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Language Arts

Language arts, or the skills needed to communicate, is an essential component of our society. Some children can communicate better than others, either orally or through writing, because they have a natural gift in this area.

Some characteristics that are common among gifted individuals with language arts strengths include:

- Possessing a storehouse of information about a variety of topics
- Having an unusually advanced vocabulary for their age
- Recalling information quickly and accurately
- Being intense when truly involved in an activity
- Questioning everything; favorite question is “Why?”; having an argumentative nature
- Displaying original thinking
- Being highly verbal
- Having a great imagination; being a daydreamer
- Liking to read, talk, tell stories, word games, and listening to stories or to other people talk
- Enjoying language, word play, and verbal communication
- Having unique ideas in their writing and speaking
- Using drama and humor to engage an audience in imaginative ways through their writing or drama experiences

By working on enhancing communication skills, students benefit from an increased ability to express themselves in all avenues of their learning. Some children, however, demonstrate giftedness in the language arts and should receive special attention, like Alexis.

Alexis

A fifth-grade teacher approached me about a student she had who wrote phenomenal poetry but who was not in my gifted class. The teacher asked if I could give Alexis an opportunity to join the other gifted students during my poetry unit. I read some of her work and was flabbergasted by her use of words and creative details, and how easily her poetry seemed to flow. She really was a gifted poet. When she joined the class for my poetry unit, I made sure that I provided challenges and avenues that would help expand her linguistic strengths. I introduced her to different poetry styles to help broaden her knowledge. After studying Shakespearean sonnets, she wrote her own sonnet in iambic pentameter, just like Shakespeare. She loved having this opportunity to share and utilize her strength in poetry. Alexis excelled in my class and was fortunate to have had a teacher who recognized her needs and provided her with an opportunity to further improve her strengths in the language arts.

The following activities are designed to assess how well students use verbal and written communication skills. Fluency, the attention to detail, the ability to ask appropriate questions, spelling, and grammar are important aspects that are addressed. For younger students, of course, spelling and grammar aren't relevant, as most do not read or write; check instead for fluency in their verbal responses.

ANALYSIS ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Verbal Sequencing

Teacher Notes/Grading: This activity is designed to check for verbal skills, fluency, and elaboration as students give the correct sequence of events for certain experiences.

Children who communicate effectively will give very detailed answers to questions. They will elaborate on each aspect of the process that they go through without repeating themselves or going back and saying that they forgot something.

Following is a good sample response for how to make a sandwich. You will notice the underlined sections are very detailed aspects of the answer. These specific details do not have to be included in a response, but are offered because they are examples of exceptionally well-crafted answers. Remember to look for unique details and proper sequencing of events.

First, I would take out a plate from the cupboard and place it on the counter. Then I would go over to the breadbox and take two slices of wheat bread out of the bag and place them on the plate. Opening up the refrigerator, I would take out a slice of cheese, the ham, and the mustard. I would then take the wrapper off the cheese and place the cheese on the bread. Then I would place a slice of ham on top of the cheese and then squirt some mustard on the ham. After placing the other slice of bread on top of the mustard, I would take a knife from the drawer and cut the sandwich in half. That is how to

make a ham and cheese sandwich. All you need to do is eat it. Don't forget to clean up by putting the mustard away, throwing the cheese wrapper in the garbage, and washing the plate.

Directions:

- a. Tell how you make a sandwich.
- b. Tell how you play a game.
- c. Tell how you make a bed.
- d. Tell how you get ready for school.

Activity 2: Written Communication

Teacher Notes/Grading: Students may choose a topic to write on one or you can choose the topic for them. Check for grammar, spelling, punctuation, fluency, and elaboration in the student's writing piece.

Children who write effectively will give you very detailed answers. Good responses will include specific details, original ideas or thoughts, and correct spelling and grammar.

Directions:

- a. Write a letter to a child in another country.
- b. What would you tell a famous person if you could meet him or her?
- c. If you were an eraser, what would you say to the child using you?

Activity 3: Mystery Box

Teacher Notes/Grading: Place a single object in a box. By asking questions, students should try to determine what is in the box. Remind them that they can ask detailed questions, like Twenty Questions. Look for good verbal skills and creativity in their thinking. Instead of just asking "Is it a penny?" children should try to ask more questions about categories, such as "Is it round?" or "Is it found in the playground?" to help narrow down the choices. This shows their creative thinking. Just because they don't guess correctly doesn't mean that they are not gifted in this area. You should look for good thought processes, not just correct guesses.

