. I type the poem on the center of a page in large primary font and photocopy it for each child. The kids glue the poem on the left page of the open scrapbook and illustrate it on the right side. Then they use highlighters to show specific skills we are learning. Sometimes they use one colour to highlight the sight words that they know. Sometimes we show phonics patterns such as all the short /a/ words. We use another colour to show capital letters, another to show compound words, etc.

I always have a lesson on capitalization in poetry - I don't want the children to think that there should be a capital letter at the beginning of each line in other writing. Poetry is different!

We number all the pages, and on the first page of the scrapbook we print an index of the poems - the title and the page number.

This book becomes a favourite reading book - we work on each poem every day for the week so every child is able to read it (or memorize it) and it helps to increase the reading vocabulary, too."

"I give each student a 3 ring binder early in the year (Grade Two). We learn one poem each week, and it is a printing exercise to print the poem VERY neatly onto a new page of the book and to illustrate it - so it serves several purposes - teaching poetry, increasing vocabulary and discussing imagery, and printing."

"We first read the poem several times to get the rhythm. Then they find pairs of words that rhyme (or do some other word skill). They practice reading the poem in small groups, taking turns. Then they read it fully through to a partner and then some children get to read it to the whole class - reading with expression."

"We scan all the poems that we learn. I use the / for the heavy beats and - for the lighter ones, so for example, 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' is marked - / - / - / - / and 'Alligator pie' as / - - - / The poems by Dennis Lee and the ones by A. A. Milne are particularly good for this. The feeling the beat and rhythm really helps later when they begin to write their own."

"I read a lot of silly poems to my class. The poems of Shel Silverstein, Jack Prelutsky and Dennis Lee are good examples. The children love them! Often we memorize favourite poems or parts of poems."

"In my Grade Three class I teach many poems. We also discuss words like simile, metaphor, rhyme, blank verse, onomatopoeia, etc. They do love the word onomatopoeia, and I have a chart up on the wall after the lesson and we add words that we find in the reading where the word imitates the sound or feel - buzz, click, smooth, bark, etc. We discuss rhyming patterns and we write the patterns as - ABCB, AABB, AABBA, etc. We discuss the different kinds of poetry: haiku, limerick, couplet, cinquain, quatrain, diamante, and acrostics, and then the students write some of their own."

"I put up a bulletin board of poems that the class has learned, titled the 'Poet-tree' - with a tree of course as the background."

"I teach my Grade Two kids to use the keyboard. One of the weekly exercises to do with the poem of the week is to type it out on the computer. I begin with short 4 line poems and gradually increase the length during the year. When they have it typed they put a frame around it and print it out. Then they 3-hole punch it and put it into their personal binders. They love doing this!"

Classroom Organization

It is an unpleasant fact that visitors to the classroom make snap decisions of our capabilities by the organization of the classroom. In some cases, this judgment may not be accurate - but in most it follows that a teacher who takes time to organize the space and has an attractive neat classroom also takes time to have organized lessons and written records and plans. If the time is not taken to make the classroom an attractive place for the teacher and the children to spend these hours each day, usually the time has not been put into organizing lessons and planning well. The classroom organization is very important!

We also want to teach our children to work in an organized manner, to print neatly and to keep their supplies in good order. We must set an example.....

Here are some ideas to help you organize your space.

