



Becoming a Writing Thief

Using Mentor Texts to Teach Writing

ILearn 2014
Shirley Barclay

Agenda

- Reading and Writing Together
- Be a Writing Thief
- Mentor Texts
- Writing is a Journey
- Does and Don'ts
- The 4 Ws of Writing
- Examples of Mentor Texts
- Activity Time
- Writing Rubrics from Ministry
- Accessing Materials



Reading and Writing Together

At the same table



Reading and Writing Together

- “Weaving the two literacy giants of reading and writing into one tapestry is not only creative and enjoyable way to teach but also immensely beneficial.” – Ruth Culham – page 19 The Writing Thief
- Writers need to be avid readers so they fully understand how great writing is constructed and the impact it can have on the reader
- The close reading of a mentor text is where reading and writing intersect
- Look at reading through the eyes of a writer

Reading and Writing Together

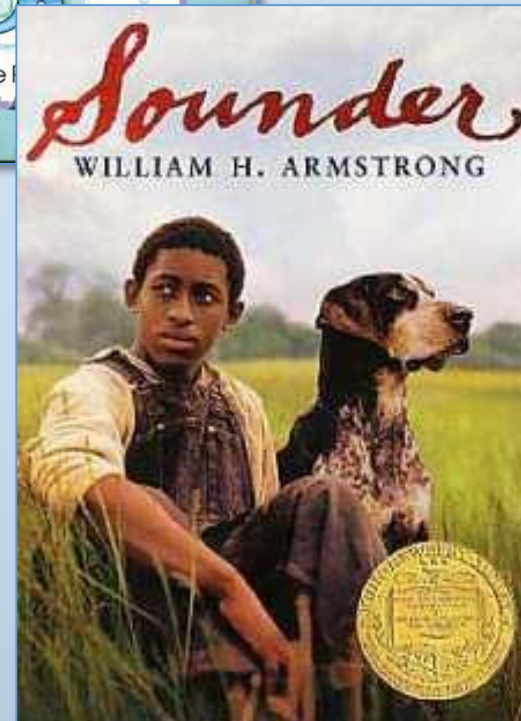
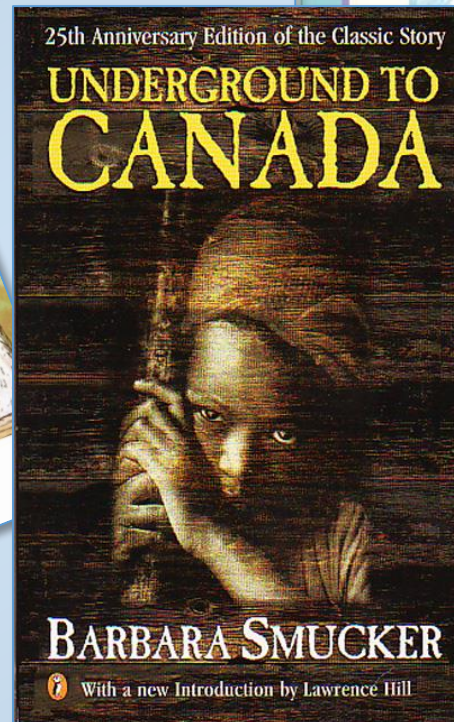
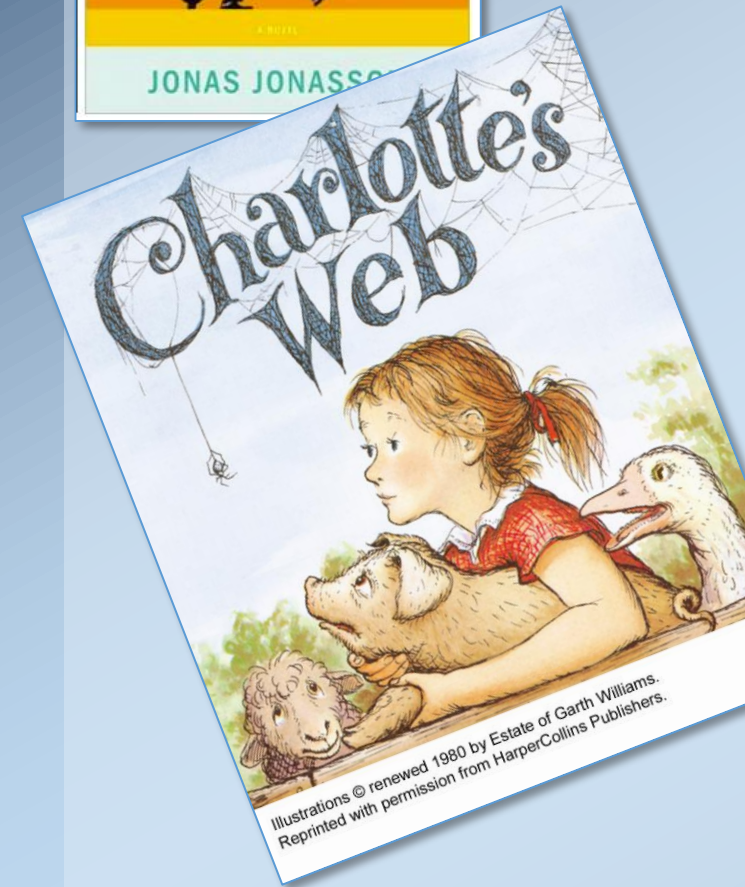
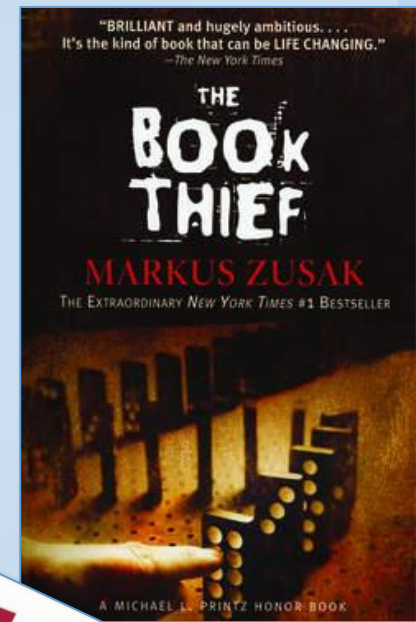
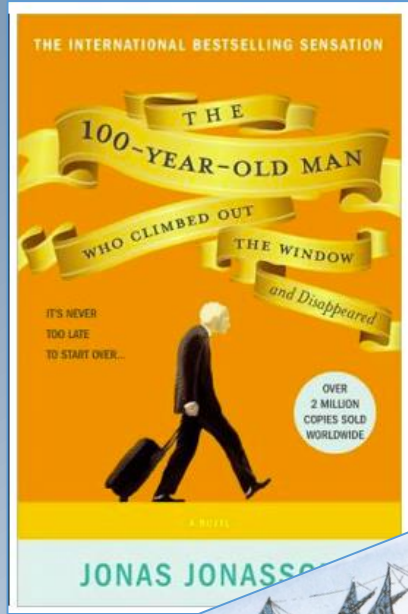
- Students must read, think about, and discuss the different aspects of mentor texts in order to think about and revise their own writing
- Encourage students not only to be readers, but to be re-readers of great literature!
- Why we reread books over and over – “It hasn’t finished teaching me yet.”
- EAL connection – by using reading to teach writing, students who are unfamiliar with English will benefit by becoming stronger readers and writers

