

The Primary Success Notebook



From Primary Success Publications

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It's Busy December!

December is always busy as we struggle with Christmas concerts, art projects, noisy and excited kiddies, report cards and the usual lessons. Then when we leave school we have all our family preparations for the holiday season, too - shopping, baking, cleaning and planning.

Primary teachers are usually tired and stressed at this time of year. Take care of yourself and try to find time each day to revitalize your energies. If you can be happy and relaxed the people around you will be happy, too!

Take time to do some great art projects. Do lots of Christmas stories in Readers' Theatre. Do lots of cross-curriculum lessons - find countries as you teach Christmas Around the World, read lots of Christmas books. Sing at every opportunity. Christmas is a happy time, so share lots of smiles!

Have a great holiday!

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 Ideas

Oral Reading Responses

Be encouraging:	'I can see you are really looking carefully at the words today.'
Demonstrate strategies	'When I get stuck on a word I can sound it out or read on and re-read.'
Stretch the response:	'Tell me more about that...'
Add information:	'A _____ is a very unusual bird. These birds can...'
Extend vocabulary:	'A word that rhymes with _____ is _____.'
Extend student responses:	'What do you think will happen next?'
Review story structure:	'What happened first...and next...and last?'
Make the student prove it:	'Find the words that show that...'
Model smooth fluent reading:	'Today let's try shadow reading so you can feel the flow of the words.'
Reflect:	'What part of the story did you like? What words were tricky to read?'

Encourage the child to read the story more than once.

Introduce the child to shadow reading (reading with the child at the same time).

Ask questions related to the story.

Ask the child to tell the story in his own words. (Starting with what happened first, what happened next, and what happened last)

Try reading it to the child first to get him/her familiarized with the story, then have it read to you.

Skeleton Response

Talk about a skeleton - the bones that hold a creature together.... What are the 'bones' that hold this story together?

This story is about _____. Character(s) in a setting - e.g. This story is about a little boy named John who lived on an island.

There was a problem! _____

It got even worse when _____. (if problem gets worse)

Finally, the problem was solved when _____.

Grade Three Responses

Pick one response after reading a book or story.

1. Write a letter to a story character.
2. Pretend you are a story character and do a daily journal for him/her.
3. Write: Why I would like to spend a day with _____ (one of the story characters) or in _____ (the story setting).
4. Name five objects used in the story and tell how they were used.

Extra Responses:

- Find six interesting adjectives and tell what they were describing.
- Look up five tricky words in the dictionary and write the meaning that was meant in the story.
- Find four synonyms for 'said' in the story.
- Find three compound words.
- Find two contractions and write the two words that makes up each contraction.
- Write a sentence that gives you a mental picture.



Literacy Jobs

Instead of centres where the students go to another part of the classroom to do 'work', have a series of jobs for them to do at their desks or tables. If you are teaching reading groups at this time, the jobs must be simple, absorbing and self-directed. You want the rest of the class to be profitably busy and quiet.

Grade One

Word Wall Work - Have the students put this week's word wall words into alphabetical order or.... make the words with tiles or.... make the words with play dough or print the words and make word shapes.

Poem Time - Have an envelope with a poem cut into lines or words (this has been previously taught). Put the lines or words into the correct order and print it.

Silent read books that have been previously taught and are at the students' independent reading level.

Do a printing exercise (insist on correct formation and spacing).

Grade Two

Word Wall Work - Put all the words under one specific letter into alphabetical order.... or, using this week's words, make fractions with the consonants and vowels or..... find words with a certain number of syllables or make acrostics with a specific number of words or..... make sentences using only word wall words.

Do silent reading with a book of choice - at the student's independent reading level.

Wonderful Words - Collect words from trade books. Collect words with specific suffixes, interesting adjectives, synonyms for over-used words like 'said', etc.

Print an exercise that has some purpose - a cloze exercise, answering questions, etc.

Reading for Fun in Grade One!