- ◆ Sort through your materials. Throw out things that you haven't used in the last two years - or, if you can't bear to throw things in the trash, put them out for other teachers to look at and take if they wish. If no one takes the things - well - that proves they are junk! If you have materials for other grades than the one you are teaching, box up these things and take them home. Toys, puzzles or math manipulatives that aren't being used or are looking worn or have missing pieces can be tossed.
- ◆ Organize your themes and units, and put these in plastic boxes or tubs with lids, labeled clearly. Some teachers have 10 of these labeled with the months - with charts, books, art ideas, themes, etc., all ready to use at the beginning of the month and then put away in the box at the end of this time. Then put these boxes out of sight! Boxes are never attractive. Put them in cupboards or a closet or up high in the children's coatroom. If these places don't work for you - take them home and bring them when needed.
- ◆ I hereby challenge you to keep the top of your desk tidy and organized! It is a pleasure to work at a desk that is not cluttered with paper and 'stuff'. Put a large piece of coloured tag to define your workspace, and have only your daily plans and perhaps a computer to one side. Put the necessary pens and marking pencils into an attractive container. Then a small plant or some flowers will complete the space. Why should we expect the children to keep their desks clean and tidy if we can't?
- ◆ In your desk filing drawer, have files that are for your personal paperwork. Forms for discipline and accident reports, etc., staff and committee meetings, substitute ideas, letters and correspondence from parents, newsletter copies, etc.
- ◆ Have a shallow plastic container marked 'To File'. Pop things that need to be filed into it when you are in a hurry, and clean it out often so you can put your hand on things that you need quickly and easily. Don't let it build up to where you don't want to look at it!
- ◆ Have a computer calendar file, a desk calendar, appointment book or a calendar in your plan book where you put important dates. Keep a record of appointments past so you can refer to them.
- ◆ Buy a plastic file box and make files for each day of the week. Put in photocopied materials, lesson plans and worksheets, books, tests, etc. If you have the week planned ahead, life is so much easier!
- ◆ Put as much as possible on the computer. Daily plans can be done quickly onto a template. They are easily changed this way, as we often don't do exactly what we had planned. Keep all the used plans. Monthly and yearly plans can be on the computer, too, and easily changed or modified from one year to another. Marks can be put onto databases and anecdotal notes into files for each student.
- ◆ The students should have places to put completed work so that the different sheets or exercise books are piled neatly.



Time Management

How many minutes each day do your students receive instructional time? To see how your students fare, think about one student at the top of your class, one in the middle and one of your lowest students. Find the number of instructional minutes each student gets on a normal day. When you do whole-class instruction, every involved child can count this as instructional time. Group time and individual instruction can be counted - but not the time when the child is doing independent work, centres or other activities, supervised but not being instructed. Some hands-on math activities can be counted as instruction if the teacher is actively involved in the process. Add up the minutes in the day when each child is receiving instruction. What percentage of the day are the children being instructed?

Then see how much individual instruction each child is receiving, for a different result. For whole class instruction, divide the minutes of your lesson by the number of students in your class. If you teach a whole class math lesson for 20 minutes and there are 20 children in your class, each child gets one minute. If you teach a group of 5 children for 30 minutes, each student gets 6 minutes of individual instruction. Do this throughout the day and see how many minutes each of the children get in individual instruction. How does each compare to the number of minutes in the day divided by the number of students in the class? There are some times of the day that no child will be getting instruction. Which child gets the most minutes? Which child needs more minutes of your instructional time? You may be surprised at the results. It is interesting to think that if there are 300 minutes in the school day and 20 children in your class - if it were divided evenly each child would receive only 15 minutes time!

Obviously, every minute you can save gives you more instructional time. Here are a few ideas to save a few precious minutes!

Calling the roll is only instructional in kindergarten, where you can show the names for recognition. Otherwise, this minute can be saved. You can have the children move their names to a different place when they come in, or if the children go to their desks simply look for absent ones.

The children can have a book at their independent reading level in their desks and read while you do the morning house-keeping tasks.

Have everything you need for each lesson well prepared and at hand so instructional time is not lost during the lesson.

Have strategies for the times the children are moving around the classroom or lining up to go outdoors. If the students know exactly what they are to do in these transitions, things progress more quickly and time is saved. Using a signal is a quick way to tell the students to clean-up - turning the lights out or playing music or ringing chimes. You can play jazzy music - teaching the children what to do when they hear it - tidy, line-up, put things away or get certain things out. Practice the transitions until the children know your expectations, and then monitor them as they make these.

Giving each child a number that corresponds to your mark book number is a time saver. Train the students to put their numbers in the top right hand corner of each paper they do. When you put the papers in order you can immediately see which papers are missing and the marks can be put in the mark register much more quickly.

Spend plenty of time to model the procedures that you want your children to follow - in classroom movement, assignments, centres, etc. Some time spent at the beginning so every child understands thoroughly is really a time saver after that.