Reading and Writing Together

- “Reading is like breathing in and writing is like breathing out.” – Pam Allyn – educational writer and researcher
- Find books that are “hug worthy”



Your "Hug-Worthy" Books



Be a Writing Thief

Model the Unforgettable



Be a Writing Thief

- In the words of T.S. Eliot



**“GOOD WRITERS
BORROW, GREAT
WRITERS STEAL.”**

Be a Writing Thief



- Encourage students to become “Writing Thieves”
- Ruth Culham suggests that we pickpocket our way through the world of print and non-print as writers, not just readers. Be a cat burglar of great writing. Bring the great treasures you find into your teaching and learning
- Use things that jump out at you, that are unforgettable
- When you get excited by something an author writes about or the way they write it – steal bit of it in the hope that you can improve your own writing – **BE A WRITING THIEF!**

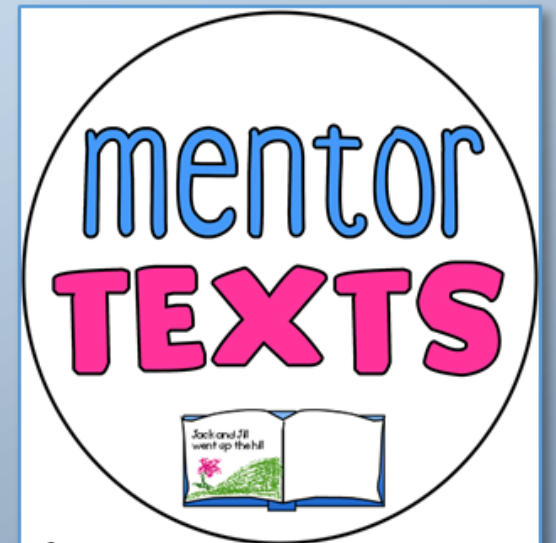
Mentor Texts

The Sky's the Limit!



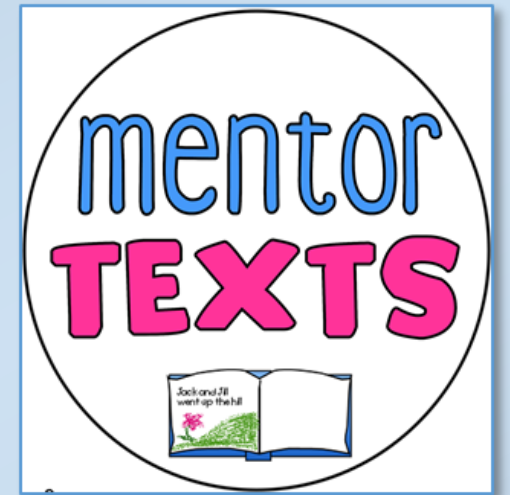
Mentor Texts

- If the text leaves you with the feeling of excitement, emotion or thrill – it is a great mentor text!
- A mentor text – any text, print or digital, that you can read with a writer's eye.
- We can use whatever catches our eye as a mentor text:
 - books
 - Signs
 - menus
 - brochures
 - websites
 - advertisements
 - e-mails
 - blogs
 - TV show
 - plays
 - song lyric



