

Writing from Literature

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by J. Moore

Writing from Literature

Making the Reading/Writing Connection Requires:

Children who know:

- *what to collect
- *where to record it
- *how to categorize it
- *when to use it

Curiosity is one of the best tools for teachers. Children who are curious are unstoppable in their learning. One way to pique children's curiosity and get them started in making the reading/writing connection is to create a notebook with a cover reading "Top Secret". While reading stories aloud to students make a point of stopping in the middle of the story to record an idea in your "Top Secret" notebook. This will eventually (if not immediately) elicit curiosity. When students ask what you are recording, simply reply "I'm sorry, but that's top secret!" After lots of begging, relent and explain to students that you are learning how to become a better writer by collecting things from books which will help you. Once the categories are made known to students, they will begin collecting and requesting that you add in their ideas to your book. Older students can be given their own books to collect in. See the next page.

Top Secret



Table of Contents:

1. Motives and Story Patterns
2. Story Complications
 - *Tricks
 - *Disasters
 - *Act of god (weather, magic, miracle)
 - *use of force (physical or political)
3. Encounters and Dialogue
4. Verb Vocabulary

Researching to Make the Reading/Writing Connection

Example One:

Read the Book: Stellaluna by Janell Cannon

Ideas collected to use in a new story:

1. Story Pattern:

Lost and Found Circle Story

Motive: A baby bat wants to find its mother.

Change it: A baby seahorse wants to find its father.

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Notebook**



2. Story Complications: Trick, Disaster Act of god, Use of Force

Use of Force (physical): Baby bat is separated from mother by an owl.

Change it: Baby seahorse is separated from its father by a shark.

Disaster: Baby bat falls into a bird nest. She has to eat, sleep and fly like baby birds.

Change it: Baby seahorse meets an octopus. She has to eat clams, sleep on the rocks, and bury herself in the sand to escape enemies.

3. Encounters and Dialogue

Encounter: Fell into a bird nest and frightened the three baby birds who lived there.

Dialogue: "What was that?" cried _____.

"I don't know, but it's hanging by its feet," chirped _____.

Change to: Fell into the rocks on the sea floor and frightened three baby octopuses.

Dialogue: "Did you see that?" gasped _____.

"Yes, and it latched on to one of MY TENTACLES!" shivered _____.

4. Verb Vocabulary

said words: crooned, squeaked, cried, chirped, thought, warned, sighed, gasped, stuttered, murmured, asked, whispered, cheered, explained, yelled, howled, shrieked, replied, mused, wondered

went words: dodging, followed, swooped, dropped, landed, clambered, climbed, jumped, flying,

others: spied, stuck, knocking, wrapping, clutched, trembling, gripping,

5. Ending to story: Mother finds baby bat sitting upright in a tree.

Change to: Father finds baby seahorse clinging to a rock by his tail.

Researching to Make the Reading/Writing Connection

I Read the Book:

by _____

Ideas collected to use in a new story:

- 1. Story Pattern(s):** circle what you found
Stand Alone Plots(s): copycat, stuck, contest, physical transformation
Picture Frame Plot(s): circle, switch, character transformation

Motive: _____

Choose a different character and change the motive to:

2. Story Complications: record what you found

Trick _____

Disaster _____

Act of god (weather, magic, miracle) _____

Use of Force (physical or political) _____

Use your new character(s) and change the story complications to:

Trick _____

Disaster _____

Act of god (weather, magic, miracle) _____

Use of Force (physical or political) _____

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Notebook**



3. Encounters and Dialogue

Encounter: Choose one interesting meeting between characters and record it.

Dialogue: Record what the characters said to each other when meeting.

Using your new characters change the encounter to:

Dialogue: Using your new characters change the dialogue:

4. Verb Vocabulary I collected:

said words:

went words:

Story Complication Verbs I found:

Trick _____

Disaster _____

Act of god (weather, magic, miracle) _____

Use of Force (physical or political) _____

5. How did the story end?

Using your characters, change it to:
