Grades 3–5

The Literacy Recipe: Multimedia Booktalk Program for Grades 3–5

Preparation and Materials Needed

- Words to “The Publishers’ Payoff” chant (see page 3) to display for class.
- Book display stands (place books with back cover facing students for the “reveal” after they select the correct title).
- Pull the ten books listed at right and label ten boxes with these books’ titles and/or covers (recycle “boutique” Kleenex boxes; shoeboxes, or use Ziploc/Rubbermaid plastic containers).
- Reproduce the reservation form from page 4 so that children can note which books they would like to reserve. Instead of entering all the reservations in the computer, just use the book boxes to pick a name. It is more fair this way; children who hear the lesson first won’t necessarily be first on the reservation list.
- Prepare a visual of the “Pick the Bestselling Titles!” matching game from page 5 to display for the class.
- Provide scissors and pencils for all students.
- Get the props indicated in the book list and review the synopsis of each book.

1. **Dragon Slippers** by Jessica Day George (Bloomsbury, 2008). Props: women’s blue slippers/shoes. Imagine how you’d feel if your aunt offered you as a sacrifice to a dragon. Creel, a savvy orphan, manages to escape such a fate and journeys to the kingdom’s royal palace where a prince recognizes her bravery, and she discovers that her simple blue slippers may be the key to defending her country from invasion.

2. **Hamster Magic** by Lynne Jonell (Random House, 2012). Props: fur (a handful from grooming your dog or from a stuffed animal is fine). It’s tough being the smallest kid in a family, but laughter and chaos ensue when the littlest family member voices her desires aloud, and she is overheard by a wish-granting hamster. The child starts growing fur, and her siblings do everything they can to hide her from their parents and other disastrous scenarios until they can undo the magic.

3. **Nory Ryan’s Song** by Patricia Reilly Giff (Dell Yearling, 2002). Prop: potato. In Ireland, famine forces Nory Ryan and her brother to scale coastal rocks to try to steal eggs from angry birds who claw and peck the children. They’re willing to chance crashing into the rocks below, if it means their family won’t be dying like others around them.*
4. *Crosswire* by Dotti Enderle (Boyds Mills Press, 2010). Props: wire, fence, or hedge cutter tool. In Texas in the late 1800s, thirteen-year-old Jesse is terrified of guns. But he wants to help his family protect the farm during a drought. Desperate, free-range cattlemen are cutting the family’s fences to gain access to their water. Jesse can’t rely on his older brother, who wastes all his time in town doing nothing, and he is afraid the farmhand his dad hired will force him into using a firearm.*

5. *Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznick (Scholastic, 2011). Props: a lightning bolt from clip art, glued or taped onto cardboard. Author-illustrator Brian Selznick continues his unique approach to writing in this electrifying book with separate stories of two kids’ lives that happened 50 years apart. Read the text for Ben’s story as he tries to find out why he never met his father, and use the illustrations to “picture read” Rose’s search as she finds out more about a mysterious actress.

6. *The Case of the Lost Boy* by Dori Hillestad Butler (Albert Whitman, 2010). Props: clip art of number 3, glued or taped onto cardboard. Picked up and taken to the pound, King, a dog that is a detective, can’t solve the mystery of why his former owner didn’t come to the pound to claim him. But that mystery is soon overshadowed by the disappearance of Connor, the boy who adopts him from pound. With the help of another dog, a mysterious cat, and his own detection skills, this trio has a doggone good chance of bringing Connor home.

7. *Ellray Jakes Is Not a Chicken* by Sally Warner (Viking, 2010). Props: bell (signals time for recess). Ellray needs a truckload of luck to fend off the trouble he’s in when he defends himself against the class bully who never gets caught. The bully is sneaky and waits for certain times, like recess, to taunt Ellray. What’s a kid to do to make the adults realize he’s not the problem, and that he should get to go to Disneyland?

8. *Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie* by Julie Sternberg (Amulet Books, 2011). Prop: camera. Eleanor thinks her life is as bad as a pickle juice on a cookie when her favorite babysitter has to move away and the newbie, Natalie, takes over. But Natalie is determined to make Eleanor like her, too, and she takes Eleanor on a walk to do some photography and other fun things.

9. *Cyborg* by Patricia C. McKissack et al (Scholastic, 2011). Props: battery and flashlight. It’s a pretty simple thing to replace a battery in a flashlight, but not for someone who has his eye, arm, leg, and heart replaced with biofe parts. Even worse, Houston’s mom and many other people don’t want anything to do with him, because he’s not fully human any more. As time passes, Houston is pushed further and further to the periphery of society. How is it fair, when the accident was his mom’s fault and he’s paying for it?*

10. *The Roar* by Emma Clayton (Chicken House, 2009). Prop: plate with fake mold. Imagine a future world where you are forced to live in the lower, moldy region
of a walled city. Being poor, you are forced to eat the mold while those in the upper region live like royalty. That is what Mika must endure as he searches for his missing sister and faces a criminal mastermind who recruits boys in his fight to destroy the upper region.*

* These books would also be excellent springboards into historical and scientific research.