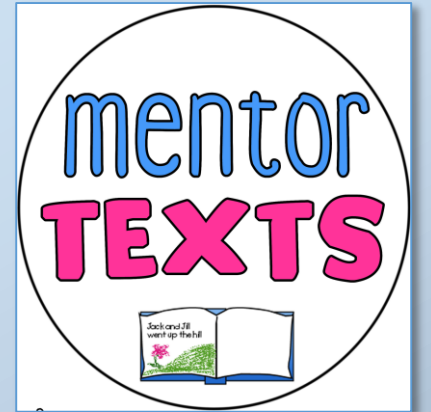
Mentor Texts

- Discovered by you or the students
- Something that you or your students love
- Like double-dipping – using the style of another writer and applying it to your own writing
- May vary from year to year
- Must spark our writer's curiosity and be studied for their techniques
- Dig below the surface to notice the moves the writer makes so those moves can be replicated



Mentor Texts

- Texts rather than worksheets to help students understand writing more deeply
- Places to find lists of mentor texts:
 - List of books for teaching each trait – on writing wiki
 - The Writing Thief – Ruth Culham
- Lists of books are only a spring board, a launch pad of what to look for and what to try
- **Texts are the glue that binds reading and writing processes together.**



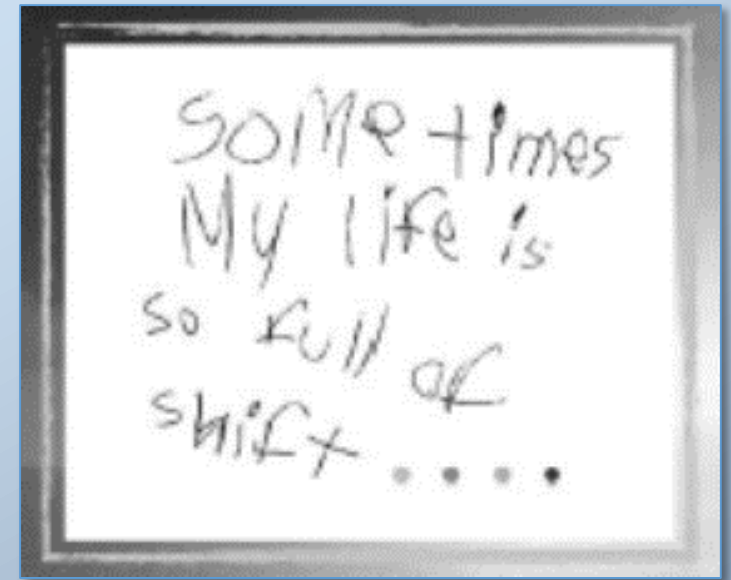
Writing is a Journey

Not the destination!



Writing is the Journey

- Writing is a journey, not a destination. It involves a constant state of learning.
- Shift our thinking from the good strategies that we use to teach writing to even better ones.
- A fourth grade student's view of shift:



Writing is the Journey

- Writing is messy
- “Writing isn’t diamond cutting, where there can be no allowances for mistakes: it’s a recursive process built on trial and error. Each step in the direction of clarity moves us closer to good writing.” – Ruth Culham



Does and Don'ts

Put Away the “Red” Pen!



Does and Don'ts



- **Don't** “prescribe” how to write
- **Do** look at published pieces of fiction and non-fiction and draw conclusions about how writing is structured.
- **Do** show students what they are doing right in their writing
- **Do** nudge them to make one specific change at a time. Don't swamp them. Give them a chance to learn one thing well, and then tackle the next area when it's time to move on.
- Assessment – **Do** zero in on one thing at a time

Does and Don'ts

- Big Things Not to Do:
 - Dwell on test preparation
 - Mark paper for every possible thing that could be corrected or improved
 - Teach writing as an isolated subject that consists mostly of grammar and other conventional practices



Does and Don'ts

- Authors are the coaches that are sitting by our sides as we write
- They coax, nudge, teach, question, urge and prod – even if they aren't in the same room!



The 4 Ws of Writing

Putting the Pieces Together





The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Process

Writing Traits

Writing Workshop

Writing Modes

The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Process

– How writing is created

The Writing Process



The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Traits – How writing is crafted



Key Qualities for Each Writing Trait

Effective Sentence Writing

6+1 Traits of Writing

Ideas

Organization

Word Choice

Voice

Sentence Fluency

Conventions

Presentation

The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Workshop – How the classroom operates

- A structure/series of routines for organizing time, resources and interaction in the classroom
- Encourages active, student-centered writing activities in which students (on their own and collaboratively with others and the teacher) make decisions about what will be written
- Built on the writing process model

Writer's
Workshop



The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Workshop – How the classroom operates

- Teacher's role – confer, nudge, support, offer feedback
- No “one size fits all” – as different as you and your students
- Safe environment to take writing risks
- Be cross-curricular

