

# THEMATIC UNIT

## Related to ELA Prototypes



Theme: **Courage**

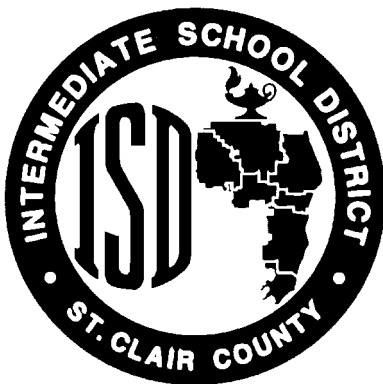
Suggested for: **Fifth Grade**

**Developed by:**

Carol Schwehofer, Academic Support  
Teacher, East China School District  
Wendy Wassman, Academic Support  
Teacher, East China School District

**Edited by:**

Jeff Beal, Language Arts Consultant



499 Range Road  
P.O. Box 5001  
Port Huron, MI 48061-5001  
Phone: (810) 364-8990  
Fax: (810) 364-7474  
[www.sccisd.org](http://www.sccisd.org)

© 2003 Intermediate School District of St. Clair County

All text and pictures on this CD-ROM are copyrighted. Permission is granted to the purchaser to freely copy, in electronic or print form, the materials on this CD-ROM for non-commercial, classroom use only.

## ~Thematic Units~

Dear Colleagues:

The purpose of this project was to organize thematic units related to previously published MEAP ELA prototypes using best practices in reading and writing.

These were developed by, **real teachers**, just like you! We worked to make them teacher friendly for easy implementation in your classroom. Teachers from school districts across St. Clair County gathered the material. The units are a representation of what each group of teachers thought was important to your grade level and to the themes in the prototypes.

Every packet includes **THEME RELATED TEXT SETS**. These are titles that can be used in a variety of ways to develop a deeper understanding of themes. We have noted the **PAIRED TEXTS** (look for the #2) and **LISTENING TEXT** (#3) that are included in the prototypes. We also noted the title(s) we used for **FRAYER'S MODEL** (#1).

A **PROFUNDITY MATRIX** was developed for each set of paired texts in the prototype to help in identifying possible themes. The matrix also helps look across text to make cross text connections. Blank copies of this chart are included and can be used in your classroom to help students make connections between other texts.

**CROSS TEXT QUESTIONS** were written and answered to aid in responding to both the multiple choice questions and the provocative question given in the second writing piece of the ELA MEAP assessment.

Many packets include one or more **WRITING MODELS** for the second writing piece. We suggest you use these before or after student writing to exhibit a well written constructed response.

The **TEACHER SUGGESTION PAGE** is a personal response by the individuals involved in the project. Some contain anecdotes from the use of the material in their classrooms. Others contain a plethora of ideas to implement. We hope these help.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES** (#4) are poems, plays, articles, reader's theater presentations and related suggestions to further develop understanding of the themes.

It is our sincere hope these packets are useful to you and your students.

Happy reading and writing!

# ELA Prototype Materials

- **Thematically related texts**
- **Fruyer’s Model examples**
- **Writing from knowledge and experience using narrative strategies**
- **Profundity examples**
- **Cross Text Question examples**
- **Writing in Response to Reading example**

These materials were designed to provide examples of instructional approaches that will help you and your students prepare for the ELA assessment. The examples are all possible answers; they are not to be considered the “right” answers. We wanted to provide examples of other teachers’ thinking through Fruyer’s, Profundity and cross text questions to help guide you through your own thinking.

The sequence of instruction would be to introduce the theme through using the Fruyer’s Model of concept attainment. Have students write from knowledge and experience. Think through each reading selection using the profundity scale to create a matrix by which cross text questions can be posed and answered. Examples and blank copies are provided to help you in planning instruction.

## Thematically Related Text Sets – Courage

CODE	TITLE	AUTHOR
1	The Lily Cupboard	Shulamith Oppenheim
2	The Legend of the Lady's Slipper	Kathy-jo Wargin
2	Stone Fox	John Reynolds Gardiner
3	Brave Irene	William Steig
4	Paul Revere's Ride	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
	The Story of Ruby Bridges	Robert Coles
4	Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky	Faith Ringgold
	Great American Folklore	Compiled by Kemp P. Battle
	Lewis and Clark	Candice Ransom
	And The What Happened Paul Revere?	Jean Fritz
	Wider Than the Sky Poems to Grow Up With Pg. 89, Ballad of Birmingham	Dudley Randall
	Kate Shelley and the Midnight Express	
	Hatchet	Gary Paulsen
	The River	Gary Paulsen
	Sasquatch	Roland Smith
	Tales from Gold Mountain	Paul Yee
	Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH	Robert C. O'Brien