Activity 4: Book Writing

Teacher Notes/Grading: Check for detailed writing, clarity of ideas, spelling, and grammar. A good answer to this activity includes complete thoughts and original ideas incorporated into the writing.

Directions:

What type of book would you write? Explain why.

■ ENHANCING READING AND WRITING SKILLS

Being able to successfully communicate ideas in written form or orally is a talent. Providing engaging opportunities for students who excel in the linguistic area is necessary for them to continue to reach their fullest potential as learners.

Listed in the following section are language arts units and activities that I have found to be very motivating to children in my classroom. They include reading, writing, debates, discussion groups, book clubs, plays or skits, mock trials, and speeches. I suggest that you select the activities that would best fit each child or group of students.

Greek Mythology Unit

Myths are stories that try to explain natural phenomena. My students really enjoyed studying Greek mythology. I have never seen my fourth graders so excited about learning! They just loved reading the stories and were productive during class periods. After reading several myths, they selected the project they wanted to do to present what they had learned. The project options and requirements were:

Become a Greek God or Goddess. Research a god or goddess and become that god or goddess by acting like him or her. Develop an oral presentation telling facts about your Greek god or goddess. The other students will try to guess who you are, so remember not to tell anyone! Include another interesting piece to this project, such as designing Poseidon's trident or Pandora's box.

Create a Board Game. Research and come up with a board game all about Greek mythology. Be sure to create questions, a game board, directions on how to play the game, and game pieces. This game will be played and shared with the whole class.

Create a Newspaper. Create a newspaper about the everyday happenings of the Greek gods and goddesses. It should include various articles, advertisements, and even comics. The use of creative ideas is very important.

Create Your Own Greek God or Goddess and Myth. Create your own god or goddess and create a myth around him or her. Remember to include detailed descriptions and personal characteristics of your god or goddess.

My students loved these projects because they had options for displaying their own learning. I have found that creating choices for the students increases their motivation to learn. Author Steven Levy (1996) proposes that learning is more meaningful when students select the topic for a project than when teachers assign the work.

Cosmic Comic Writing

Studying and creating comic strips are a great way to motivate students to use their imagination while learning character development, using

inferential skills, and utilizing literary devices like point of view. I like to start this unit by having students brainstorm a list of comics that they are familiar with, which incorporates the fluency component of creativity. Then as a class, students use the flexibility component of creativity by placing the comics into categories. Sharing a variety of different styles of comic strips, such as the “funnies,” political comics, graphic novels, and superhero comics, is very important to show different writing styles. Have students bring in their favorite comic to share with the class. Using the different types of comics, students should analyze each comic’s characters, use of dialogue, genre, message, and progression from one frame to the next.

How a comic strip is set up is significant. Be sure to point out the different types of frames that are used to enhance or draw attention to the frame and the use of language. The critical aspect that I share with my students is that you don’t have to be an artist to create a comic—what is important is that the ideas are there.

After students have the background knowledge on comics, they can develop their own comic. Comic strip topics may include creating a new superhero that helps solve a real-world problem, such as recycling or endangered species, or creating a political cartoon that deals with a community issue.

Comics Resource

National Association of Comics Art Educators, www.teachingcomics.org

Poetry

“Poetry presents an opportunity for gifted students to explore (1) the quality of words, (2) the power of metaphoric language, and (3) the complexity and subtlety of meaning” (Smutny, 2001, p. 1). Creating an atmosphere where poetry is shared, appreciated, and understood is very important. The study of poetry is not just about learning the different styles of poetry. Reading poetry for pure enjoyment is a very beneficial learning process for all ages. “Poetry has the power to help children distill their deepest perceptions and thoughts: it also acts as a springboard to other creative work” (Smutny, Walker, & Meckstroth, 1997, p. 92).

Introducing poetry to students should be done in such a way that it can be applied to real-life experiences. Providing these experiences will lead students to be more motivated, sense a purpose for learning poetry, and enjoy learning about it. For example, if the class reads poems about nature, it’s beneficial to go outside and read these poems again, outside “in nature.” Students will probably look at the trees and plants from a different point of view. Filling the classroom with a wide variety of styles of poetry for students to read is also very important.