"My Grade Ones just love their Grade Six buddies! We meet once a week and do a project, but part of the time is shared reading - the buddy reads to the Grade One child and then he/she reads to the big buddy. I gave the Grade Six kids a lesson where I showed them how to help their buddies with reading."

"I have my kiddies read to a stuffed animal. We call them 'Book Buddies'. The kids love it. I let them read to their buddies, sometimes in pairs. I also used it as a reward for good behaviour. It is fun to see the children talking to the stuffies as if they can really listen to the story."

"I have a reading area beside my class library. There is a big couch and lots of soft cushions and corners where the kids can sit and read. I spent some time at the beginning of the year training the kids to use this area properly - to read quietly, to use the cushions to sit on (not play with), etc."



Spelling

It is good to get our children to focus on the words. Do spelling and math in the same exercise! This is great for Grade Two and Grade Three students:

Write the word: The number of vowels x the number of consonants = _____ + the total number of letters = _____ - (minus) the number of syllables = the total

This can be changed to suit your students.... for example, an easier one might be:

The number of consonants in the word - (minus) the number of vowels + the number of letters in the word = _____

Write out the alphabet and give each letter a numerical value - a = 1, b = 2, c = 3, etc. Add up the value of all your spelling words. Which word is worth the most? Guess first! Were you right? Then number the letters with z = 1, y = 2, etc. What is the highest scoring word you can find in your reading? Can you find a word that equals 50? 100?

The following strategy helps the student focus on the pronunciation of a word before seeing its spelling.

First, feel what your mouth is doing as you say the word. Example 'sight'.

- Say the word. sight Say the syllables if there are more than one.
- Stretch the word. /sss-iii-t-t-t/ Work by syllables if necessary. If a sound can't be stretched, stutter it.
- Split up the sounds. Work by syllables if necessary. First sound? /s/ Next sound? long i Last sound? /t/
- Count the sounds. 3
- Draw blanks. _ _ _ The blanks stand for the sounds. Put slashes between syllables if necessary.

Next, learn the spelling.

- Record the spelling sound by sound. On the first blank, write [letters] s _ _ On next blank, write [letters] s igh _ On last blank, write [letters] s igh t
- Study the spelling. Ask, what does [pattern] say? What does igh say? Only ask about tricky parts.
- Write the word. sight

Spelling Fun

Silly Sentences

Choose between 6-10 spelling words each week. Underline the letters from the spelling words. The first letter in word is first word in sentence, and so on. Examples: Spelling word - brook Sentence: Bobby ran over old kettles. Spelling word - hates Sentence: Harry and Ted eat sardines.



Glow-in-the-Dark Spelling

Students write their spelling words on white paper using glow in the dark materials. Then, hang up the words and have the students enjoy reading them in the dark!

Learn about Your Province

Give each student a list of cities and towns in your province or a simple map with the places marked. Have the children write a spelling word from their study list and then find a city or town that begins with the same letter. It gives them a chance to practice the words and also learn the names of other communities. It helps many children to learn the relative locations and distances of places in their province.

Math Ideas

Tally Marks

"I have been working on tally marks this week in various forms. Today we did this poem. I even had them copy it in a poem book and illustrate it. Then I wrote a list of numbers on the board for them to copy and write the tally marks."

1, 2, 3, 4, cross the 5 for one more.

Keep doing this and you will see

How easy counting things can be!



Fact Families

"I introduce Fact Families as 3 numbers that are like family members. No one else (no other number) can be in the family. I draw a big 2 story house on board. In the attic I write the 3 numbers (such as 3, 5, 2). Together we think of the two addition sentences and two subtraction sentences that can be made with these numbers. We role play and practice with several number families. Kids write addition facts in two upper windows and subtraction facts in two lower windows. After a few days of practice, kids make their own house from paper and markers. They work in partners and then 'present' their houses. These make a great bulletin board display by adding a road and setting the houses along the road and called it Fact Family Street."