**Code Key:**  
**Suggested Uses**

1 – Frayer's Model

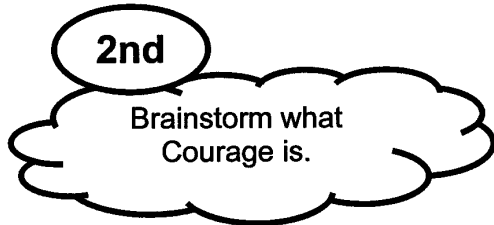
2 – Paired Text

3 – Listening

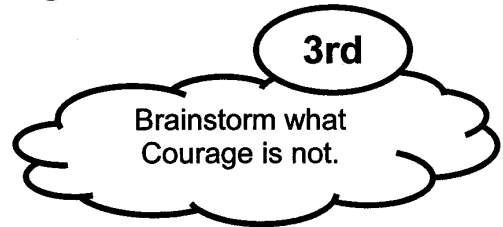
4 – Articles, Poems, Short Text

# How to Use Frayer's Model to Develop Student Understanding of Themes

**Courage is...**



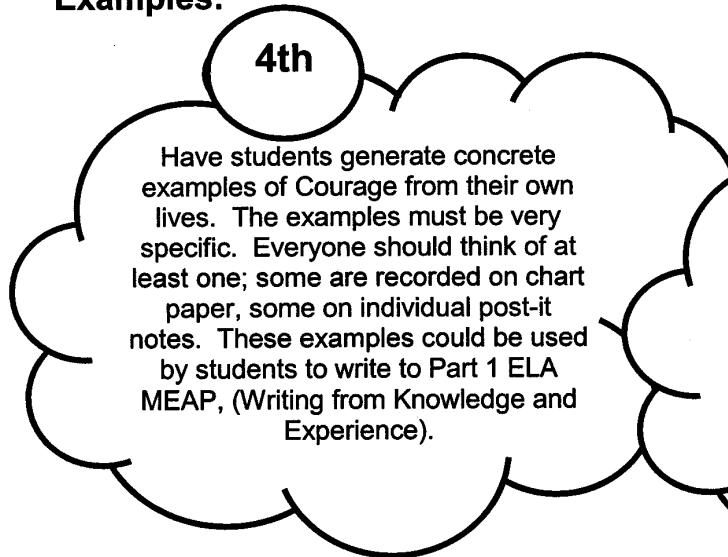
**Courage is not...**



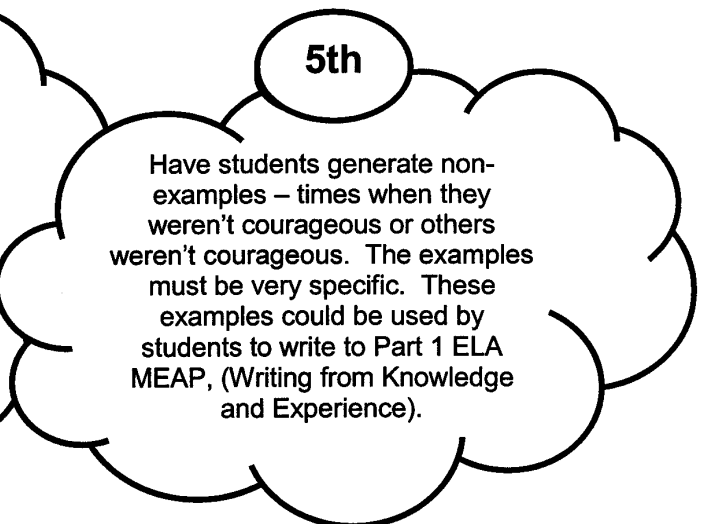
State theme in center oval



**Examples:**



**Non-examples:**



**6<sup>th</sup>** Read a book about "Courage" that is not in the prototype. Have students listen for clear examples and non-examples of courage. Use names and situations specific to the reading selection, when recording the examples.

**7<sup>th</sup>** Have students identify clear examples from the 1<sup>st</sup> reading selection to record on the chart.

**8<sup>th</sup>** Have students identify clear examples from the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading selection to record on the chart.

**9<sup>th</sup>** Have students listen for clear examples and non-examples of courage during part three of the prototype to record on the chart.

**10<sup>th</sup>** Students who need help can use the clear examples from this chart when writing to Part II ELA MEAP, Response to Reading.

# Example of Frayer's Model

## Courage is...

Being brave even when you are afraid

## Courage is not...

Running away from a problem

Running away from trouble

Not standing up for what you believe



## COURAGE

### Examples:

Sam had courage when she dove off the diving board for the first time.

Tim had courage when he told a bully to stop picking on his friend, Bill.

### Non examples:

Tricia did not show courage when she wouldn't be in the class play.

...from *The Lily Cupboard*, by Shulamith Oppenheim

### Examples:

Lily's parents were brave to send her away.

Lily hid quietly from the soldiers in the cupboard.

Nello and his parents risked their lives to keep Lily safe.

### Non examples:

Lily said she would not go away.

...as you continue through the prototype add examples from each of the reading and listening selections

**Courage is...**

**Courage is not...**



**Examples:**

**Non examples:**

## Writing From Knowledge and Experience

The English Language Arts MEAP assessment requires students to write from knowledge and experience. Students may choose the style or genre of writing that suites them best. However, the majority of students choose to write personal narratives. Dr. Elaine Weber, Barbara Nelson and Ray Woods, the authors of *Profiles in Writing 2002*, have granted us permission to offer you some information from the book. This information may help you as you instruct students in personal narratives.

These resources will provide you with:

- Description of the four qualities of writing the MEAP assessment used to evaluate student writing;
- A model for creating writing prompts;
- Examples of well written student papers;
- Attributes of writing that commonly appear at this grade level;
- Strategies used by narrative writers; and
- Examples of student papers with the narratives strategies highlighted.

# *attributes of* **writing**

---

## **Note**

This year the Profiles Project has reorganized the attributes of writing to align with the 4-trait rubric most widely used by Profiles Network members:

### **Focus on Content and Ideas**

**Organization**

**Voice/Style,**

**and**

**Conventions.**

### **focus** on content

Focus refers to concentration on the content and ideas of the piece of writing and to the development of the content and major ideas with appropriate details, examples, etc.

### or g a n i z a t i o n

Organization refers to the structure of a piece of writing with logical sequence; beginning, middle, and end; flow; cohesion, coherence, unity, effective leads; transitions and conclusions; sense of wholeness, etc.

### **Voice/style**

Voice refers to the writer's ability/attempts to engage and interest the reader through stylistic elements and techniques such as: descriptive detail, precise word choice, sentence variety, strong verbs, humor, figurative language, personal reflection, etc.

### **con·ven·tion(s)**

Conventions refer to a writer's presentation of a piece of writing through accurate and effective use of writing form including: directionality, spacing, mechanics (capitalization, punctuation), grammar and usage, spelling, etc.

# profiles prompt

---

## Topic

---

A Special Place

## Thinking About The Topic

---

Do you have a favorite place that is important to you?

- Where or what is this place or space? (indoors, outdoors, your bedroom, closet, tree house, a place you like to visit, etc.)
- What is it like there?
- What do you do there
- Why is it special to you?

## Writing About The Topic

---

Write about a special place.

You might, for example, do one of the following:

- describe in detail a place that is important to you.
- or ■ tell what you like to do in your special place.
- or ■ tell why your special space is important to you.
- or ■ write about the topic in another way.

You may use examples from real life, from what you read or watch, or from your imagination. Your writing will be read by interested adults.

# grade five (A Special Place)

## MY "SPOT"

One of my favorite places is the grassy rise north of the family pellet rifle range, nothing big, just a ~~some~~ mowed lane and a haystack. Here, the grass is ~~of~~ dark green, tall, soft and comby (in the summer, here in a good hiding spot.

This "spot" is <sup>also</sup> good for hiding and reading in. The bugs (they refuse to bite) are relaxing, relieving of stress and calming.

My favorite books to read here are Hardy Boys' mysteries by Franklin W. Dixon, even when I reread them. But these aren't the

only books I read here. I thoroughly ~~enjoy~~ enjoy Gary Paulsen's books (I've read Hatchet three times).

I also think here. I think about anything from school to aircraft ~~to~~ ~~to~~ designs to sports to books to my dog. I also think about ~~science~~ scientists' theories when I'm in "my spot."

This "spot" is special in this way: nobody nor anything can bother me, and it is a natural spot. I can't wait to go there this summer.

### focus on content

- ✓ stays on topic
- ✓ supports with details
- ✓ title focuses reader and creates interest

### organization

- ✓ concise
- ✓ succinct

### Voice/style

- ✓ strong voice
- ✓ simple place - made complex
- ✓ humor

### con-ven-tion(s)

- ✓ mature grammatical structure
- ✓ use of quotation marks for emphasis

# *attributes* **grade five**

## **focus** on content

- ✓ incorporates strong content and focus/stays on topic
- ✓ expresses ideas clearly – have a purpose or vision
- ✓ clearly develops through important details
- ✓ “explodes a moment”
- ✓ uses concrete examples
- ✓ includes title which creates interest
- ✓ develops theme well
- ✓ develops story elements
- ✓ shows view beyond self and present time
- ✓ includes a moral
- ✓ draws conclusions
- ✓ includes content area knowledge
- ✓ uses anecdotes

## **or** **gan** **i** **za** **tion**

- ✓ sense of wholeness
- ✓ good organization-introductory clauses and phrases, development of introduction and summary/closure
- ✓ logical development
- ✓ uses good lead/”hook” at beginning
- ✓ flow
- ✓ includes subtle introduction to the topic
- ✓ ending ties to beginning
- ✓ builds to an effective wrap up
- ✓ includes philosophical/reflective ending
- ✓ uses effective paragraph structure
- ✓ uses effective transitions
- ✓ uses comparisons
- ✓ develops a story within a story

## **Voice/style**

- ✓ uses clear and engaging voice
- ✓ gives reader a sense of “being there”
- ✓ willingness to risk sharing personal experiences
- ✓ creates a mood
- ✓ uses humor, irony, sarcasm, exaggeration
- ✓ effective use of cliff hangers
- ✓ uses show not tell
- ✓ ideas supported by appropriate, selective, descriptive, and figurative words (modifiers, interesting/strong verbs)
- ✓ writing is empathetic – recognizes others’ feelings
- ✓ uses sensory language – concrete to abstract
- ✓ uses personification
- ✓ uses dialogue effectively
- ✓ uses questions to build interest
- ✓ uses clever ideas
- ✓ uses varied sentences
- ✓ uses conversational tone successfully
- ✓ uses internal monologue/dialogue
- ✓ uses sound effects
- ✓ uses a effective use of fragments
- ✓ variety of “said ”words
- ✓ uses musical notes to show singing
- ✓ uses varied points of view: first person, third person
- ✓ uses asides
- ✓ very visual
- ✓ uses strong verbs

## **con·ven·tion(s)**

- ✓ skillful use of writing conventions
- ✓ demonstrates accuracy with mechanics (conventional spelling, punctuation – dash, commas, end punctuation)
- ✓ subject/verb agree
- ✓ phonetic spelling of difficult words
- ✓ effective use of punctuation with dialogue
- ✓ uses accurate paragraph form for dialogue
- ✓ uses ellipses
- ✓ correct use of parentheses
- ✓ writing is neat

# *strategies used by* **narrative writers**

*The next step* in the Profile process, after selecting the most effective writings and holistically scoring the papers with a rubric, is to identify writing strategies used by the authors of the effective papers. The following list of writers' strategies is a combination of the original list that came from the New Standards Project shared by Sally Hampton and modified by Barbara Nelson to include the writing strategies of Barry Lane. These writing strategies can be taught in focused lessons. It is also a way to talk about narrative writing with students during writing conferences. The list of strategies used by narrative writers follows:

1. forecasting
2. flashback / flash forward
3. foreshadowing
4. compressing - shrink a century
5. naming (specific names of people or objects quantities, number)
6. describing visual details of scenes, objects, or people (size, colors, shapes, feature, dress) binoculars
7. describing sounds or smells of the scene - snapshots
8. narrating specific action (movements, gestures, postures, expressions) snapshots
9. creating dialogues, interior monologues, or expressing remembered feelings or insights at the time of the incident - thoughtshots
10. slowing the pace to elaborate the central moment in the incident - explode a moment
11. using syntax to support meaning
12. creating suspense or tension - explode a moment
13. including the element of surprise
14. comparing or contrasting other scenes or people
15. detailing subjects's routines habits or typical activities - binoculars
16. humor or irony
17. repetition / recurring events, objects, phrases
18. using various characters' voices to narrate a story
19. inserting historical or factual information into a story
20. figurative language - simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, alliteration
21. effective lead
22. effective conclusion, ending
23. literary allusion
24. creative, insightful word choice/word order (eg. active not passive voice, strong verbs, interesting or unusual use of or combination of words, etc.)
25. transitions
26. engaging audience intentionally and effectively (questioning, conversational tone)

# *strategies used by* **narrative writers** (cont.)

## **Fifth Grade**

### **The Tree**

Is there a place that is special to you? A place where you can think? A place in which you like to go? A place that is important to you? I have a place like that where I go to think, or to listen. This place is a pine tree that borders between my neighbors and my yard. **effective lead**

The tree is very large and beautiful. It has many big branches in which you can sit or lay. It has the sweet smell of pine sap **snapshot-smell**. In the summer the tall pear trees in which surround it are filled with big, sweet pears, only which you can pick from the pine tree **specific details**. On the tree you can hear the birds singing softly. You can see the bunnies playing in the wild. You can see life beginning.

the pine tree has long soft needles. It has large pine cones. It is the biggest tree in the forest **comparing**. It is strong and sturdy and will never let you down **personification**. It is always there, when ever you need it.