After the students have a good grasp of the meanings and feelings that poems share, they can start to write their own. Gardner (1983) states, “The young poet generally begins his self-education by reading other poets and by imitating their voices as best he can” (p. 82). Once they are more confident, they should be able to find their own voice. An author’s personal voice is what gives the writing personality and its unique style. Voice is one component of the six writing traits created by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory to help teachers guide writing instruction (“6 + 1

Trait Writing," 2005). The other traits are ideas, organization, word choice, conventions, and sentence fluency.

Limericks

A limerick is a five-line funny poem, in which lines one, two, and five rhyme and lines three and four rhyme. After teaching the class about limericks, I combine the concepts and rules of limericks and math together. I have students create number limerick poems for others to solve (see example below). Students should first read a variety of limericks to get a sense of the rhythm and rhyme of this style. Then they select a number and write clues to describe the number in a limerick. Problem-solving skills and creativity are blended together to solve these puzzles. Stephan Krensky's (2004) book *There Once Was a Very Odd School and Other Lunch-Box Limericks* is a wonderful resource on limericks.

Number Limerick Example:

I am a two-digit prime,
Whose digits add up to a dime.
The largest digit you see,
Is a multiple of three,
I hope you find me out in time.

Answer: 19

Sharing Poetry

Ideas for sharing original poems or students' favorite poetry include:

- Creating a poetry journal or diary with illustrations
- Creating a poetry slideshow on the computer, incorporating sound, video, and pictures
- Reciting poetry in a circle, such as an author-sharing chair or book talk
- Planning a night of poetry sharing with family and friends through a Poetry Talk
- Incorporating poetry in drama experience
- Creating an anthology of students' poetry

Personification

Personification is a way of giving inanimate objects or ideas human characteristics, feelings, or actions. I like to read various personification poems to students for them to get a feel for that style. To practice personification, students can select an object and personify it either in a sentence or as a monologue. For example, the wind is personified in the sentence, "The wind felt tired of pushing the leaves around in the street." To culminate the personification activity, I give the students a piece of paper with random lines and a shape on it. Students incorporate these lines and shapes into a picture. Using the personification poetry tool, students then

personify their picture with a poem. This activity incorporates the creativity components of elaboration and originality.

Poetry and Drama

Mixing poetry and drama together by acting out original published poems or even poems that students have written makes learning more meaningful and authentic. Acting out poetry improves communication skills, social skills, cooperative learning skills, and memorization skills, and provides for a deeper understanding of poetry. The rules for Poetry Drama are:

- Students form groups of two or three to act out a poem.
- Students must work collaboratively to break the poem down into speaking and acting parts.
- Students may not use any props.
- Students must memorize the poem that they are acting out.

After students have rehearsed their poems, I invite parents, teachers, and students to the auditorium for their presentation of "Partying With Poetry." The students love bringing poetry to life, and this also gives the audience a different avenue from which to view poetry.

This idea came from a workshop that I attended called Poetry Alive. For more information, see the Poetry Alive! Web site at www.poetryalive.com. Students can even submit their own original poems for a chance to be selected for the Poem of the Month on this Web site; it also lists great Web sites where students can play with poetry online (click on the "Resources for Students" links).

Poetry Web Sites

Giggle Poetry, www.gigglepoetry.com

Poetry4Kids, www.poetry4kids.com

Teaching Poetry Web Sites

Favorite Poem Project, www.favoritepoem.org/

Tips for Teaching Poetry, www.inspiringteachers.com/tips/curriculum/poetry.html

Fables and Folktales

Everyone is familiar with fables and folktales. Talented students can delve deeper into a unit on fables and folktales by looking for the morals or important parts of the story, while developing and writing their own fable or folktale.

Fables are short stories in which animals are the characters. These animals have human characteristics and solve a problem, teaching the reader a moral. Teaching the class about Aesop and his fables is a good starting point. Folktales are stories that have been passed on orally from generation to generation. They usually begin with "Once upon a time . . ." and

describe human nature or how things came to be. Activities that can be done with fables and folktales include:

- Guess-the-Moral Game: After the teacher reads a fable, students guess the moral of the story; points can be awarded.
- Students write and illustrate their own versions of fables or folktales.
- Create a moral match sheet: list the morals of several fables and have students find which fable correlates with each one.
- Create puppets and produce a puppet show of a particular fable.
- Create a skit from a folktale to share with others.
- Create a diorama or visual representation of the major parts and characters of the folktale.

