



Below you will find the Goals and Standards for each activity presented in the “Catch Up” with John Smith” language arts section of the Teachers’ Lounge at www.missmaggie.org . Here we offer you some tips, suggestions and extension ideas for each activity. You will also find an answer key if appropriate. Note many of the answers to the language arts activities will vary. While the activities presented are designed to be self-guided, we hope you will choose to expand on some of the topics presented through these extension ideas. Have some ideas of your own? Please feel free to share and we will post them here. Contact our Project Coordinator, Jessica Mocarski at Jessica@missmaggie.org

“Swimming with Crabs”

Goals and Standards:

Children will read a graphic organizer containing notes about the Blue Crab. Intermediate children are given a four-square organizer to help them write a five paragraph essay using the information. Primary children use the four-square organizer to write an informational paragraph about one of the components of the Blue Crab’s life. Specific directions are given for teachers along with helpful classroom tips. The activity correlates with the IRA/NCTE Standard, “Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.”

Tips

- After children complete the chart have them read it, beginning with the middle rectangle (topic sentence). Continue reading in numerical order around the square. This will help students to hear their words and make any necessary “edits” before writing in final form.

Primary Level:

- Instruct children NOT to begin their topic sentence with “I will write about.”
- Encourage children to use good transition words. Make a class chart of good examples.
- Perhaps you will want to have children add a concluding sentence to their paragraph. (I encourage this!)

- Be sure to have children read their paragraphs orally. Primary children are quite good at finding their own errors if they hear them. I even suggest using plumbing pipe for children to read into. This helps them hear each word and has the added benefit of cutting down on class noise!

Intermediate Level:

- Tell children that each square should be indented to make the five paragraph essay.
- Encourage children to go back and put in good transition words to make their essay “flow” (i.e. Finally, Amazingly, etc.). You may want to make a class chart of these words.

“Chesapeake Scramble”

Goals and Standards:

Students will learn about animals that live in the Chesapeake Bay region by putting letter tiles together. This activity correlates with the National English/Language Arts Standards dealing with Applying Knowledge: Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation). This activity is available on both the primary and intermediate levels.

Something to think about when reviewing this activity:

- Do they use information about digraphs and blends to help them put tiles together? Do they think through various long vowel patterns to help them? Children who have a firm grasp of phonics patterns, including how syllables are put together will likely have an easier time with this type of puzzle activity.

Extension ideas:

- Encourage your students to do research about other areas of the Chesapeake Bay (or a body of water where you live) and have them to construct their own tile activity.
- Use tiles as part of your spelling program. Children are often asked to write sentences using each of their spelling words. Why not make this activity more exciting by having students put their sentences into tiles, trade papers, and figure out the sentences of others?

Answer Key (Intermediate Activity):

The first sample tile sentence is:

Kuma fed Dude.

Other sentences should read:

- A. Oysters filter water.

- B. Bald eagles live in pine trees.
- C. Sandbar sharks swim in the Bay.
- D. Loggerhead turtles visit the lower Bay.
- E. Warm weather brings jellyfish to the Bay.
- F. Dolphins come to the Bay from the Atlantic Ocean.

Answer Key (Primary Activity):

The first sample tile sentence is:

Kuma fed Dude.

Other sentences should read:

- G. Oysters filter water.
- H. Bald eagles live in pine trees.
- I. Sandbar sharks swim in the Bay.

“A Trip to St. Michaels”

Goals and Standards

Students will read five journal entries about St. Michaels, Maryland. They will exhibit their understanding of the journal text by illustrating each entry. This activity is available on the intermediate and primary levels. A companion emergent activity is also available. The activity correlates with the IRA/NCTE Standard, “Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).”

Tips:

- Reinforce the idea that good readers visualize what the text is saying.
- Talk about this comprehension-building strategy with your students. Point out that this is what good readers do...and the picture doesn't have to be “right.”
- When we see the pictures in our heads, greater comprehension results.
- Have children draw their pictures and then share them with fellow students. Ask students to explain why they drew the picture in a certain way. This is a wonderful key to understanding individual thought processes.
- Encourage students to keep a detailed journal of their travels.

“Log Canoes: A Chesapeake Bay Tradition”

Goals and Standards

Students will read a conversation about log canoe racing on the Chesapeake Bay. Follow-up questions highlight how to glean facts from a fictional

conversation. Higher-order thinking skills requiring analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are asked. The activity is available on the primary and intermediate levels. A companion emergent reader activity is also available. This activity correlates with the IRA/NCTE Standard, “Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works” and with the National Social Studies Standards: Culture and People, Places and Environment.

Tips:

Visit the official website of the Chesapeake Bay Log Sailing Canoe Association at <http://www.logcanoes.com/> for more information.

- Discuss the correct writing of conversation before sending children off to write their stories.
- Use of quotation marks, commas, and paragraphing
- Try a discovery technique such as saying, “What do you notice the author did when a new person spoke?” This will help to draw their attention to the “rules” in a way that we know is likely to result in true learning.
- Get away from the red pen. Put on an editor’s hat and tell students you are working for them.