The pine tree is a place in which you could sit and think for hours, and no one would mind. It is a place **repetition** where you could lie and pray and know one would know where you were. It is a place where you could read a book, and no one would say a thing.

The pine tree is for thinkers, readers, or prayers. It is not for teasers, liars, or deceivers. On the pine tree there is nothing to tease except for yourself. There is nothing to lie to except for yourself. On the pine tree there is nothing to deceive except yourself.

As the tree gently waves in the wind when you're coming it seems to seem hi. It seems to smile at you with its needles. It seems to listen to your problems. It seems to rejoice with you, and sing with you in times of joy. It seems to feel when you are feeling. **repetition, personification**

The pine tree is a place of peace. In which you can sing or laugh, dream or pray. It is a beautiful place in which you go for joy. The pine tree is a place for me.

## Using Profundity in Grades 3-12

To get third through twelfth graders to think about books at the theme level we use an activity that is systematic, based on the Profundity Scale, and dependent upon group discussion. The activity must be presented using the to, with and by format. First the teachers model the entire activity to their students. Next, teachers will share the responsibility of the activity with their students. Then teachers will guide students working in small groups through the use of the activity. Finally, students will independently work in small discussion groups to complete the activity or independently complete the activity. Following are the directions we give to teachers to guide students working in small groups. From these directions you should be able to model and share the activity and to help students move to independent use of this activity. The directions will be followed by some hints to help you do that. Depending upon the age of the student, adjust how much direction is needed.

To prepare for the activity you need the following materials for each small group working on the activity; sets of eight different color markers, large sheets of unlined chart paper: two sheets for the teacher and one sheet for each small group. You will also need a great book. There is a list of thematically linked text at the beginning of this unit. If they are books that you and your students have enjoyed over time they are probably good books with good lessons to be learned.

We are going to demonstrate the use of the activity using the book, *Elmer*, by David McKee. *Elmer*, is the story of a patchwork colored elephant. He is always the center of attention until one day he mistakenly gets the notion that the other elephants are laughing at him, not with him. He leaves the herd to find a berry bush that has elephant colored berries. He covers himself in berry juice until he looks like any other elephant. When he rejoins the herd he is unnoticed by the others. He stands there seriously still until he can't stand it any longer and yells, "Booo!" The other elephants think it is a great joke and make the remark that Elmer should have been there to enjoy the joke. In the next moment a rain cloud showers Elmer back to his normal patchwork color. All the elephants think that what Elmer did was his best joke ever and they decide to have a parade each year to celebrate Elmer's best joke. So, every year Elmer comes to the parade looking like a normal elephant and all the other elephants color themselves patchwork.

To begin, hang two sheets of chart paper up where everyone can see them. Devise a way for students to gather the material they need. We usually have them count the number of buttons on their person. The one with the most buttons gets to come up and get the markers and sheet of chart paper. Once everyone is situated in small groups, four to a group seems to be a workable size, and has the materials they need you tell the students to listen for the actions of the main character in the story as you read. Profundity depends on following the actions of one character throughout the story.

Tell the students to listen for the actions of Elmer as you read the story. Remind them that actions are the things Elmer does. Read the story aloud to the class. As a class cooperatively build a list of important actions on the first piece of chart paper. **This list goes along with the Physical Plane: the reader is aware of the physical actions of the character.** Choose the three actions the class feels are the most important being sure that one of them is the turning point of the story (the turning point is often the clearest example of the theme in stories). Then explain that they will be working in co-operative groups, which means we will listen to each person talk and each person will have an opportunity to talk. The person with the most buttons needs to pick up the black marker and draw this shape (a rectangle divided into three equal parts) in the middle of their group chart paper. Then they write one of the three actions chosen by the class in each of the boxes. As they are writing the teacher also draws the boxes and

writes one of the three actions in each of the boxes (on the second sheet of chart paper), as a model.

We always have the students use the markers as their talking sticks. That means when you have the marker in your hand it is your turn to talk and everyone should listen to what you have to say. It is very important to establish this procedure from the very beginning especially if this is the first time the student will be working in cooperative discussion groups. The first student in each group to have a marker is the one with the most buttons on his or her person. We always start there and then have the students exchange the use of the marker by the order they are sitting in, moving clock-wise around the group. So, moving clock-wise around the group the next person needs a red marker to draw a red bubble that connects to the first action box. We are going to use the example for *Elmer* to help explain the next steps. What the group is going to be thinking about is “Why did Elmer think the other elephants were laughing at him?” **This question goes along with the Mental Plane: the reader is aware of the intellectual actions of the character.** The person with the red marker tells why first, then passing the marker clock-wise, everyone gets to share his or her reason why. When everyone is done sharing, the group synthesizes the information and the person with the red marker writes their response in the red bubble. The next person takes a blue marker and draws a blue bubble that connects to the red bubble. What the group is going to be thinking this time is “was it right or wrong for Elmer to think the other elephants were laughing at him and tell why?” **This question goes along with the Moral Plane: the reader is aware of the character in light of an ethical code.** Repeat the process of sharing and writing shared response in the bubble. The next person takes a green marker and draws a green bubble that connects to the blue bubble. What the group is going to be thinking this time is “What did Elmer get from thinking the other elephants were laughing at him?” **This question goes along with the Psychological Plane: the reader is aware of the psychological forces influencing the character.** It is important to remember that Profundity begins with the actions of the character and always goes back to the actions. It is also important to remember that for the third bubble you must stay specific to the action, you can never go beyond the next action. Students repeat this process for the next two actions on their own. As they are working you wander from group to group monitoring the group discussion, giving advice, modeling discussion behavior, prompting for deeper discussion and giving evaluative feedback that students can use to help monitor their own discussion groups.