Fable Web Sites

Aesop's Fables, www.umass.edu/aesop/fables.php

Page by Page Books: Aesop's Fables, www.pagebypagebooks.com/Aesop/Aesops_Fables

StoryTymes Aesop's Fables, www.childclassics.com

Fables and Folktale Drama

Infusing drama into this unit by putting on fable or folktale plays will motivate students. Two books, *Aesop's Fables Plays for Young Children* by Dr. Albert Cullum (1993) and *Folk Tale Plays From Around the World—That Kids Will Love!* by Marci Appelbaum and Jeff Catanese (2001), include plays for students to act out. These drama-learning experiences don't need to be elaborate with detailed costumes or props. I have students create simple masks out of foam board for props to create a quick and easy play.

Folktale Problems to Solve

The book *Stories to Solve: Folktales From Around the World* by George Shannon (1985) and its sequel (Shannon, 1994) contain folktales with a problem-solving twist. I usually read one of these short folktales to the class once a week. My students love trying to find the solution to the folktale. This is a great critical-thinking and higher-level thinking activity.

Free Writing

Writing comes in various forms, from creative writing to informational writing. Many talented writers don't like to be restricted to a particular topic, so I allow students time to free-write on a topic of their choice, which improves their motivation. An independent study project lends itself to gifted writers by giving them the time and freedom to write for enjoyment. If you'd like your class to write on the same topic, use any of the following creative-writing prompts:

What if all clocks stopped?

What if your parents went away on a permanent vacation and left you in charge?

What if money really did grow on trees?

What if you never grew up?

What if everyone had two heads?

What if animals could talk?

What if you were a pencil? Describe your adventures.

What if it was your birthday every day of the year?

What if you could invite anyone from history to a dinner party? Who would it be? What questions would you ask?

Word Play

Palindromes, transmogrifications, and anagrams can be used as word-play activities that are entertaining, challenging, and enhance vocabulary. Following are some ideas for playing with words.

Palindromes

Palindromes are words, phrases, sentences, or numbers that read the same forward and backward. Some palindrome examples are dad, mom, wow, racecar, and stop pots. Activities using palindromes can include:

- Students create a list of all the palindromes they can think of. This develops the fluency component of creativity.
- Students create a palindrome puzzle book that gives hints to a particular palindrome, such as “What is a three-letter palindrome for a loud sharp noise?” (pop). This develops the originality and elaboration components of creativity.
- Students create phrase palindromes with illustrations. This also develops the originality and elaboration components of creativity.

Palindrome Resources

Too Hot to Hoot: Funny Palindrome Riddles, by Marvin Terban (1985)

Transmogrification of Words

Transmogrification is the act of changing into a different form or appearance. I have students use the dictionary or thesaurus to change simple sentences or phrases into complex language or vice versa. For example, the phrase “The grass is always greener on the other side” can be changed to, “The lawn is constantly emerald in the opposite section.” Try changing the following well-known book titles or phrases into transmogrifications:

The three little pigs

Sample Answer: The trio of diminutive swine

The farmer in the dell

Sample Answer: The cultivator in the glade

Good night, sleep tight

Sample Answer: Pleasant hours of darkness, slumber taut

For a culminating activity, students create their own transmogrifications of famous quotes, nursery rhymes, or book titles. Their final product can be put into a booklet or on a poster that includes illustrations and an answer key.

Anagrams

An anagram is a word made by using the letters of another word in a different order. The only rule is that every letter must be used in the new word or phrase. This unit of study will have students use their creative and critical-thinking skills in order to make an anagram. One example of this is the word "step," which can be made into the word "pets." Students can create an anagram challenge puzzle book with answer key for others to solve. This activity can be done independently when they have extra time. A nice Web site on anagrams is www.manythings.org/anagrams/.

Root Words

Many of the English words used today are taken from Greek or Latin words. Studying the roots of words can help students understand the meaning of words better, as well as help them with spelling. A root word is a word that can be made into a new word by adding a prefix and/or a suffix. The word can stand alone and has a meaning.