Writer's
Workshop



The 4 Ws of Writing



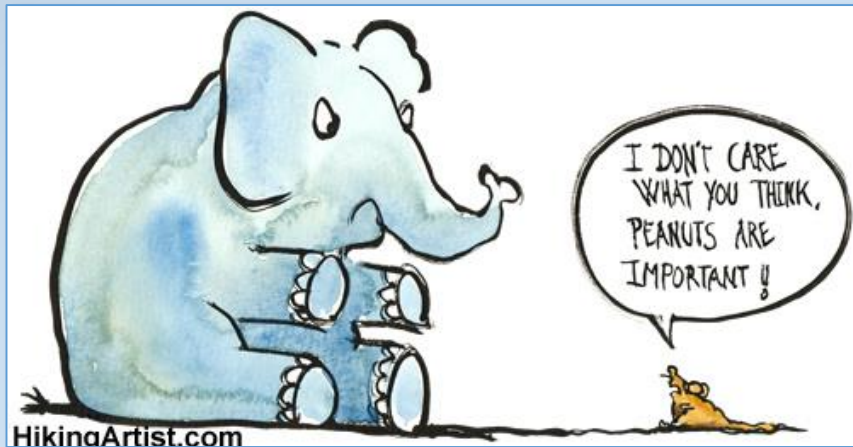
Writing Modes – The different purposes for writing

- The purpose of the writing
- Influence how each of the traits operates within the text
- Need to focus on the modes of writing right along with the traits
- The traits are present in every form of writing, but they take on a particular spin based on the purpose or mode of the writing
- Mentor texts should show strength in the traits, and they must be exemplars of mode as well
- Traits are the how, modes are the what

The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Modes – The different purposes for writing

- Informational Writing
- Narrative Writing
- Argument Writing



Narrative Writing

Narrative: A story or report on something that happened.

Writing: to be an author of or to form letters, words, or symbols on paper, or some other surface.

Narrative Writing: To be the author of a story or report about something that has happened.

How do I write an informational piece?

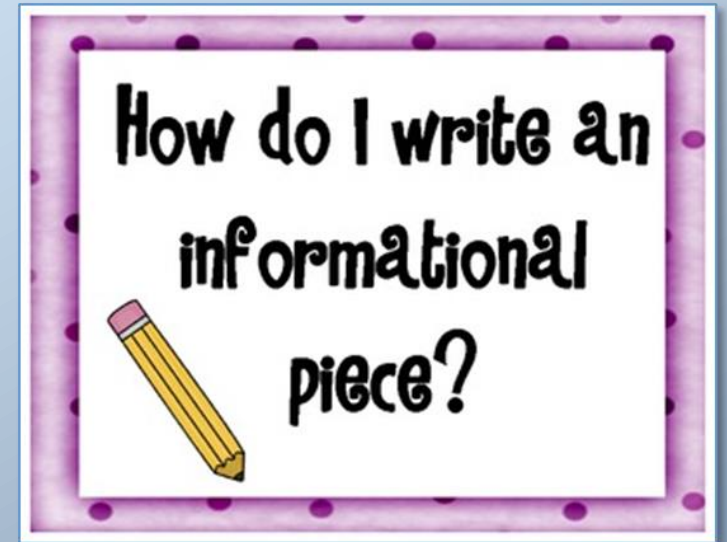
A yellow pencil with a pink eraser and a sharpened lead tip, pointing towards the text.

The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Modes – The different purposes for writing

Informational writing

- to explain, describe or inform the reader about the subject in such a way that is credible, clear and captivating
- Should not read like a textbook or an encyclopedia entry
- It should read like literature.
- It should be literature

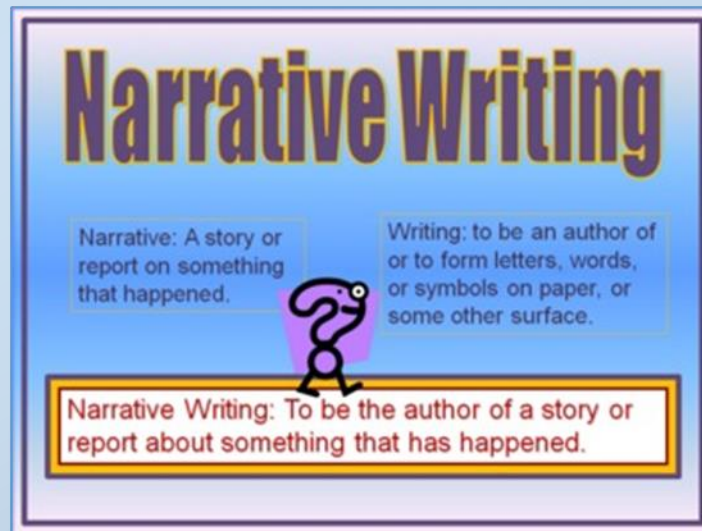


The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Modes – The different purposes for writing

Narrative Writing –

- the structure of fiction or non-fiction events
- the architectural design of the story or series of stories that are often open-ended