**The Program**

- Introduce the program by displaying and explaining “The Publisher’s Payoff.” Divide the class in two and have children be ready to chant their parts.

  **The Publisher’s Payoff**

  *(Student Group 1: Representing Publishing House)*

  It’s a great book, yes it’s true.
  The title must be perfect, too!

  *(Librarian: Representing Booksellers)* I’ve got to sell it, yes I do. A good title calls out to you!

  *(Student Group 2: Representing Readers)*

  I want to buy it, yes I do! The title’s cool—I’ll read it through!

- Briefly discuss with students how focused publishing houses are on picking titles that will appeal to specific audiences: children, middle graders, young adults, and adults. In the minds of the publishers and the other booksellers, when it comes to making a book appealing, the title is a critical concern, along with the cover, text, and illustrations.

- Display the “Pick the Bestselling Titles!” visual. Using the groups from the chant, explain to the students that they are now divided into two competing publishing companies (Group 1: Best Books Ever Publishing House; Group 2: Awesome Reads Publishing House). Their houses must use their editing and marketing talents to select the titles of books that will become bestsellers. They must take turns selecting the best titles by reading the “rough draft titles” from the left column, and then choosing titles that will have more appeal.

  Only uncover one Rough Draft Title at a time, but display all the Bestselling Titles. Alternate turns between groups, and play the game like baseball: Students must raise their hands; if they call out an answer, the other publishing house gets an extra turn. They have three tries (or strikes), to match the title. After each title is matched correctly, draw a line between the matching titles so they are not used again.

  Then, hold up the appropriate prop and give a mini-book talk (include the synopsis provided, if you wish)

  When you have finished matching all the titles, tell students that they can fill out their forms to enter the book reservation drawing for titles that interest them. (You may want or need to explain why you’re determining who is next on the reservation list in this way, rather than entering their names into the computer.) Tell them that when a book comes back, you will draw a new name, check the book out to that name, and put it in their teacher’s mailbox. (After I check the book out to a student, I tape that slip to the book so they know why they’re getting it, and the teacher knows who is receiving the book.) Pass out pencils, scissors, and a form to each student. Have kids complete the form and drop their slips into the various boxes.

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  **Aileen Kirkham**, author of Library Lessons for Little Ones, the intermediate Collaborative Bridges series (both from UpstartBooks), and numerous articles for Library Media Connection and LibrarySparks, has thirty years’ experience as a librarian and classroom teacher at the elementary level. Often dressed as the storyteller Captain Book with her first mate, Kitty the Dog, she does contract work to educate, entertain, and enrich the literacy experiences of students and public library patrons. In addition to writing and storytelling, she creates and presents custom-designed staff development workshops for libraries, schools, and organizations including AASL and the Texas Library Association. Recently she began working as a volunteer ESL instructor at the Tomball (TX) Public Library, and finds herself as much a student as those with whom she works. Visit Aileen’s website at www.aileenkirkham.com.
Student Reservation Forms

Directions: Fill in the blanks under each book title that you would like to read when the book becomes available. Cut your reservation slips out and drop them into the container behind the matching book.

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**Book – Dragon Slippers**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

**Book – Hamster Magic**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

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**Book – Nory Ryan’s Song**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

**Book – Crosswire**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

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**Book – Wonderstruck**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

**Book – The Case of the Lost Boy**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

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**Book – The Roar**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

**Book –Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

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**Book – Cyborg**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________

**Book –Ellray Jakes Is Not a Chicken!**
Name __________________________
Library Card # __________________
Teacher/Rm#____________________
## Pick the Bestselling Titles!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rough Draft Titles</th>
<th>Bestselling Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mixed-Up Thin Metal</td>
<td>A. Dragon Slippers (fantasy: grades 3–6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Not a Squawking Guy!</td>
<td>B. Hamster Magic (fantasy: grades 2–4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Event of the Missing Kid</td>
<td>C. Nory Ryan’s Song (historical fiction: grades 3–6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The Gross Food Combo</td>
<td>D. Crosswire (historical fiction: grades 4–6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The Overwhelming Noise</td>
<td>E. Wonderstruck (mystery: grades 4–6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Lizard’s Shoes</td>
<td>F. The Case of the Lost Boy (mystery: grades 2–4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Rodent Sorcery</td>
<td>G. Ellray Jakes Is Not A Chicken (realistic fiction: grades 2–4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Dumbfounded</td>
<td>I. Cyborg/ The Clone Codes Series (science fiction: grades 4–6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Person’s Melody</td>
<td>J. The Roar (science fiction: grades 4–6)</td>
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