After students have studied the meanings of prefixes and suffixes of words, you can create a quiz game. Create questions that ask for the meaning of the word and award points for correct answers. For example:

Question: From looking at the following words, what do you think the word *bene* means?: benefit, beneficiary, benevolence, and benefactor

- a. to take
- b. good will
- c. time

Answer: b. good will

Question: From looking at the following words, what do you think the word *dic* means?: dictionary, diction, and dictator

- a. to speak
- b. to rule
- c. to know

Answer: a. to speak

Online Root Word Puzzles/Quizzes

Funbrain, www.funbrain.com/roots

Skillswise, www.bbc.co.uk/skillwise/words/spelling/wordbuilding/rootwords/

Similes and Metaphors

A simile is a comparison of two unlike things in which the words *like* or *as* are used, such as “She eats like a bird.” A metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things in which no words of comparison are used: She sat at the foot of the mountain.

Activity ideas for similes and metaphors are:

- Compare unlike things by creating a book of metaphors with illustrations.
- Research well-known similes and metaphors and explain their meaning.

Give a simile or a metaphor to the students and have them explain the simile or metaphor. For example, “A math teacher is like an egg timer.” Students need to explain why math teachers are like egg timers. Some answers may include: “They like to be perfect when done,” “They like the fast pace of things,” or “They like to turn things upside down and look at things from a different perspective.”

The Dynamite Dictionary Game

“Improvement in vocabulary will result in improved writing skills only if the teacher is able to create a classroom that takes writing seriously” (Brynildssen, 2000). This means dedicating time to writing, spelling, and learning new words. The Dynamite Dictionary Game enhances vocabulary and takes little preparation, time, or materials. To play this game, students select a word from the dictionary that they think no one else will know. Then they write down the definition along with two other definitions that they make up. They read the definitions to the class, and the class tries to guess the correct definition. Each correct answer receives a point. I have the students keep track of their points each time we play the game.

ENHANCING ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS ■

Structure Conversation

One entertaining activity that improves communication skills is an activity called a Structure Conversation. The object of this activity is to improve communication and listening skills by building a structure with partners. The materials that are needed for this activity are a bag

full of “junk” (paper clips, straws, cups, Popsicle sticks, buttons, spoons, and coins) and a barrier, such as a file folder. Two of every item is necessary. This activity is done with the partners sitting across from each other with the barrier between them so they can’t see each other’s workspace. Divide the materials between the partners so that each person has the same exact materials. The leaders build a structure or place their materials in a particular way on the table in front of them. Then the leaders must describe to their partners, in detail, using only words, what their structure looks like. Partners cannot look at what leaders have built and leaders can’t look at how their partners are building their own structure. Leaders need to be very specific with their instructions to communicate their structure verbally, without using hand gestures. Words that they may need to use are *front, back, left, right, north, south, east, west, diagonal, parallel, and perpendicular*. Once a leader has communicated all of the directions on how to build his or her structure, the barrier is removed to see if the partner’s structure looks identical. Hopefully, they do but if they don’t, the two can communicate their misunderstandings. Then the roles are reversed. After doing this activity multiple times, students will improve upon giving and listening to directions. It’s just amazing!

Mighty Monologues

A monologue is usually a long dramatic speech done by a single person. Having students develop their own monologue can help improve their communication and creativity skills. After watching and listening to monologue examples, students develop their own creative monologue. These monologue activities enrich, broaden, and improve their oral communication skills. Another benefit of this activity is that it takes very little time and no materials.

Topics for monologues can include:

- You are a ball in a tennis match. Describe what is going on.
- Your boss just fired you and you are rehearsing what to tell your mother.
- You are a dog that is placed in a kennel while your owners go on a weeklong vacation. Describe how you feel and what you are going to do.
- You are a: (Tell of your adventure or situation)

kitchen table	rock	bee
soccer ball	school bus	pencil
book in the library	diving board	mirror
half-eaten sandwich	fluffy pillow	cup
piece of paper	piece of grass	fly

Debates

Debates are an excellent way of involving multiple people in discussing a particular topic that they have researched or learned about and have a strong opinion. To organize a debate, select a topic for the class to

research and discuss the pros and cons of the situation. I have found that relating topics of debates to students' real-life experiences will engage their motivation and curiosity.

Topic ideas for a debate can include:

- Should you be allowed to have an allowance without doing any chores around the house?
- Should the school impose school uniforms?
- Should you have to go to school six days a week?
- Should you have to have a set bedtime on a school night?
- Should the driving age be changed?
- Should you be able watch as much TV as you want to?