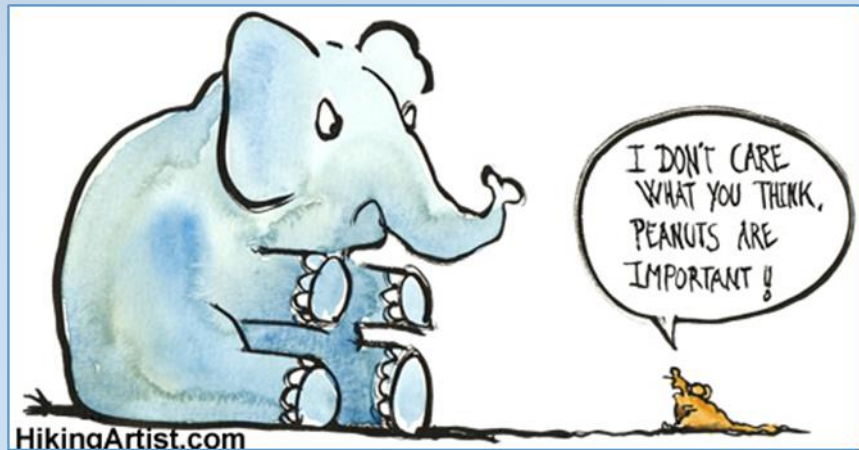


The 4 Ws of Writing

Writing Modes – The different purposes for writing

Argument Writing –

- a very specific form of persuasive writing
- draws on the critical thinking that is essential to logic - the argument's core



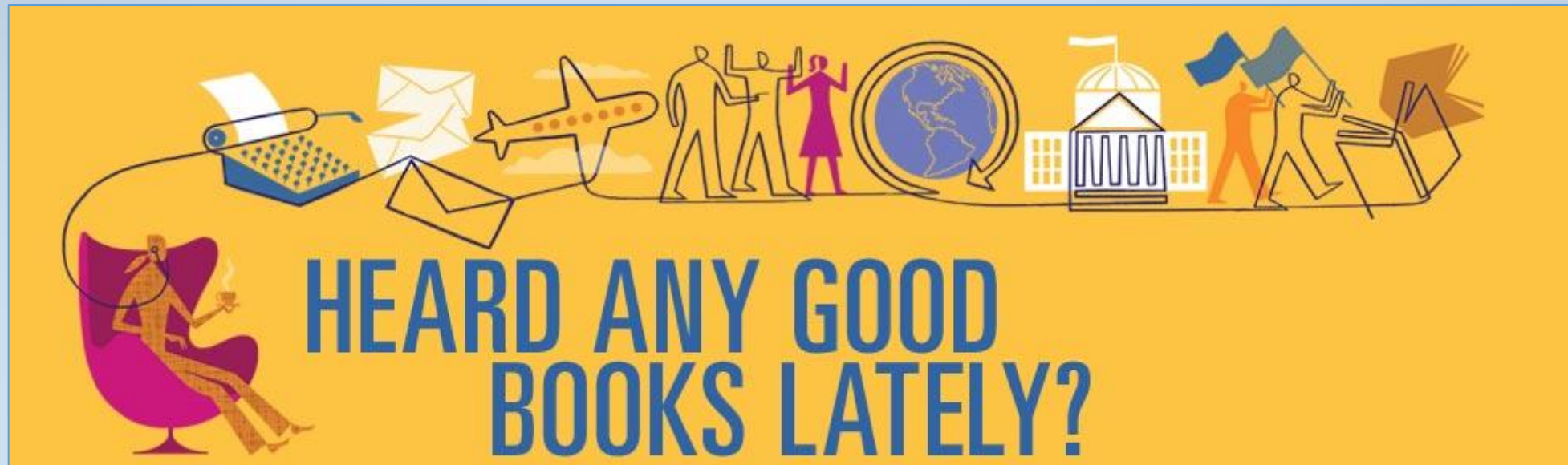
Examples

Mentor Texts are Everywhere!



Examples of Mentor Texts

- Turn to books that the students and teachers love
- There are passages on every page that are worth studying for some quality of writing.



Examples of Mentor Texts

Writing Observations



I'M A WRITING "THIEF"

Name: _____ Mentor text: _____

Why I chose this text:

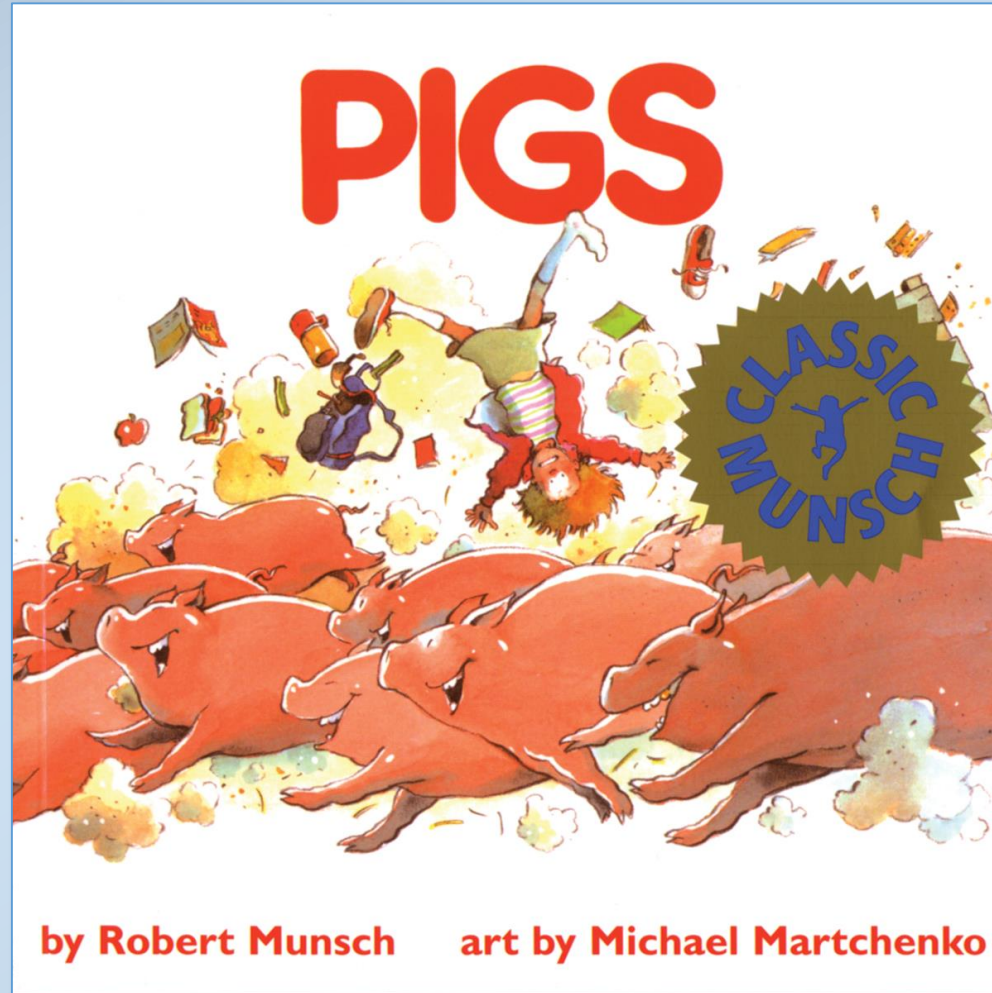
The writing quality this mentor text demonstrates: (my writing observation)