Tidy your classroom several times a day and spend a few minutes after school doing filing or tidying only you can do. This few minutes will save you oodles of time - things will be where they belong, easy to find and in order.



It's 100 Day!

What fun! Children in Kindergarten and Grade One look forward to this big day - and it can also be celebrated in Grades Two and Three with great 100 activities.....

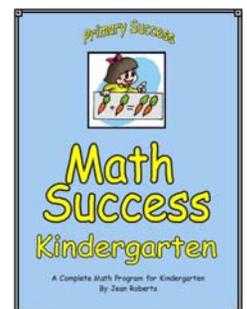
- Send home a family project a week before 100 Day - the family is to make something with 100 objects - it could be a picture or an object.
- What if I had \$100? Have students write about what they would do if they were given \$100.
- Count down the days until you reach zero on 100 day.
- Have the children be quiet for 100 seconds. Repeat often!
- What can you do in 100 seconds? How many times can you skip in 100 seconds? Do push-ups? Do jumping-jacks?
- How many words can you read in 100 seconds?
- What 100 objects could you fit in a cup? Will 100 beans fit? peanuts?
- How many centimetres tall is a stack of 100 pennies? 100 nickels? Other coins?
- Do 100 math problems.
- How many adding and subtraction questions can you do in 100 seconds?
- Make a chain with 100 links. Make the chain in a pattern of tens.
- In Grade Two or Three - write a 100 word story. Exactly! Is it possible to make 10 sentences with 10 words each?
- In the gym, set up 10 stations with activities to do 10 times each, such as 10 ball bounces, 10 jumps on the little trampoline, 10 times go through a hula hoop, etc.
- Have your class bring 100 cans of non-perishable goods to donate to local Food Bank.
- Have a penny drive the week before, and then count the pennies into 100s.
- Put together a 100 piece puzzle.
- Do 100 minutes of reading, spread throughout the day. keep track of the minutes on the board or graph it like a thermometer.
- Make a collage of 100 things - pictures of smiling people is a nice one.
- If 100 Day falls near Valentine's Day, cut out 100 hearts to make a picture on the bulletin board.
- Estimate how many times they can do something (jumping jacks, skipping, etc.) in 100 seconds. Time them and have them check their estimate.
- Predict which jar holds exactly 100 objects.
- Wear 100 glasses, or crowns with 100 objects drawn on it, or necklaces with 100 Cheerios.

The Math Success Program

Primary Success Publications has an original math program that has been proven to work very well! Schools that use it report that their math scores have increased and the students are far ahead. The program uses strategies that increase understanding and give students alternative ways to approach math procedures that suit different learning styles. This program is for Kindergarten through Grade Three. Math Success is a complete program with teaching strategies, lesson plans, student practice sheets and assessment.

Go to our website to see sample lessons!

"I have been teaching for 14 years and have never had a group of Grade Twos come this far in Math ever. I totally love this program!"



Math - Subtraction With Re-Grouping

"I draw a cookie jar on the board. I put 0-9 ones cubes in the jar. They are 'cookies'. I then put 10's strips to the left of the jar. Those are packages of cookies. There are only 10 cookies in a package. If you need more cookies than are in the jar, for the ones column, you have to open a new package and add them to the cookie jar. The kids seem to catch on."

"For teaching 2 digit subtraction I usually teach them the rhyme:

If there is more on the floor

Go next door.

That seems to help some of them remember."



"I use a lot of place value and tens/ones recognition. For example, to add two digit numbers, students pull apart the tens from the ones and add. $36 + 48$ - my students see $30 + 40 = 70$ then $6 + 8 = 14$, After that it is very automatic to add $70 + 10 + 4$. I reference a 100 chart a lot! My students are so efficient at this that they solve them mentally now.