"I do houses, too. I cut out a basic house, which is glued to a piece of 12 x 18 inch white or light blue construction paper. Then each child gets a boy and a girl pattern cut from the Ellison machine. Each child is assigned a family. They write and correct the number sentences that go with it. (This will be glued onto the back of the paper.) If the family is 3, 7, 10, this name of the family is on the roof. Then using 2 different colours of the little circle dot stickers they put these on the boy and the girl. (They're supposed to be buttons.) The boy might have 7 buttons and the girl 3 buttons or vice versa. Then I put a dot of velcro on the back of the boy and the girl and the corresponding pieces inside the house. To demonstrate: The boy can walk in first, then the girl and the number sentence would be $7+3=10$. The girl could walk in first and the sentence would be $3+7=10$. Both could be in the house and the girl leaves first, $10-3=7$ etc."

"We use triangles. On the points of the triangle write the digits in the fact family: ex. 2, 3, 5. On the triangle, have the child write the 2 addition and 2 subtraction facts for that family. You could duplicate tons of triangles, with lines for the facts."

Problem Solving

There are certain key words used in problem solving that help determine what operation a student can use to solve the problem. Addition - sum, all, together, total, in all, altogether. Subtraction - difference, left, less than, fewer than, greater than, more than, how many more?

If children have difficulty with problem solving, it often helps to make the question personal using the children's names.

The problem-solving method consists of four basic steps:

1. Look carefully at the problem. What does it tell you? What information does it give you? What facts do you have? What is it asking you to find out?
2. Choose a strategy. Will the answer be larger or smaller than the numbers in the facts? Can you visualize the problem? Can you estimate the answer? What do you think you will do to find the answer?
3. Do the math. Use the strategy you chose and work the problem.
4. Look back. Re-read the question. Did you answer the question that was asked? Does your answer seem reasonable? Can you put the answer into a sentence?

Math Games

"We have been practicing double facts with a 'hot potato' type game. We sit in a circle and pass a ball. Students repeat a double fact (we go in order- $1+1=2$, $2+2=4$ etc.) when the music turns off, the person with the ball is out and sits in the middle of the circle until the next person out takes his/her place."

"I have a beach ball game I play with the children whenever we have a few minutes to 'kill'. I simply throw the beach ball and say a math equation and the catcher says the answer and throws the ball back. I also do this 'counting by' - each child giving a number in the series as they catch the ball."

"I played 'Around the World' with my students almost daily and it really helped them to learn the facts. You start with one student standing behind another student's chair and you call out a math problem. The first student to answer moves to the next student and you do the same. (If the student standing doesn't answer first, he then sits in that chair and the student who answers moves on) They enjoy competing against each other and ending up in different seats. We do two or three rounds a day to start math class."

"This game is used to practice addition facts. You need two sets of cards with one digit numbers , one number on each card. Three kids are needed to play. Two kids each pick a card from the pack and without looking at it, hold it on his/her forehead so that the third child can see both numbers. He gives the answer and the other two have to tell what number is hidden on his/her own forehead. Here is how it goes. Jan picks a card with a 6 on it. She holds it on her forehead (without looking at it) so that Bob can see the 6. Bob picks a card with 7 on it. He holds the card on his forehead (without looking at it) so that Jan can see the 7. Sally adds the two numbers together and says 13. Jan looks at the 7 on Bob's forehead and figures out her number must be 6. Bob figures out that his number must be 7 by looking on the number on Jan's forehead."

"I have a 'math fact a day' calendar that I use to get the kids to learn their facts. I think it helps them. Each day is a fact and the turn around fact ($8 + 5 = 13$, $5 + 8 = 13$, and $13 - 8 = 5$ and $13 - 5 = 8$)."

