Key Topics in Teaching

Curriculum and Methods Seminar
Spring 2011
Pedagogical Benefits of Picture Books

The continuing relevancy of picture books in the elementary school classroom

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To the Editor - NY Times,
In response to your article, "Picture Books No Longer a Staple for Children," our school designated February as "Love a Picture Book Month." We believe picture books are essential to the development of life-long readers and learners.

Signed,
Developing Understanding

“During these lively interactive readings of picture storybooks, the children revealed a great deal about their deep understanding of stories and how they work” (Sipe & Bauer 329).

“The analyzed both text and illustrations; related the stories to their own lives in various ways; connected the stories with other texts; and... lightheartedly played with stories for their own purposes” (Sipe & Bauer 329).
Importance of Illustration

- “Color makes life much more exciting, not so drab. I think color is a healing tool” George Littlechild (Mendoza 323).

- “They use illustrations and other visual features of picturebooks to make meaning, although this visual interpretation has not receive a great deal of attention from researchers” (Sipe & Bauer 331).

- Aesthetic impulse “they enter what Michael Benton (1992) has called the ‘secondary world’ of the story and have what Louise Rosenblatt (1978) calls the ‘lived through’ literary experience…” (Sipe & Bauer 332)
This impulse is driven by the urge to liberate themselves from the contingencies of time and space and to experience the freedom that *all art* provides” (emphasis added; Sipe & Bauer 332).

“[W]ell over a quarter of their talk involved the close scrutiny of the visual elements of picturebooks. Children very often used illustrations in their narrative meaning-making, and in many cases it was impossible to tell whether they were using illustrations or the verbal text, or both simultaneously, as they sought to understand the story” (Sipe & Bauer 335).

Children make speculations regarding the significance of endpages, color choice and color metaphor, stylistic presentation, as well as others (Sipe & Bauer 335).
Little Red Riding Hood

*Denise:* What’s that blue stuff on her face?
*Teacher:* Any ideas? *Dominique*?
*Dominique:* Probably paint.
*Susan:* That make-up on her.
*Keyron:* Probably the sky was flashin’ on her.
*Teacher:* I was thinking the same thing.
Probably the sky’s reflection on her.

(Sipe & Bauer 335)
Long-term Benefits of Reading Picturebooks

- Picture book autobiography

“I have become a voice for the people through my art and through my writing. I would be the last person to understand, as a child, that [becoming a voice] could possibly be my future” -- Littlechild

(Mendoza 323)
“Practitioners will want to examine their own use of picturebook illustrations in constructing meaning with children” (Sipe & Bauer 339).

Discussion of peritextual features (Sipe & Bauer 339) - bleed, borders, continuous narration, cut-out, dust jacket, edition. For an extensive list of peritexutal features: http://www.reading.org/downloads/52nd_conv_handouts/pantaleo_sipe.pdf

Entrée to other types of literacy learning & confidence in readers & writers (Sipe & Bauer 339).

“Capitalizing on meaning making and interpretive richness that children bring to literature and their stance towards stories as raw materials for their own creativitiy” both textually and visually (Sipe & Bauer 340)
“A Scroll to the Editor: We Love To Read!” *New York Times*. (13 April 2011)


Writing as Social Change

- Students can exercise social imaginations by articulating visions for social change and proposing action steps to implement these visions.
- Students can take stances on *authentic* social issues, enabling them to see the world as activists.
- Student work can be shared with *authentic* audiences that can extend to the larger community.
  - "'[T]o carve out new orders in experience': Imagination in a Social Action Literacy Project", by Shira Eve Epstein.
Creativity in Formal Writing

- “Should students learn the rules before they break them?”
- Using sentence fragments as an example of taking some creative liberties in formal writing
- Major publications with professional writers such as the *New Yorker*, *Harper's*, and the *New York Times* “break the rules” in writing
- Rhetorical and dramatic rules vs. grammar rules – which one wins?
  - “A Fresh Look at Sentence Fragments”,
  - by Edgar H. Schuster
Assessing Creativity

- Demystifying the writing process
- Vagueness in assignments and rubrics
- How does one develop rubrics that provide evidence of growth in creative thinking to meet state standards?