Next, the teacher explains to the students that they will understand stories and theme better when they attempt to identify with the characters of the story. Every group now turns over their large sheet of chart paper and makes a list of how these are like a character in the story. Think about the ways you are the same as Elmer to make your list. This typically starts out as a list of physical characteristics; such as, we are both animals. Teachers should get students to think deeper by posing situations from the story to consider while they are filling out the chart. One such situation is pointing out that when Elmer was standing with the herd still, quiet and serious, he yelled, “Booo!” If you would do that then you are like Elmer. Teachers want students to see how their thinking is the same as Elmer’s. Do they do the same things as Elmer? Do they think the same things are right or wrong?

An example of the power identifying with characters has in helping students get to the theme level came about one day as while presenting this activity in a third grade classroom in Memphis, Michigan. We walked into the classroom and were immediately able to identify at least one Elmer, in the room. You can always identify the Elmers in classrooms very quickly. He was a very vivacious, very blond boy seated with a group of about 10 students and he was keeping them very entertained as we were preparing for the activity. He did stop long enough to become thoroughly engaged in the activity. However, when we got to the part where they had to think about “Why did Elmer yell, “Booo!” he stood up, threw his arms in the air, in very Elmer fashion, and announced, “Nobody needs to think, I know the answer, Elmer was addicted to

attention, just like me!” It was a very easy jump for him to get from that understanding to the theme of “Be true to yourself.”

Go back to the person with the most buttons and have them turn the chart paper back over to the bubbling side. He or she needs to draw a large brown bubble. What the group is going to be thinking about here is “What is the theme of this story?” **This question goes along with the philosophical plane: the universal truth the author is trying to expound.**

Then you finish up the activity by having everyone draw a square and respond to one of the prompts listed on the three ways reading can transform your thinking page. This illustrates to students that universal truths are generative. This step often takes you beyond the theme level to the ideas in action level. Now that you know this to be true what can or are you going to do about it. This is the social action level that is described well by Terri and Randy Bomer in their book, *Reading and Writing for Social Action*, (1999) and by Paula Rogovin in her book, *The Research Workshop, Bringing the World into Your Classroom* (2001).

Here are some helpful hints to help you manage the activity in the classroom. This activity takes a few hours to do with the children so think of creative ways to break it down and spread the instruction over several days. You could do all the red bubbles one day, the blue bubbles the next day and then the green bubbles another day or you could do the first action one day or you could do the first action one day the second action the next day and then the third action another day. We recommend that the book be reread each day before resuming the activity. Since it takes a great deal of time to complete the activity, be sure to select text carefully. The teachers we have worked with always stress that they would never have students complete this activity with a book they themselves had not personally analyzed. They want to make sure they are able to help students through the tough spots and they want to make sure that the theme the students infer is reasonable and justifiable given the evidence in the story.

Here are some helpful suggestions to help you present this activity in a to, with, and by format. When modeling the activity the teacher will do all the talking and will be demonstrating how to draw the boxes and bubbles and how to think about the questions before filling in the bubbles. A time or two of modeling should be enough for most classes. When sharing the activity the teacher will share the talking and thinking about the questions with the students. The teacher still draws the boxes and bubbles and fills them in with synthesized answers. It looks and sounds like this when a teacher is sharing, the teacher draws the red bubble and poses the question, “Why did Elmer think the other elephants were laughing at him?” He or she then asks for responses from several students. The teacher then shares their own response and shows the children how to synthesize the several responses into a statement that can be written into the bubble. The teacher continues to share the talking and thinking until the activity is completed. Again, a time or two of sharing should be enough for most classes. When independently completing the activity, the students are to work alone. The teacher’s job becomes one of facilitator and evaluator. As they are working, you wander from group to group, monitoring discussion, giving advice, modeling discussion behavior, prompting for deeper discussion, and giving evaluative feedback that students can use to help monitor their own discussion groups. The ultimate goal is to have kids either using the Profundity Scale in small discussion groups or individually to understand text at a deeper level.

It is very helpful to repeat this process with a second thematically related book. A book that I often pair with *Elmer* is *Stand Tall Molly Lou Mellon*, by Patty Lovell. The theme of both stories is “Be true to yourself,” however; both characters accomplish this through entirely different means. By repeating the process with thematically related books students can compare and contrast one character’s understanding of the theme with the other character’s understanding of the theme and with their own understanding of the theme. It also demonstrates to students that theme is inferred. It is the teacher in this case who is inferring the theme of both books,

declaring them thematically related and then asking students if they agree or disagree with the theme that the teacher has inferred. To answer that question effectively students will need to provide clear examples from the text to support their position. Looking at two thematically linked books will lead students to a deeper understanding of both texts.

As mentioned before, our ultimate goal is to have kids either using the Profundity Scale in small discussion groups or individually to understand text at a deeper level. We hope, by now, that it is becoming clear to you how useful the Profundity Scale is in helping students discuss and think about text. Hopefully, students will be able to choose text about which they are curious, get with interested others and successfully start and sustain a discussion group around that text. Hopefully, individual students will have enough experience with thinking this way that it will become internalized and students will think this way about all text. One teacher during a workshop remarked, "Now I have all the questions I need to discuss texts with my students." She was referring to the questions asked at each plane during the bubbling activity.

Another adaptation was to use the Profundity Scale Matrix as shown on the next page. Teachers should read two thematically linked texts. Then on a greatly enlarged version of the matrix they would lead children through a group discussion about each box of the matrix. You complete the matrix one book at a time. When you have completed the matrix for both books you can then lead discussions that compare and contrast the two characters' understanding of the theme to your own understanding of the theme. Students then can agree or disagree if the theme of both stories really is the same. Of course, to effectively answer that question, they will need to provide clear examples from the texts to support their position. Using this matrix truly helps students develop a deeper understanding of both texts.