This can be a solitaire game. Take the face cards out of the deck. Take out one card from the deck and don't look at it. Then turn over 8 cards face up. Cover the combinations of 10 - like 2 and 8 or 3 and 7 with fresh cards from the pack. Ace is a one. If you get stuck just make more piles until you get a 10 combination. When all cards are used pick up the piles that are combinations of 10 and you should have one pile left. The number missing to make ten is the hidden card - if all the combinations were correct.

"My students love this game! It's called 'Addition Top It'. You need a deck of cards - a regular deck is fine, but remove the face cards. Have the children play in pairs. They are to deal out all of the cards in the deck evenly between themselves. Each child then places his pile face down. Together, they say, '1,2,3, Top It!' and then flip one card over (one card each). The first person to say the correct sum of the two cards wins both cards. For example, if the two cards that have been flipped up are 5 and 9, the first person to say 14 wins both cards. Place winning cards face up next to your pile of face down cards. Continue until all cards are used, then count your 'face up' pile to see who won the most cards.

You can also play 'Subtraction Top It' (play the same way but subtract the cards, rather than add them), or for earlier in the year an easier 'Top It' where whoever flips the card with the higher number wins both cards. These games can get noisy, but the kids love them and it's a great way for them to practice their facts!"

Music

Even if you can't carry a tune in a paper bag, music needs to be taught in the classroom. Kids love to sing, and songs can be taught by singing along with favourite CDs. In Kindergarten and Grade One, teach the simple nursery songs, gradually adding more difficult songs. Many children today do not know those wonderful songs that are part of our culture..... Alouette, I've Been Working on the Railroad, Old Macdonald, etc. For a list of songs and the music, go to:



<http://www.theteachersguide.com/ChildrensSongs.htm>

Sing along here, too! Some are suitable for Grade Two kids.

Here is a site where you can play modern children's music: <http://freekidsmusic.com/>

And this is another site where you can find the lyrics and some of the music.

<http://www.kididdles.com/lyrics/allsongs.html>

For pictures of musical instruments (and other great sets of pictures):

<http://www.musicwithease.com/music-instrument-pictures.html>

"You can combine music with a unit on sound. There are lots of great activities in the science books on sound. Talk to the kids about the different types of musical instruments. All of them vibrate in some way to make the sound. The percussion instruments vibrate by hitting them (like a drum). The string instruments vibrate when you rub the bow over the strings or pluck them. Blowing in hollow tubes of various lengths gives them some ideas of how the woodwinds work.

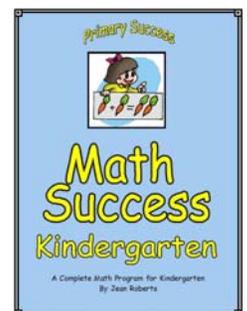
We did The Magic Flute one year - I wrote out a lot of the words on charts and we read them and talked about them and then listened to the music. Then we made the characters using feathers and other things - they were a lot of fun. I found a flautist who came in and played some songs for us and told us how the flute works.

This was the year I let the kids play classical music on tapes on private headphones. They could borrow the tapes and listen while they wrote or did math, etc. Everyone wanted their turn at the tapes. Parents were rather amazed to see their rugged grade two boy sitting listening to Mozart and Beethoven."

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!"

Christmas Gifts

Staff Gift Exchange

"We have a staff party where we bring gifts, but we bring what would be considered a tacky gift. Sometimes it is something that a student brought for you or something silly. Everyone wraps their packages so beautifully. We can each in turn take one off the table or take one belonging to someone else, and it goes around until everyone has a gift without knowing what it is. We often end up in a 'fight' to get the one that is the biggest or best wrapped. It is lots of fun. At the end we open them and see what we have 'won!'"

"This is another staff gift exchange: everyone brings a gift and places it on a table or other central spot. Each participant draws a number....#1 gets to choose a gift first and must open it and let all see. #2 goes next, may take #1's gift or one from the pile. (If #1's gift is taken s/he must go back to the pile, s/he cannot re-take the original gift.).....#3 goes next and may take 1's or 2's or one from the pile....etc..."