As far as subtraction, I HATE the reference to borrow! You are not borrowing, you are regrouping the tens, therefore, I never refer to it as borrowing. I start with: if you can subtract $8-5$ then you can subtract $80-50$. From there we play a game called 'Race to 0'. I give each student 50 in base 10 blocks (not snap cubes). Students roll one die and begin subtracting that number. They will see on their first roll that they have to REGROUP one of the tens into ten ones and continue on rolling until they reach 0. After that they will understand the regrouping concept better. I've taught subtraction both ways in the past, with the algorithm and without. When I have taught the algorithm without, my students would build the first number in tens (for example: $34 = 10\ 10\ 10\ 4$. After that they start to subtract by crossing out numbers. They subtract 22. They cross off two of the tens. Cross off the 4 and make it a 2 and there is 12 not crossed off. It isn't super efficient always, but students understand it. I have also had them solve it by $34 - 20 = 14$, $14 - 2 = 12$. Try it! You'll be pleasantly surprised how they can solve these mentally."

"I talk about a neighbourhood of numbers. Each number is a person. We talk about when you cook, you sometimes have to go to a neighbour to borrow something that you don't have. We apply this same concept to the numbers. We name our numbers Mr. Ones (he's not very wealthy, so he only has dollar bills, Mr. Tens has \$10 bills, and Mr. Hundred is rich! He has \$100.00 bills. Then to solve the problem we say, ' $7 - 9$, oops, I don't have enough so I go next door and I get TEN more. We do the same chant for the hundreds. They love it. At first, they say 7 take away 9. This helps them hear the problem and not reverse the numbers."

"Try 'BBBB'. Bigger Bottom Better Borrow. My grade two kids loved this and it really made a difference."

Primary Success Publications Art Books

Successful Art Lessons

This new book teaches line, shape, colour, patterns and design with interesting lessons and great art projects to reinforce the skills. It also teaches the different mediums, sculpting, and famous Canadian artists (and some others, too). It is useful for all grades, K to 3.

Art Through the Year

Here are hundreds of great primary art ideas and activities! This book contains art ideas for Autumn, Halloween, Christmas, Winter, Valentines, Spring and Easter; and Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, Groundhog Day and St. Patrick's Day, too. Your children will have fun doing the wonderful projects. This is a great collection!

Groundhog Day

The legend of the groundhog predicting the weather comes from long, long ago in Europe. It was said that if the sun shone on Candlemas day, there would be a much longer winter, and if it was cloudy on Candlemas Day (no shadow) spring would come early. Candlemas Day is the mid-point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. The groundhog is a North American symbol to follow this early legend.

According to the old English saying: If Candlemas be fair and bright, Winter has another flight. If Candlemas brings clouds and rain, Winter will not come again.	From Scotland: If Candlemas Day is bright and clear, There'll be two winters in the year.	From Germany: For as the sun shines on Candlemas Day, So far will the snow swirl until May. For as the snow blows on Candlemas Day, So far will the sun shine before May.
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- Get a groundhog pattern and 'paint' it with liquid glue - then sprinkle coffee grounds on it to make it brown.

- Research the groundhog. Find out the habitat, the food it eats, the animal group to which it belongs, etc. Write a paragraph or a little book from what is discovered.

- Research the legend, too. Do you think it makes sense? Is the legend accurate? The legend comes from Europe and Candlemas Day:

- Learn about Wiarthon Willie. Go to: <http://www.wiarthon-willie.org/> and also find out about the American groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil.

- Learn about weather patterns at this time of year where you live.

- Make a class chart of predictions whether or not the groundhog will see his shadow.

- How big is a groundhog? Find out and then draw him full size. Use measurement skills.

- Research and present reports on other animals that hibernate during the winter.

- Brainstorm words to describe the groundhog and the weather on Feb. 2.

- Memorize and do choral speaking of groundhog day poems.

- Learn the vocabulary in the research.

- Create a winter scene, with sky, trees, snow and the groundhog's den below ground.



Learn About Shadows

What do you know about the sun and shadows? Look for shadows in the classroom. Discuss what makes the shadow. Does the shadow look like the object? How is it different?

Using the overhead projector demonstrate shadows. Turn on the lamp and turn off all classroom lights. Students observe a student's shadow being cast in the classroom. Ask the students where the light source is and where the shadow is cast.

Using the overhead projector, place a divider on it to keep students from seeing objects placed on the projector. Choose a student to pick an object from the bag and place it on the projector without the class seeing the object. Have them guess what the object is. Discuss the shadow that the object makes.

