

Ornament Pal Writing

Grade Level: First Grade

Subject Area: Language arts (Reading, Writing), Art

Materials Needed: Reading: “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” by Alan Benjamin

Art: Toilet paper rolls, construction paper (various colors) puffer balls (cotton type), hot glue gun, glue sticks, brown pipe cleaners, scissors, markers, crayons, hole puncher, yarn or string, googly eyes.

Writing: Pencil, eraser, piece of paper.

Standards:

RL.9 Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.

W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

W.5 With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

4.1.1 Students explore a wide range of visual art media and materials, tools, equipment, and technologies.

Objectives:

Students will make text to self connections

Students will construct their own piece of art

Students will create stories and practice writing complete sentences

Students will have a topic and use a beginning, middle, and an end in their writing.

Learning Activities: Teacher will read aloud “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” to class. Class will make relations from text to text and text to self throughout the story. After class reads this book, students will get to choose between three characters—reindeer, elf, and a snowman. Each student will receive a toilet paper roll and will be able to decorate their character according to how they like it. When they choose their materials, teachers will help hot glue gun the pieces so they stick. Each student will get a pair of googly-eyes, and the needed materials for the specific pal. After the ornament is assembled, the teacher can hole-punch the top of the toilet paper roll, and run a string through the hole to create an ornament.

After the art project, bring children back to the carpet to discuss the ornament pals they made. Have children name their pal, and then explain they will be writing about their new friends.

Reviewing Skills and Using Background knowledge:

Before jumping into the writing assignment, talk about proper sentence and story writing. It is important for students to understand where to capitalize letters in a word or in the sentence, proper spelling of age-appropriate words, and using correct spacing between words followed by a period at the end of the sentence. Teacher can do a formative assessment with the students during this time to make sure they understand what their jobs in writing are. This formative assessment can be done in a whole group discussion.

A few things to go over in group discussion, and starter questions to boost their thinking about writing:

- How are capital letters and lowercase letters used in a sentence?
- What do you put at the end of the sentence to let the reader know your thought is complete?
- What is a topic? What is a conclusion?
- What are facts and ideas?
- Review that proper names should be capitalized as well.
- If our topic is our ornament pals, does that mean we get to talk about what we did on the fourth of July?

Students will start off their writing with a topic sentence to tell the reader what it is they are going to write about. They will practice their grammar and spelling skills as they write their stories, and use proper capitalization and punctuation that is age and grade appropriate. After the review has been done, students can grab a piece of writing paper, and begin to write.

Starter questions to boost ideas for writing:

- What is your ornament pal's name, and why is he/she special to you?
- Write about one of your favorite things to do during the holidays, and how your pal can experience those memories too.
- What kinds of things does your ornament enjoy doing, eating, etc.?
- Write about the perfect gift you would give to your ornament pal, and why do you think that would be special to them.

As students finish up their writing and the teacher reads over it, they are able to draw a picture that goes along with their story. These stories can be put in a class book, and the students will love to see their hard work being accomplished.

Assessment:

During the read-aloud, allow children to make connections to the story, and to share with others their thoughts and opinions about what might happen next.

During the ornament making, make sure all children have the appropriate equipment, and encourage them to stay on task and work efficiently.

During the writing, check to see who is making progress, and help those who are struggling. Check to make sure their pal's name is capitalized, and they have a beginning, middle, and end. We are working on complete sentences. Help those who need a boost in their imagination, and help them create sentences without doing it for them.

Summative Assessment for writing is rubric attached:

Name of Story: _____ Written by: _____

Category	1	2	3
Topic	Story is difficult to read and does not stay on topic.	Story has a topic sentence and one fact that stays on topic. Includes a closing statement that is somewhat on topic.	Story is easy to read and it is on topic. It has one topic sentence and two facts to support the topic. Includes a closing statement.
Capitalization	No words are capitalized. Periods at the end of sentences are missing.	Some sentences are capitalized. Periods sometimes used in the right places.	Student uses capitalizations correctly every time.
Spelling	Age appropriate words are spelled incorrectly. Some words are not legible.	Most words are spelled correctly. A few words are spelled phonetically.	Student spells age appropriate words correctly. Difficult words are spelled phonetically.
Spacing	Letters in words overlap. Not very many spaces are used to break up words.	A few spaces are too narrow or too wide, some letters are blended together in words.	All words have appropriate "finger" spacing.
Handwriting	Proper writing print is not used in this story. Story is very difficult to read.	Handwriting is legible, but is not consistent. Some words are written nicely, and some are hard to read.	Overall neatness of writing. Easy to read and understand.

Overall: ___/15

Comments:

Reflection:

This lesson was a huge success. I was really glad that I was able to incorporate a read aloud, an art lesson, and writing all into one. I think that starting these children off with a read aloud really drew them into becoming interested about Christmas and the holidays, and they were able to make connections between what we were reading, and how they can connect it to other stories or any personal experiences. I gave the children times to turn and talk to their thinking buddies and predict what was going to happen next, and also share their insights on what they were reading.

As the class moved into the art project, I had to make sure that I took my time with this so the children did not just run wild. I had all of them go back to their desks, and I called names according to the popsicle sticks that were in a jar, so they all had a fair chance of being called. As I called each child's name, they got to choose between an elf, snowman, or a reindeer. I would then give them their toilet paper roll to help get them started. I ended up running out of reindeer by the time the last few children were called, and so I quickly prepared a reindeer for them so they could use the pal that they wanted to. After all of the children got their toilet paper rolls, they were free to choose what colors they wanted to use for decorations. When the children all had their things assembled, I helped them glue all of their pieces on with hot glue gun. I was so happy to see how excited and engaged they were, and as they were working on their projects, I asked the class to think about what they wanted to name their pals. This part of the lesson was very time consuming, but I was really proud on how hard and long the students were working on their pals.

After the whole art project was done, I brought them to the carpet to talk about the writing. I did a formative assessment through asking questions and reviewing sentence structure with the students. They did a really great job interacting. There were a few times that they got distracted, but not to where I could not redirect them. After we reviewed topic sentences, beginning, middle, and end, we talked about naming our ornament pals again. I had them think of a name they wanted to name their pal, and they had a chance to turn and tell their thinking buddies about their pal's name, and why they named it that name. After we talked about this, I passed out a piece of paper and we started our story. I was very pleased to see how hard these students were working on their stories. A lot of them had really great ideas, and wrote way more than expected. I was really happy to see how excited they were about writing on their new pals. I think this was a great idea to give the students a visual, and it gave meaning to their writing.

There were a few students who were stuck in the beginning of their writing, and they did not know where to go with it. I asked them questions to jumpstart their thinking, and they ended up having great ideas to write down. Again, this part of the lesson took quite a bit of time, but it was well worth it. They were engaged and excited about their learning. I think they did an awesome job. This is definitely a project I will be doing again. At the end of their writing, they all got a chance to hang their new ornament pal on the classroom Christmas tree.