  “Imagine Creating Rubrics that Develop Creativity”, by Linda Payne Young
Assessments that Develop Creativity

- “Knowledge fuels imagination and creativity.”
- “Focus on student control of their internal resources for creative choice frees the imaginative student and encourages and guides the more practical-minded or 'safe-thinking' individual to develop their creativity.”
- “Far from limiting students in their expression, assessment lists honor students' feelings and experiences by putting the focus on the tools that students can use to express themselves.”
  - “Assessment Lists: One Solution for Evaluating Student Poetry,” by Andrea Griswold
Technology and New Media

- “...the more we can teach students using their media... the more effectively we can reach the space in which they learn” - Referring to using laptop computers for writing rather than paper and pencil

- This teacher argues that blogging allows for “expanded thinking” - it is open-ended and time-unlimited in a way that class discussion can’t be

- SMART board also allows for other media to be brought into discussion - ex: painting

  - “What Classroom Technology Has Taught Me about Curriculum, Teaching, and Infinite Possibilities,” by Laura Rochette
Science and Creativity

Allison Bishop & Ernesto Manzo
Teachers don’t like creative students

- Creative children were seen as more disruptive than average children.
- Creative students want their questions answered.
- Employers seek out creativity.
- Teachers should promote creativity.

Sing Lau, Grace Y. C. Ng
Inquiry based laboratory

- It places the responsibility on the students to pose hypotheses, design experiments, make predictions, choose the independent and dependent variables, decide how to analyze the results, identify underlying assumptions, and so on.

Donald French and Connie Russell
How do inquiry-based labs work?

- Example: While looking at how corn seeds germinate in different pH waters, we see some corn seeds falling from their wet paper towels into the water and not germinating. How can we solve this problem?

- All ideas are accepted and evaluated
- Teacher does not have all the answers.
Questions Promoting Inquiry

- Do we have a use for this?
- What do we know for sure?
- How should we budget the time we have left?
- What are we trying to figure out?

Eyste r
Works Cited


- Sing Lau, Grace Y. C. Ng. Creativity: when East meets West. World Scientific. New Jersey. 2004:

Global Consciousness

...more than the acquisition of knowledge about world history and cultures
What is *global consciousness*?

- “a mindful way of *being* in the world today” (Mansilla & Gardner, 2007, p. 48)
- Placing ourselves within the “broader matrix of our contemporary world” (58)

Why does it matter?

- We are living in a globalized world
- Global consciousness places students at the center of contemporary debates, so they:
  - recognize the symptoms of a changing planet (51-52)
  - become reflective agents and actors—citizens of today and tomorrow (58)
- Knowing who we are and how we have been shaped by our past affects our perception of our future possible selves
Necessary Steps

- We need to help students:
  - Understand culture
  - Construct membership
  - Develop global consciousness
"Shape of the World" exercise


Students create a symbol of the world and identify phenomena that

- have an impact on the world today
- are declining in importance
- will have an impact on the world in the future
“Crossing borders and building bridges using the internet”

- Finding common values, beliefs, and goals amidst other differences
  - How to design a pen pal program
    - [http://k6educators.about.com/od/languageart1/a/pen_pals.htm](http://k6educators.about.com/od/languageart1/a/pen_pals.htm)
  - Kids Around the World — introduces students “to the lives of children of the same age in developing countries around the world"
    - [www.katw.org/index.cfm](http://www.katw.org/index.cfm)
  - The United Nations CyberSchoolBus — lesson plans, quizzes, and games

“The U.S. Role in a Changing World”

- Who we are as individuals as a nation

- Possible futures for the U.S.?
  - "Lead the World to Democracy"
  - "Protect U.S. Global Interests"
  - "Build a More Cooperative World"
  - "Protect the U.S. Homeland"

Men In the Lives of Young Children

Starting in the Classroom
By Ashley Acle and Liz Ritchie
Negative Assumptions

- Gender discrimination
  - “child molester”
  - “lazy man”

- Gender stereotyping
  - “male as breadwinner”
  - “domineering role/males as authority figures”

- Disproportionate male-to-female representation in the training programs
  - “male isolation in a sea of women”
Countering Assumptions in the Present

● Article– *Football Players in the Early Childhood Classroom: Learning Teaching Skills*

● Present success stories
  - Featured Bios from *Male Voices in Early Childhood Education: And What They Have to Say About It….*
    - Louis Romei (ESL Relief Teacher)
The Future Looks Bright!

- Article– *Call Me MISTER Program*

- Program Modifications
  from *Men in Your Teacher Preparation Program, Five Strategies to Recruit and Retain Them*

1. Have men work with children immediately
2. Provide a mentor
3. Facilitate a men’s support group
4. Offer men a scholarship or stipend
5. Adapt to the program’s culture to welcome men
Resources for Professionals