Have the students make shadows on the wall with a partner. Students use flashlights and objects to make the shadow. Make shadows of animals using hands. Share the story of Peter Pan and his Shadow.

Discuss shadows, and how they are different from the real object.

Draw shadows outdoors, and then come back at a later time and see if the shadow is still the same. Why is it different? You could use a digital camera to record the results of the changing shadows.

Valentine's Day

How to cut a Valentine

Some children see the half-shape and how to draw and cut out the shape of a heart, and others have a big problem with this! To help those who have troubles, show them how to cut a heart. Begin by folding paper bigger than the child's hand. Have them place the fold into the non-dominant hand with the fold in the crease between the thumb and the fingers. Extend the thumb. Draw around the hand from fold to fold and you have a heart shape!

The best activity:

I talk about this activity every Valentine's Day - but it IS the best! Make a small book or scrapbook for each student with empty pages and room for all the valentines received. You can make a cover for the book or the students can do this - perhaps 'MY CARDS - VALENTINE'S DAY 2008' and a place for the child's name. After the cards have been delivered, give the children time to look through them and read them. Then they each get a tape dispenser and put one piece of tape on the left side or top of each card and stick the card into the book. Only one piece of tape, so the card can be 'opened' to see who sent it on the back side.

If you ask every child to send a card to every other one, this makes a good keepsake of all the children in the class. It also is a nice quiet activity for your Valentine's party! Valentine cards are so often just lost or thrown out after the day - this makes the sending of cards a more interesting activity.

Spend some time talking about the sayings on the cards. The students may not understand the double meanings without this discussion.

<http://www.kidzone.ws/math/valentine/index.htm>

Go here for Valentine theme math worksheets at the different grade levels..... Fun!

Play x's and o's - kisses and hugs, of course.

Make your own valentine bingo cards - put the letters HEART at the top and put in the random numbers - 1-15 under H, 16-30 under E, 31-45 under A (and the free one, of course with a heart shape in it), 46-60 under R, and 61-75 under the T. Do a Google search for 'generate bingo cards' and you will find lots of sites that will make these up for you with numbers or words.

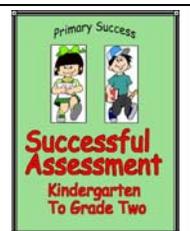
Play 'Valentine says'..... like Simon says.

Finger paint large sheets in red and pink. When dry, cut out huge and small valentine shapes. Use these to decorate your classroom or hall, and as background for writing, art, or other examples of student work. They are very effective!



Successful Assessment - Kindergarten to Grade Two

There are tests and assessments for math, reading, phonics, spelling, and other subjects. This binder includes assessment check lists, screening sheets, running record sheets, writing standards, and more. There are report card comments and sample interim report cards. This is a very useful resource!



Odds and Ends

"I send only one newsletter each month. I would like to do it every week, but it is a lot of work! My monthly letter has each week's spelling words through the month, the special days and events that will occur, ideas for ways the parents can help the students at home, great things that happened in the past month and a few samples of writing the children have done. I give some praise to students who have done well, too. The newsletter is longer this way, and the parents always know when to expect it to arrive."

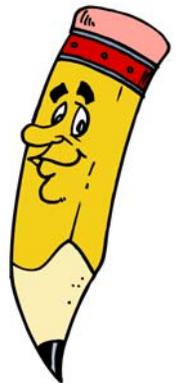
"I don't have a word wall - I have mini-offices for my students. I print off a sheet of word wall words each week and it goes in their office folder. The website below gives terrific ideas to use to make the offices. My kids love to put up their offices and work in privacy - and the folder gives them lots of information."

<http://www.jmeacham.com/mini.offices.htm#full>

"For making sure the kids put names on papers, I have a highlighter and pencil in the bins used to collect papers. They highlight their name when they turn the paper in. If it's not on the paper they can write it with the provided pencil. I have also used an 'easy button' from Staples and the kids could push it if they had their name on their paper when they turned it in."