Draw names, and then be that person's 'Secret Santa'. Every week before Christmas (or every day of the last week of school) put a gift on the other teacher's desk without being seen. It could be an ornament, a teaching aid, a memo pad or other cute, useful or funny gift. The children in your class will be excited to see your gifts, too, and be very interested in opening it and trying to guess what other staff member is your Secret Santa.

Gifts for Volunteers

"I always make something (fancy cookies or candies), wrap them in holiday wrap or fancy saran wrap, tie with pretty ribbons, and give them to lots of people....principals, secretaries, custodians, team members, etc. It doesn't cost very much (except my time) and everyone loves them.

For my parent volunteers it depends on how often they volunteer. The ones who maybe come on field trips or help out every now and then get the same bag of candy plus a nice card thanking them. For volunteers who come every week I give them the candy or cookies but I try to get something else to go with it-sometimes a Starbucks card, sometimes a small plant, depends on how much money I have and what their interests are. We don't have many volunteers at my school so I really do appreciate those who come regularly and want to give them something to reflect my appreciation."



Primary Success Publications Seasonal Art Books

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!

The BIG Christmas Book

This book has poetry, art, Christmas concert ideas, ways to integrate the holiday into the curriculum, gifts for parents, bulletin boards, 'Christmas Around the World' and lots more. Now everything for the holiday is in one place!

Integrating Christmas Ideas

Christmas Writing

Do your own version of the '12 days of Christmas'. This is a good exercise to teach rhythm in poetry, as the words that fill in need to fit the beat of the music.

Read Imogene's Antlers by David Small and then have the kids write about the day they woke up with a red nose as a spin off. Give the students a big red dot sticker to use in their illustrations.

What does Santa do in his time off? Does he go on holiday? What would he do on vacation?

"I use the fronts of used Christmas / holiday cards as story starters. The kids glue the card to the top of their writing paper and then write a story about the scene."

"There are lots of good writing ideas - and other ideas, too, on Mrs. McGowan's page...."

<http://mrsmcgowan.com/christmas.html>

Read and Write the Room

"We brainstorm a large list of Christmas words and I teach them to the children. Then I put the words on paper candy canes and tack them around the classroom. A centre job is to walk around the room and read and write these words. I give the students a clipboard and a paper with a candy cane theme for them to use to write the words.

This is a favourite centre, and the students are always trying to collect more Christmas words to add to the collection."



The Gingerbread Boy

We make this book every Christmas in my class. I tie it into the five senses science unit. We do one page each day and then the pages are put together later to make a book.

The Gingerbread Boy and the Five Senses

Page 1 says: I can see the gingerbread boy. I give out a copied gingerbread boy outline and the children decorate it with pencil crayons, cut it out and glue it about the words.

Page 2 says: I can hear the gingerbread boy. The students decorate another gingerbread boy. I tie tiny bells to loops of dental floss, put one around each boy's neck and then the students glue it on the page.

Page 3: I can feel the gingerbread boy. I have pre-cut brown felt gingerbread boys and the students decorate them with felt pens and glue them on.

Page 4: I can taste the gingerbread boy. Show the children how to use a paper punch to 'bite' off a part of a paper gingerbread boy. Make the punches close together so it looks like a bite.

Page 5: I can smell the gingerbread boy. I cut out gingerbread boys from sandpaper. Yarn is tied (and hot-glued) around a cinnamon stick and this goes around the boy's neck when it is glued on the page. Then the child rubs the cinnamon stick on the sandpaper when he reads that page. Scratch & sniff!

Homework Calendars for 2012 - 2013

Teachers and parents love this great resource! The children take a photocopied page home each month. The calendar gives them an interesting educational activity to do each day, suitable for the grade. This gives the children homework to do, but there is no preparation or marking for the busy teacher. Homework Calendars are available for Kindergarten, Grade One, Two and Three.