## Thematically Related Text Sets

Titles of paired texts	List three important actions of one character	Why did the character act this way?	Was it right or wrong for the character to act this way?	What did the character get from acting this way?	How am I like the characters in this story?	What is the lesson learned from this story?	How has this lesson learned changed the way I think?
<p>The Legend of The Lady's Slipper By Kathy-Jo Wargin</p>	<p>Running Flower listened to the stories of the land and her people. Running Flower went to get medicine for her people. Running Flower tried to return to her people.</p>	<p>She learned from her parents and storytellers about the land. There was a great storm and her mother was ill, as well as many of her people. She knew many of her people were ill and dying.</p>	<p>Right, Running Flower learned to respect the land and its people. Right, Running Flower knew she had to get medicine for her people. Right, Running Flower had the medicine to save them.</p>	<p>She got a feeling of joy and belonging to the earth and her people. She had a sense of purpose. She had compassion for others. She was feeling brave and confident. Running Flower was happy, but grew feverish and tired on the way home.</p>		<p>Being courageous enough to put concern for others above concern for your own welfare.</p>	
<p>Stone Fox By John Reynolds Gardiner</p>	<p>Willy took care of his grandfather. Willy enters the race with his dog. Willy wins the race and saves the farm.</p>	<p>Grandfather was ill and wouldn't get out of bed. Willy wanted to earn \$500 to save the farm and help grandfather get well. Willy was determined, had practiced, and had a great dog.</p>	<p>Right, Willy's grandfather took care of Willy when his parents had died. Right, Willy wanted to help his grandfather. He knew if the farm was lost grandfather would die. Right, Willy loved his grandfather so much he knew he had to do something to save the farm.</p>	<p>Willy felt a sense of belonging, responsibility, and he loved his grandfather. Willy had a feeling of determination and purpose. Willy was proud of his dog, but devastated by her sudden death. He had a great sense of loss even though he saved the farm for grandfather.</p>		<p>Having courage to risk everything to help someone you love or care for.</p>	

## Profundity Matrix

Titles of paired texts	List three important actions of one character	Why did the character act this way?	Was it right or wrong for the character to act this way?	What did the character get from acting this way?	How am I like the characters in this story?	What is the lesson learned from this story?	How has this lesson learned changed the way I think?

## **CROSS TEXT QUESTIONS FOR “STONE FOX” AND “THE LEGEND OF THE LADY’S SLIPPER”**

**Q. Did Running Flower and Willy do the same kinds of things? How were their actions similar or different?**

A. The characters both did the same kinds of things. They both tried to save people they loved. Running Flower went out in a storm to get medicine to save her people and Willy won a dogsled race to save grandfather’s farm.

**Q. How are their reasons for acting the way they did similar or different?**

A. They have similar reasons for acting they way they did. They both wanted to help people who were important to them.

**Q. Did you agree more with the way that Running Flower acted or the way that Willy acted? Why?**

A. We think they both did the same thing. They took risks to help others.

**Q. Did Running Flower and Willy get the same thing for their actions? Why or why not?**

A. They both saved the people they loved, but Running Flower lost her life and Willy lost his dog.

**Q. If both of the characters learned the same lesson what was the lesson?**

A. Helping others sometimes takes courage. Sometimes courage requires taking a risk that may cause hardships.

**Q. If each of the characters learned a different lesson what were the lessons learned?**

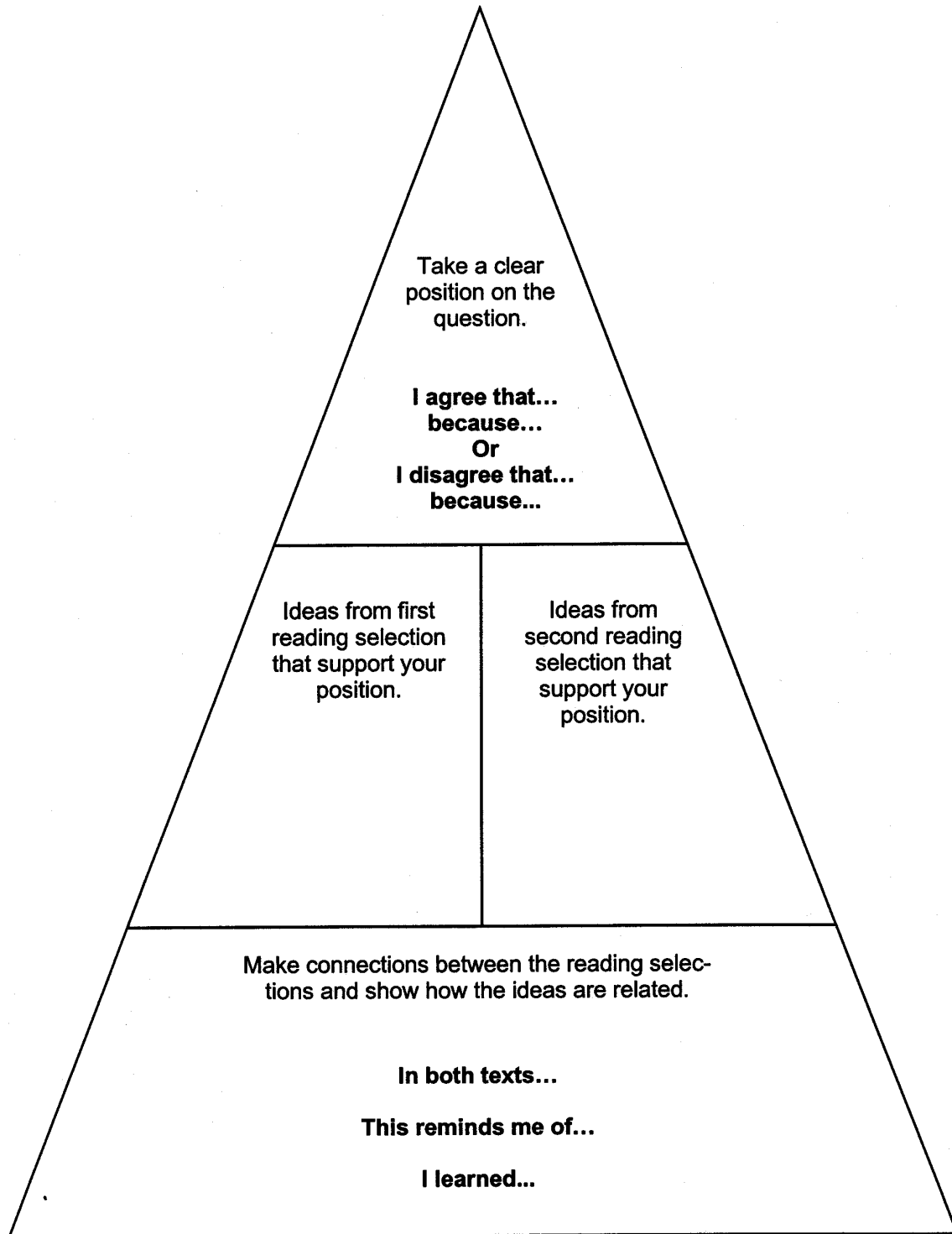
A. They both learned the same lesson.