"I have a big easel that holds my charts that has a ledge where I can keep pens or stand a Big Book. I bought a piece of clear plexiglass and now I put it over the chart or the big book, standing on the ledge - I can write on it and highlight things and, of course, the book is not marked. I used to use highlight tape and sticky notes - this is so much easier!"

"I send a form called 'Ask Me About ...' each Friday - it outlines the things we have done in school during the week. The idea is that the parents will know what questions to ask to receive answers that reflect knowledge instead of the answer 'I dunno' or 'Nothing'."



Popular Primary Success Resources!

Successful P.E.

This great primary book has lesson plans, gross motor activities, skill training, indoor and outdoor games galore - and lots of ideas to make your P.E. lessons fun and successful. There are helpful ways to organize your P.E. periods, too. There are exercises, classroom breaks and games for recess. This book is suitable for teachers from Kindergarten to Grade Three.

Successful Social Studies — Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two

These resources give specific lesson plans for an entire year of Social Studies. They follow the curriculum expectations in all the provinces, with special emphasis on the child's world - the classroom, school and community, expanding outwards to the province, Canada and the wider world with understanding of interdependency, relationships and responsibilities.

Successful Science Lessons — Kindergarten, Grade One, Grade Two

These books have all the themes in the Science strands that are required in all the provinces, so it will be useful for teachers across Canada. The sections are: the characteristics and needs of living things, plants, animals, the five senses, matter and materials, energy and motion, weather, the water cycle and daily and seasonal changes. There are lessons, exercise sheets, some little books, experiments and hands-on work. Samples are on the website.

The Successful Sight Reading Program

This series is widely used in the classroom, especially for the children who are slower to learn to read. These books give them the needed repetition and give you many strategies to help them learn. These books are also popular with Special Education teachers, as they are easy to teach and contain everything needed for success. For more information, go to the Primary Success website.

Successful Sight Reading - Part One / Part Two / Part Three / Part Four

This program is very popular and is being used with great success, both in the classroom and in Learning Assistance rooms with students who have difficulties with early reading. The Successful Sight Reading books have daily lesson plans, with lots of teaching strategies and practice sheets. It has everything you need to teach beginning reading successfully! Part One teaches the first 100 sight words so that your Grade One students soon become readers, and Part Two teaches the next 150 words. Part Three and Four continue the sequential program. It is well organized, simple to follow and the program has proven results.

Little Books to Accompany Successful Sight Reading - Part One / Part Two / Part Three

These binders each have more than 50 little books for you to photocopy for your students. These little books match the lessons in Successful Sight Reading - Part 1, 2 and 3. These will give your children the extra reading practice that they need, and the little books are fun, too!

"My children's reading has greatly improved with the Successful Sight Reading program! Thanks for this wonderful resource!" R.M.

"I am impressed with how quickly the students were able to read using the reading programs!" K.B.

"My children's reading has greatly improved with the Successful Sight Reading program! Thanks for this wonderful resource!" R.M.

"I am impressed with how quickly the students were able to read using the reading programs!" K.B.



Successful Phonics - Part 1 / Part 2

These books will give you everything you need to teach phonics successfully. Part 1 is a complete phonics program for Grade One and Part 2 is for Grade Two/Three. There are specific daily lesson plans, strategies for teaching the sounds and blending, reproducible reading sheets, flashcards, and reproducible booklets so the children can practice their skills in actual reading material. Successful Phonics is easy to teach, and is explained in simple lessons.

Go to the website for samples and book prices.

Favourite Websites

Here are some good sites at the different grade levels.
Some teachers have gone to a lot of work!

For Kindergarten:

<http://www.kellyskindergarten.com/>

<http://lilteacher.com/>

For Grade One:

<http://www.mrsmcgowan.com/>

For Grade Two:

<http://www.mrsbarth.com/>

And for Grade Three:

<http://mrsstahlheber.com/>



Primary Success Publications

4971 Fillinger Cres.

Nanaimo, BC V9V 1J1

E-mail: primarysuccess@shaw.ca

Website:

<http://www.primarysuccess.ca>



Phone:

1-800-758-0889

Fax:

1-250-758-2661