The part I want to share: (write the section out or attach a copy)

Date to share with the class: (to be completed in consultation with the teacher) _____

Examples of Mentor Texts

Organization

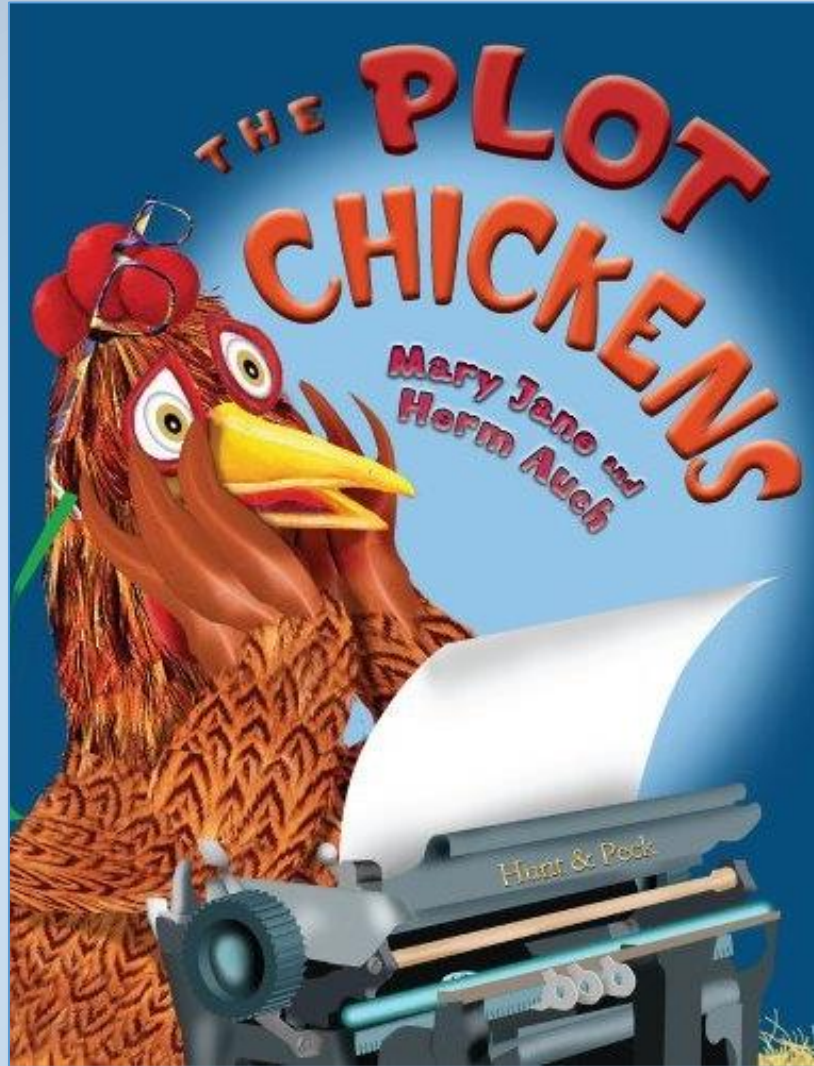


Examples of Mentor Texts