**Q. Do you agree or disagree that the theme of these two stories is “ courage?”**

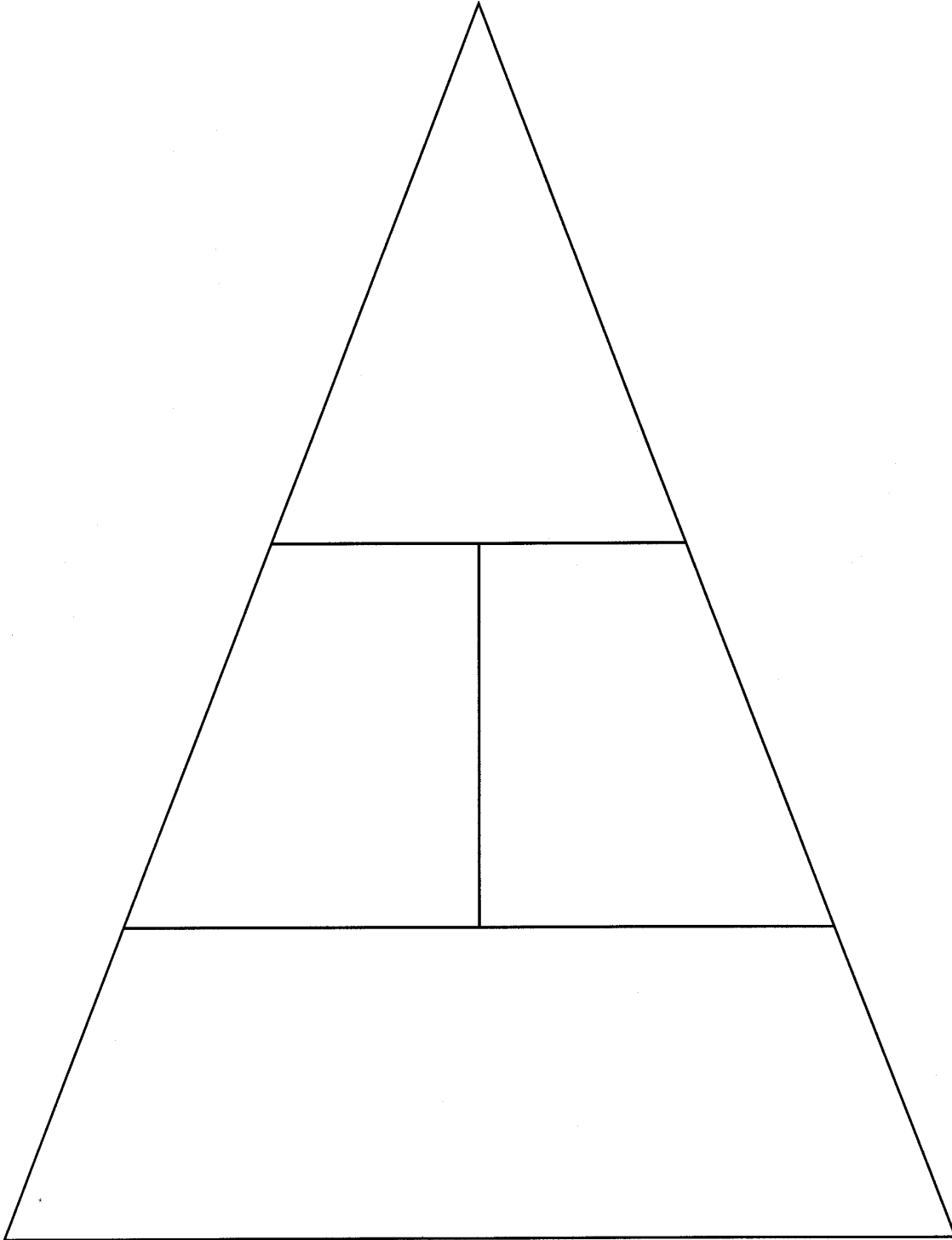
A. We agree.

**Simple Graphic Organizer  
to Help Students  
Organize Writing Ideas  
for Writing in Response  
to Reading**

**Teacher Edition**  
**Writing in Response to Reading (Part 2)**



## Writing in Response to Reading (Part 2)



# **Related Language Arts Activities:**

## **Before, During and After Prototypes**

# Sketch to Understand

Because many students learn through visualization, this structure is a wonderful tool to understanding what has been read. It is also useful in organizing thoughts and concepts of the text.

## Step by Step

Soon after reading a story or selection, allow the children to explore what they've read by drawing the information the way that they have understood it. You could ask them questions about the story that they may want to include in their drawing. "What is the setting? Who are the characters? Where does the story take place?" Students may want to label the actions in the drawing. After drawing their pictures they should write a short summary paragraph. The short paragraph allows you to see if the student really understands the reading.

## Language Arts

After reading a short story encourage the students to think about the settings, the characters and events. Request that the students draw these pieces about the story (stick figures are fine). Label the actions and write a paragraph that summarizes the drawing.

## Social Studies / Science

After reading a short selection to the class invite them to picture it in their head. Ask them to draw a picture and label the action, then write a summary paragraph.

Science students can depict the three states of matter: liquid, gas, and solid each of these have a unique set of qualities and properties.