Drama

Drama is an exciting and novel area for students. My students just can't wait to act in a play or a skit. Their imaginations and creativity soar when they put on a theatrical production. Even with a small skit, students' enthusiasm overflows.

The benefits of drama experiences are numerous: problem-solving skills are utilized, motivation is increased, and creativity skills are enhanced. Putting on a big production with elaborate costumes and scenery is not necessary. Remember to start small with a play—costumes and props are the last details that should be addressed. The main objective is to enhance problem-solving and thinking skills, while also having fun with acting. Each drama experience will build up the students' level of expertise in acting and confidence. I have even done Shakespeare plays with my fourth graders, which they were excited to do.

Drama Resources Magazine

Plays: The Drama Magazine for Young People, by Sterling Partners, Inc. Their Web site is at www.playsmag.com

Foreign Language

Research has found that younger children can learn a foreign language easier than adults can (Brandt, 1997). Foreign language experiences offer students an excellent learning opportunity. Teachers can provide this experience by utilizing CD-ROMs and online courses or finding individuals to teach foreign language lessons. These individuals can be parents, other foreign language teachers, or even high school students studying a language. Creating an afterschool foreign language club where high school foreign language students teach other younger students benefits all involved. The high school students get practice in their language skills, while the younger students are taught a new language. There are various CD-ROMs that can help teach a foreign language. The following Web site introduces some basic language skills:

Word2Word: Free Online Language Courses, www.word2word.com/course.html

Socratic Seminars

A Socratic seminar is an activity that can be done in a small group or as a whole class. A topic is discussed and ideas are shared, leading learners to really understand the material through questions and discussions. A Socratic seminar can be used to discuss literature, current events, plays, classroom problems, or other situations. Before holding a seminar, students need to be knowledgeable about the topic and know the rules for holding a seminar. The teacher's role in the seminar is to be a facilitator and pose open-ended questions, such as, "Why do you think . . . ?" Teachers should not give their opinion; they should just keep the discussion going.

The rules for a Socratic seminar are:

Students sit in a circle.

Students take turns speaking.

Students don't need to raise their hand when they speak, but one student should not dominate the discussion. Everyone needs to be able to contribute.

Students need to support what they say, using evidence from what they have read or from personal experience.

If students disagree with what someone else has said, they should state what they disagree with and support their viewpoint, based on evidence. This should be done in a nonaggressive way.

Students really enjoy discussing a topic that interests them. After engaging in several Socratic seminars, students can lead the seminar themselves, and you are there simply to pose the discussion question in the beginning of each session. I have done a Socratic seminar with my fourth graders about the play *Romeo and Juliet*. Even though they didn't understand all the Shakespearean nuances, the students acted in a professional manner by adhering to the rules of the Socratic seminar and enjoyed having a discussion without much teacher direction.

Pantomime Activity

The use of body language is a way of communicating. After learning new material or reading a new book, have students create a miming skit that reflects what they learned or describes a character. It's a very challenging task for students to communicate without using words; it helps develop their problem-solving skills as well.

Miscellaneous Ideas for Developing Oral Communication Skills

Tell a Story. Storytelling is an oral tradition of passing stories from generation to generation for entertainment. A unit on storytelling is a good way for students to utilize and improve their communication skills.

Publish a Piece of Writing. Various publishers and Web sites give students a chance to get their own writing published. Following are some places to have students' works published:

Stone Soup
Submissions Department
P.O. Box 83
Santa Cruz, CA 95063
www.stonesoup.com

Skipping Stones
P.O. Box 3939
Eugene, OR 97403-0939
www.skippingstones.org/submissions.htm

Games. Everyone likes to play games. Many games, including Pictionary, Charades, and Twenty Questions, help students practice their communication skills. These are games that students will enjoy while they interact with others.

Listening Activities. Listening is very important in everyday life in order to be successful. Listening games such as Simon Says and Repeat After Me offer practice in listening skills.

Poems, Jokes, and Riddles. The last five minutes of class can be devoted to sharing poems, jokes, or riddles that students have created.

Investigate the Writing Style of Various Authors and Genres. Select a variety of authors and genres to read to the class. You can give a book talk about a particular book to pique students' interest or introduce a new author or genre.

Create a Newspaper for Important Issues. Students design a school newspaper about the happenings around the school and the community. You can discuss the importance of the jobs of reporters, printers, and editorial staff.