Writing Rules

Humour

Puns



Examples of Mentor Texts

Voice



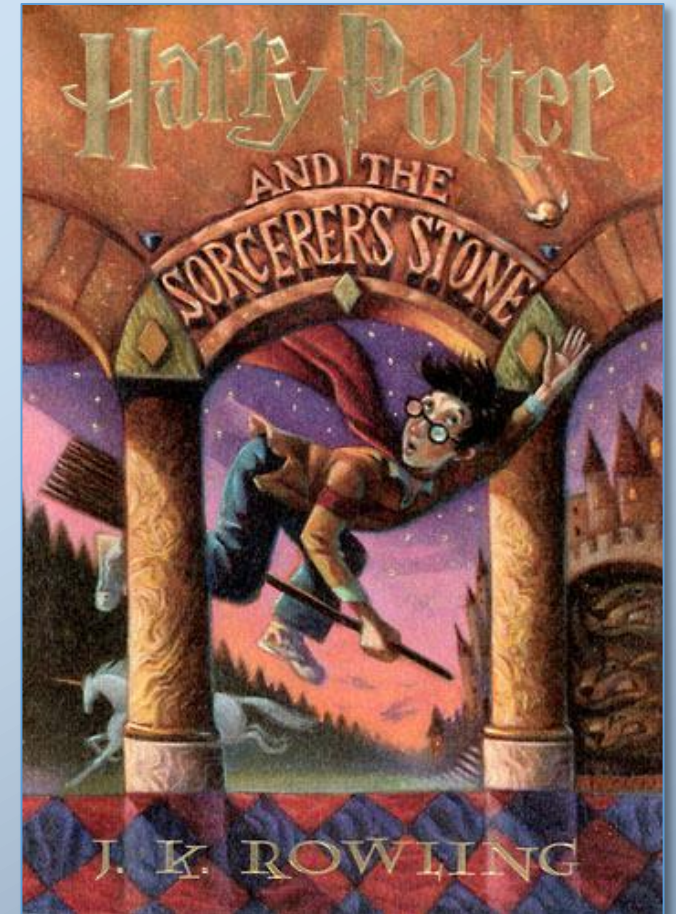
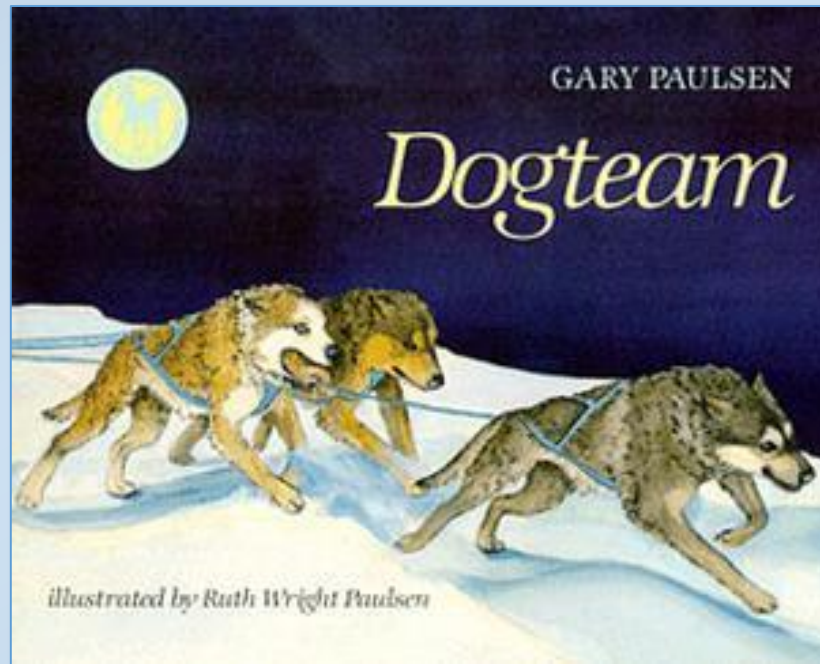
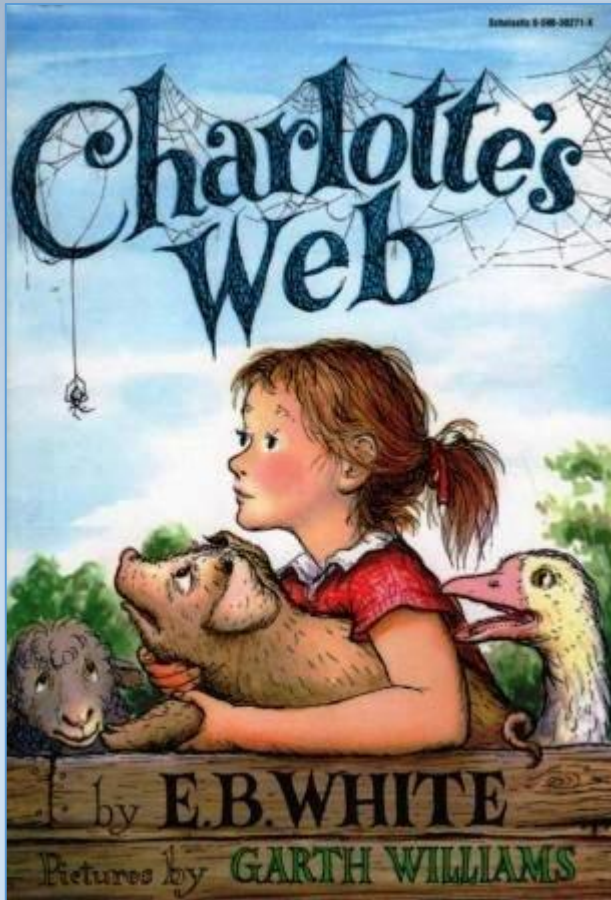
Examples of Mentor Texts

Opinion Writing – Pig or Wolf?