# Ideas for Getting Students to Talk About Text

## Three-Step Interview (Kagan)

*This is a simple structure that allows students to work in small groups to share ideas and information.*

- 1. In pairs students take turns interviewing each other.**
- 2. When the first student has interviewed the second they reverse roles.**
- 3. In a larger group the students share what they learned about each other.**
4. Use this activity to have students share how they are alike a character in the book.
5. Use this activity to have students share how two characters are alike.

## Lonely vs. Alone (Kagan)

*This structure helps students to explore character motivation.*

- 1. Students should read a variety of books on the same theme.**
- 2. Students as whole class, or in small groups discuss theme.**
- 3. Students should fill out the form on theme and then use the Three-Step Interview Process to share information.**
- 4. When the students have finished sharing have them end with . . . “ I like your use of \_\_\_\_\_ from the book as an example”. “ I like the words you used to describe \_\_\_\_\_”.**

# Read, Hide, Remember, and Retell

In order to stop a reader and help them to think about what they've read it is a useful process to introduce the Read, Hide, Remember, and Retell method. This process is especially helpful during standardized tests.

**Read** only as much as your hand can hide.

**Hide** the words with your hand.

**Remember** what you have just read (look back if you need to).

**Retell** what you just read inside your head or to a partner.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Going Beyond Cause and Effect

Book or chapter title \_\_\_\_\_

Identify the two most important, "cause-and-effect" situations in the book. Explain how each effect impacted the rest of the story.

**Cause** (found on page(s) \_\_\_\_\_) **Effect** (found on page(s) \_\_\_\_\_)

**Impact on the story**

---

---

---

**Cause** (found on page(s) \_\_\_\_\_) **Effect** (found on page(s) \_\_\_\_\_)

**Impact on the story**

---

---

---

**Put a star next to the situation that had the most impact on the story. Explain your answer on the back of this page with words, pictures or both.**

# What is Reader's Theater?

Reader's Theater is minimal theater in support of literature and reading. There are many styles of Reader's Theater, but nearly all share these traits:

No full memorization. Scripts are held during performance.

No full costume. If used at all, costumes are partial and suggestive, or neutral and uniform.

No full stage sets. If used at all, sets are simple and suggestive. Narration provides the framework for dramatic action. Reader's Theater was developed as a convenient and effective means to present literary works in dramatic form. This is still its primary use, though many scripts now published are original dramatic works rather than literary adaptations.

Originally popular on college campuses, Reader's Theater has now moved to the lower grades, where it is seen as a key tool for creating interest in reading. Kids love to do it, and they give it their all – more so because it's a team effort, and they don't want to let down their friends! And if the script is based on an available book, they of course want to read it. What's more, Reader's Theater is a simple activity for the teacher, since it requires no setup apart from the reproduction of scripts.

Reader's Theater has been found effective not only for language arts, but for social studies as well. Performing multicultural literature is one of the best ways for students to become interested in and familiar with other cultures.

## Internet Resources:

[www.lisablau.com](http://www.lisablau.com)

[www.aaronshep.com](http://www.aaronshep.com)

For an excellent representation of Reader's Theater, please refer to the play entitled "Sybil Ludington's Heroic Ride". This play is a story about bravery and courage. Much like Paul Revere, Sybil was a hero.

# **Belling the Cat**

## **A Fable by Aesop**

**A Reader's Theater Script by Lisa Blau**

**Mouse Leader**  
**Wise Old Mouse**

**Gray Mouse**  
**Narrator #1**

**Brown Mouse**  
**Narrator #2**

**Narrator #2**      **Once upon a time many little mice lived in a cozy house.**

**Narrator #1**      **One day a big cat came to live in the house.**

**Narrator #2**      **The cat chased the mice. The mice were very, very scared.**

**Mouse Leader**      **We have a problem.**

**Narrator #2**      **The mouse leader told all the mice.**

**Mouse Leader**      **I am tired of being chased by that big cat day and night.**

**Gray Mouse**      **But what can we do?**

**Narrator #1**      **Asked the gray mouse.**

**Brown Mouse**      **We must come up with a plan.**

**Gray Mouse**      **What a great idea. What will we do?**

**Brown Mouse** We can wait until the cat falls asleep. Then we can tie a bell around the cat's neck. When the cat tries to chase us, the bell will ring and we can run away.

**Brown Mouse** This is a fabulous plan! Let's tie the bell around the cat's neck.

**Wise Old Mouse** And who will tie the bell around the cat's neck?

**Narrator #1** Asked the wise old mouse.

**Narrator #2** No one wanted to be the one to try.

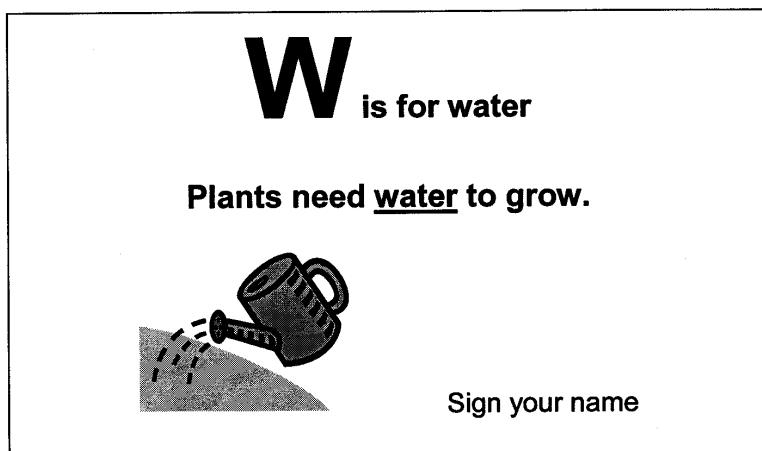
**Narrator #1** The mice were much too scared.

**Wise Old Mouse** And that is why mice are still chased and caught by cats to this very day.

## Alphabet Quilt

1. Think about the information presented.
2. Using the assigned letter, think about one word that will tell about an important concept.
3. Think about a sentence that explains your letter choice.
4. Think about a small picture that will show your important concept.
5. Prepare your quilt square using the example.

Example:



A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

XYZ