

Book Focus: Copycat Stories

This book is based on teaching children one way to write a copycat story. A copycat story occurs when one character copies another out of admiration, curiosity, a desire for friendship, a need to survive or to frame another character for a crime. Copycat stories often result in humorous situations. The humour in this plot concept can be a great drawing card for reluctant writers. In literature copycat stories begin as picture books, are used as sub-plots in chapter books and include full length novels. When teaching children to write copycat stories it is beneficial to read them about ten copycat stories before choosing one to write from. This helps children to see many ways that stories can be written using a copycat plot for a frame.

Below are copycat story examples for you to share with your class. When choosing one to write from it is best to work with a very simple pattern. Most children write about three grade levels below what they can read. Even Gordon Korman, a child prodigy, who published his first novel at thirteen wrote his book for ten year old children. Therefore, picture books will work the best with children from the end of grade one through to grade six.

Copycat Stories to Share with Your Class Prior to Writing:

1. The Chick and the Duckling by Mirra Ginsburg ISBN 0-689-71226-X
2. Monkey Tales (The Pedlar's Caps) by Laurel Dee Gugler
SBN 1-50037-530-X
3. Edmund and Hillary by Chris Jackson ISBN 0-00-648189-2
4. The Hat by Jan Brett ISBN 0590-12057-3
5. Curious George by H.A. Rey ISBN 0-395-15023-X
6. Ruby the Copycat by Peggy Rathman ISBN 0-590-47423-5
7. Little Lumpty by Miko Imai ISBN 1-56402-829-1
8. Emma's Eggs by Margriet Ruurs ISBN 0-7737-5898-4
9. Mice Twice by Joseph Low ISBN 0-689-71060-7
10. Stephanie's Ponytail by Robert Munsch ISBN 1-55037-484-2
11. Coyote by Gerald McDermott ISBN 0-15-201958-8
12. Ramona the Brave Ch. 5 by Beverly Cleary ISBN 0-380-70959-7
13. The Happy Hedgehog by Marcus Pfister ISBN 0-7358-1164-4
14. Daeadalus and Icarus by Marcia Williams (myth) ISBN 1-56402-440-7



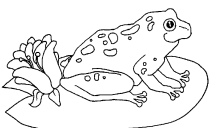



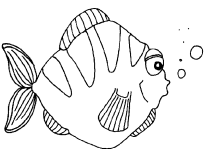

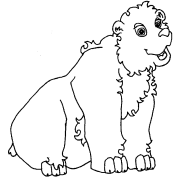


Dear Parents,

In the area of creative writing your child will be learning to edit his/her own story. Each child progresses at his/her own pace in this process. Developmentally appropriate expectations are essential for successful experiences. For this story, your child was asked to independently edit for the skill(s) which have been circled below. Other areas of the story were not edited, because your child is not yet ready for more responsibility. As your child grows in their ability, more areas of responsibility will be added.

1. Spaces between words
2. Capitals
 - *beginning of sentences
 - *I
 - *proper nouns
 - *abbreviations
 - *initials
3. Periods
 - *end of sentences
 - *after abbreviations
 - *after initials
4. Question Marks
5. Exclamation Marks
6. Commas
7. Quotation Marks
8. Colons
9. Semicolons
10. Complete Sentences
11. Spelling
12. Paragraphs
 - *Subject Change
 - *Written Speech
13. Correct Grammar in Sentence Structure
14. Maintaining Verb Tenses (past, present)
15. Maintaining Narrator (first person, third person, omniscient)
16. Word Choice (expands vocabulary with choices provided by teacher or initiated by student)

Photocopy this page and glue it into each student's research notebook.

Words to Replace "Said"

 Forest		* agreed/nodded/smiled/beamed/answered	
	buzzed sang chirped hummed squeaked		nodded sang croaked called hissed
	squealed shrieked hissed twittered screeched agreed		hooted twittered sang called screeched crooned
	hissed nodded crooned chattered jabbered called agreed		gurgled sputtered splashed spluttered whispered gushed bubbled
	whined whispered chattered hissed drawled gloated agreed		growled boomed thundered bellowed grunted snorted rumbled
	growled called hissed grunted drawled nodded		hissed chattered chirped bubbled drawled whispered

Writing Class Lesson One

1. Teacher tells the Class:

Today we will begin to write our own story about an animal that meets another animal who is a copycat. The second animal is looking for a friend and copies everything the first animal does until he experiences a disaster. After the disaster, the copycat stops imitating his friend. The first part of our story that we will write today is the setting. Authors use sensory imagery to transport the reader to a new setting. The setting that we will be writing about is the forest.

2. Teacher Models to the Class by:

writing and reading his story paragraph of a setting which utilizes sensory imagery to the class.

3. Teacher Webs with Students:

sensory imagery for the forest with the class on the chalkboard or the overhead so that they can in turn write a setting paragraph which utilizes sensory imagery.

4. Teacher Says:

Write about two to three sentences which uses the sensory imagery we brainstormed on the overhead to introduce the leader animal in the forest setting of your story. What would your leader animal see, hear, feel, or smell in this setting? Teacher models again by re-reading his setting paragraph. (Students may wish to write the setting from protagonist's viewpoint)

5. Students Do:

Students write several sentences to introduce their leader and setting using sensory imagery. When finished have some students share their work with the class.

6. Next Teacher tells the Class:

Which leader did you choose to write about instead of Duckling? If you forget, look at your outline. Now, we are going to write several sentences to show an interesting way for the leader to meet the copycat. Authors use sensory imagery and dialogue to show how two characters meet.

7. Teacher Models to the Class by:

writing and reading his story paragraph to show how the leader was introduced and how he met the follower.

8. Teacher Webs with the Class:

interesting ways for the leader and copycat to meet

9. Students Do:

Students write several sentences to introduce their leader and show how he met the copycat.

10. Teacher Says:

What did they say to each other when they met?

11. Teacher Models to the Class by:

reading his story to show what the characters said to each other when they met and how they became friends

12. Teacher Webs with the Class:

what the characters said to each other when they met and how they became friends

10. Students Do:

Students write several sentences to show what the characters said to each other and how they became friends.

Writing Lesson One is Complete