Christmas Ideas

At the North Pole

If I went to the North Pole, I might see...
 If I went to the North Pole, I might hear...
 If I went to the North Pole, I might touch...
 If I went to the North Pole, I might smell...
 If I went to the North Pole, I might taste...



I can see one white beard.
 I can see two blue eyes.
 I can see one red hat.
 I can see one red suit.
 I can see one black belt.
 I can see two black boots.
 I can see Santa!

"I make large elves! I use coloured digital pictures of the students' faces. They cut them out and add red paper hats with fur and tall pointy ears. They are very cute!"

"Last year I made large pinwheel poinsettias. We cut the square red paper diagonally almost to the middle and brought the points into the centre and glued them. We added yellow bits for the centres and put jagged leaves behind them. They made a wonderful display!"

Make big decorations for the hall! Finger paint large papers with bright rich colours. Let dry, and cut out very large circles for Christmas balls. Then decorate them with glitter pens. These are very effective."

Hands and Foot Reindeer

Take off your shoe and trace it on brown paper. Cut it out - this is the face. Put it on the table, toe down. Glue two wiggly eyes (or paper ones) about where the arch of the foot is located, a smile just above the toe and a red nose just above the smile. Trace two hands with the fingers apart from brown paper (the kids can trace two left hands and turn one over to get a left and right. Cut two ear shapes. Glue these on the top of each side of the reindeer's head. The hands are the antlers, of course. Glue them behind the ears, with the thumbs pointing down on either side.

Countdown to Christmas

"On the first of December I give each student a sheet with Santa's face. We colour the red hat and his features. I put these up along the chalk rail. Each day we glue a cotton ball onto Santa's beard and say the following poem."

How many days until Christmas? The days are fun to count.
 We'll add a cotton ball each day, 'Til there's just the right amount.
 When Santa's beard is solid white,
 Hooray! Tonight's the night!



Ice-cream Cone Ornaments

Buy regular size Christmas balls. Hot glue these sitting in pointed waffle cones, with the hanger at the top. Then the students use an eyedropper and dribble white paint at the top so it runs down the ball. The paint needs to be quite thick - do some tests.... If the balls are a bright deep colour like a rich blue or scarlet, the white paint looks great. If you have white Christmas balls you could try dribbling different colours - dark brown for chocolate, red for strawberry.

To make them last longer and not be so delicate (or rot before the next Christmas), spray the cones with clear acrylic.

I have a card 'tree', and we hang these on to do the paint dribbling and to let them dry.

Odds and Ends

Colour Blindness

Colour blindness does not mean that the child sees in black and white as this is a rare condition. But children with colour deficiencies may have problems in one colour range - green or red being the most common. 5 to 8% of boys have some colour deficiency, so this is not uncommon. Perhaps 2% of children (usually boys) have a more severe deficiency - they may see dark colours in the red spectrum as blacks or dark gray.

Examples of how the condition can cause problems at school.

1. Errors can be made on worksheet pages with coloured pictures or diagrams.
2. Some pages in basals or trade books are written with coloured print on coloured background - blue on purple, for example.
3. Teachers sometimes think that young children do not know their colours when they mix up colours with a similar intensity.

How can teachers help if a child has a colour deficiency?

1. Label a picture with words or symbols when the response requires colour recognition.
2. Label crayons, coloured pencils, and pens with the name of the color.
3. Use white chalk, not coloured chalk, on the board to maximize contrast. Avoid yellow, orange, or light tan chalk on green chalkboards.
4. Photocopy parts of textbooks or any instructional materials printed with coloured ink. Black print on red or green paper may not be seen by some students. It may appear as black on black.
5. Assist colour deficient students when assignments require colour recognition. For example - colour coding different countries on a world map.
6. Teach colour deficient students the colour of common objects. Knowing what colour things are can help them in their daily tasks. Example: when asked to colour a picture, they will know to use the crayon 'labeled' green for the grass, blue for the sky, and light tan for faces.



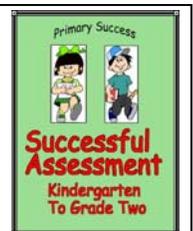
Why Does Mrs. Smith Teach?

"I was absent last Friday and returned yesterday. As I entered my room I noticed a piece of chart paper on the blackboard. At the top was Why Does Mrs. Smith Teach? Beneath that were all of the reasons the kids came up with to answer the question. It is hilarious! The one I liked most was - Who else would she play with? Apparently, the kids told me, the principal came in and asked them the question. It turns out that last week was one of the education awareness weeks and so the principal went around dismissing each teacher for a few minutes while she took the class for a 'quick lesson'. None of the teachers were aware of what this lesson might have been. Needless to say, this piece of paper will be one of my treasures for years to come!"

"I have my students do a lot of their work in interlined exercise books. When their work is done, they hand it in with the book open to today's work so I don't have to go looking in order to mark."

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 know I'm a traditionalist Grade One teacher! When the kiddies come to me from Kindergarten having never used lined paper it makes my job a lot harder. I think using free form paper is fine if you give them practice with the lined paper, too. I firmly believe it helps not only in proper letter formation, but those students I have that have had a more solid background in using lined paper have better visual discrimination and better text awareness when they go to read. They pick up on the mechanics of reading a book better when their eyes have been trained to look at letters in a straight line and proportioned correctly in relation to each other."

"For the first couple of months in Grade One we practice making letters correctly. For each, I say, "Where do we start?" and the class says in unison, "At the top!", pointing up with the arm and hand. After we do this over and over - it is rare that I find students printing from the bottom up....."

"Here is a great little tip that took me about 20 years to figure out. I always need some kind of list to keep track of who owes me what work, and I was always writing who owed me things on a list or on the board or something. It was taking too much time and effort. I made a simple class list on the computer (ABC by first name - I find it easier that way). I could fit several on a paper. I cut them into strips and use them to monitor who turned in work, homework, slips, etc. I put the assignment name on the top. Now I can just tape this to the white board and kids know (and so do I) if someone owes me an assignment. This is particularly important if you have multiple assignments going on all the time.

The kids clamor to be in charge of my list now. I assign written spelling homework and someone is always asking to be in charge of collecting and checking off - they just scratch off the name when work is turned in. Whoever collects it follows up and basically nags the offending child until the work is done."

"I like to keep my desk in the back of the room, then when or if I get a chance to sit at it, I can observe the students working. Because my computer is also in my classroom, I have both desks side by side. This works well in my classroom as I have cupboard space along one wall and so I have a number of shelves behind my desk for my things."

Popular Primary Success Resources!

Successful P.E.

This new 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. Order it now!

Successful Phonics -

Part 1 (Grade One) and Part 2 (Grade Two and Three)

This program gives you everything you need to teach phonics successfully. Part 1 teaches the single consonants, the short vowel sounds and the digraphs—and Part 2 all the rest of the sounds. There are specific daily lesson plans, strategies for teaching the sounds and blending, reproducible reading sheets, flashcards, and booklets so the children can practice their skills in actual reading material.

Successful Science Lessons and Successful Social Studies

These books for Kindergarten, Grade One and Grade Two are very popular. All your lessons are laid out for you, with a worksheet for the students and lots of extra ideas to expand your lessons. Everything you need is there for you, and teachers are thrilled with the easy-to-teach sequential lessons!

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.

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

This is a very long URL, but it gives you a great Christmas tree!

http://www.hp.ca/portal/hho/holiday/tree_printout.php?jumpid=ng-nov06-project-ht

<http://www.kllynch2000.com/Christmaselves.html>
Make life-sized elves!

<http://www.mrsnelsonsclass.com/teacherresources/themat icunits/worldholidays.aspx>

This site has a complete 'Holidays Around the World' unit.

http://www.fvsd.ab.ca/stm/christmas_sites.htm

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