Examples of Mentor Texts

Sentence Fluency



Examples of Mentor Texts



Effective Sentence Writing - How do the masters do it?		
	From the mentor text	From my writing
First word in each sentence		
Number of words in each sentence		
Verb used in each sentence		
End of sentence punctuation		

Examples of Mentor Texts

Word Choice

Menu that mouth-wateringly describes a hamburger

Gourmet Burgers & more

All burgers, sandwiches & wraps are served with your choice of tasty soup, fresh tossed salad or crispy fries.

Gourmet Burgers

We use only the freshest & finest ingredients available to our kitchen. Both our tasty lean beef patties & our tender chicken breast are grilled to perfection & nestled in a toasted sesame seed bun.

Muggn'z Cheddar Burger 8.99
Melted Canadian cheddar cheese topped with red onions, lettuce & tomato.

Bacon & Cheddar Burger 9.99
Melted Canadian cheddar cheese topped with freshly grilled bacon.

Mushroom & Swiss Burger 9.99
Just like my good friend Hans remembers, freshly sautéed mushrooms smothered with Swiss cheese.

Whiskey Jack Burger 9.99
Whiskey BBQ sauce, back bacon & Monterey jack cheese.

Champion Burger 11.49
Our burger all dressed up with bacon, ham, mushrooms, mozza & Canadian cheddar.

Vegetarian Burger 9.99
Mushroom-based veggie burger is 97% fat free! Just like our other burger creations only with a meatless patty that is also topped with freshly sautéed mushrooms!

Chicken Club Burger 10.99
Freshly grilled chicken breast topped with ham, bacon, Monterey jack cheese, lettuce & tomato.

Thunder Crunch Chicken Burger 9.99
Breaded chicken breast filet covered in a crunchy coating with lettuce & mayo. It's the thunder-crunchiest!
• (Buffalo style? No problem, no extra charge!)

Honey Crunch Chicken & Cheese 10.99
Breaded chicken breast filet smothered in a honey mustard sauce & two cheeses.

Wraps

Taco Wrap 8.99
Spicy ground beef mixed with diced tomato, lettuce, salsa, sour cream & cheese then wrapped in a tomato tortilla.

Chicken Wrap 8.99
Tender strips of chicken breast mixed with diced tomato, lettuce, mayo & cheese wrapped in a tomato tortilla.

Substitute side Caesar Salad 2.49
Substitute side onion rings 1.99
Substitute side of Poutine 2.99



Examples of Mentor Texts

Voice

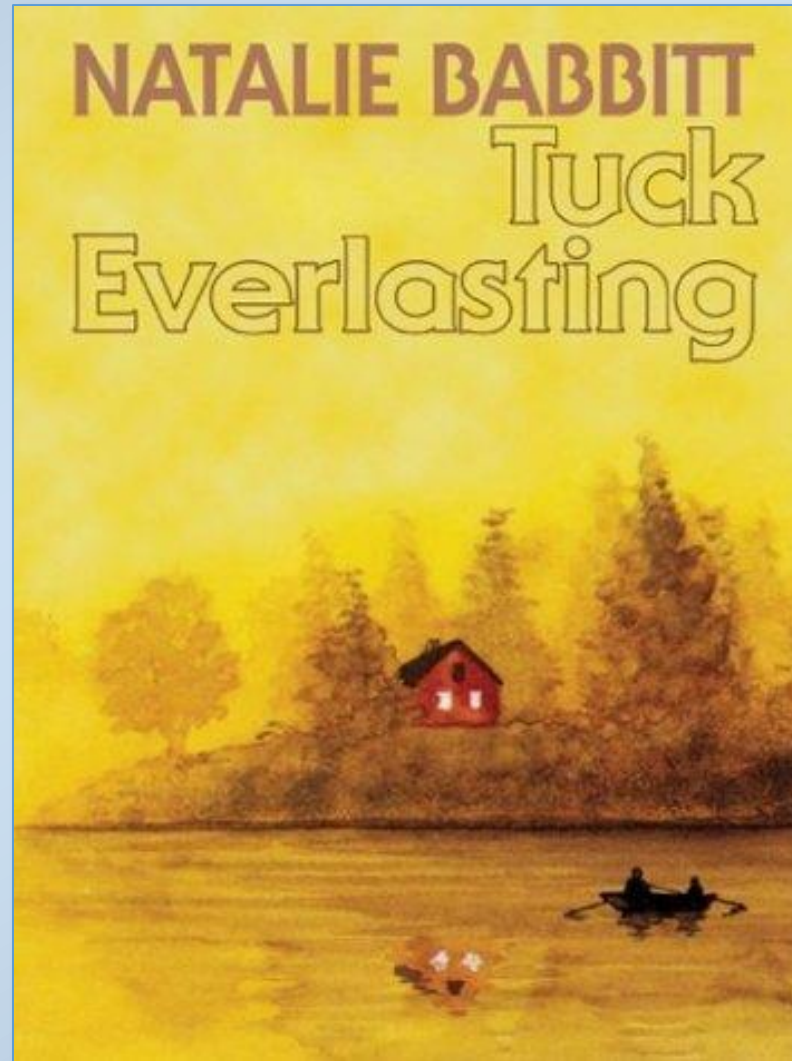
Sign on the side of a pizza delivery vehicle



Examples of Mentor Texts

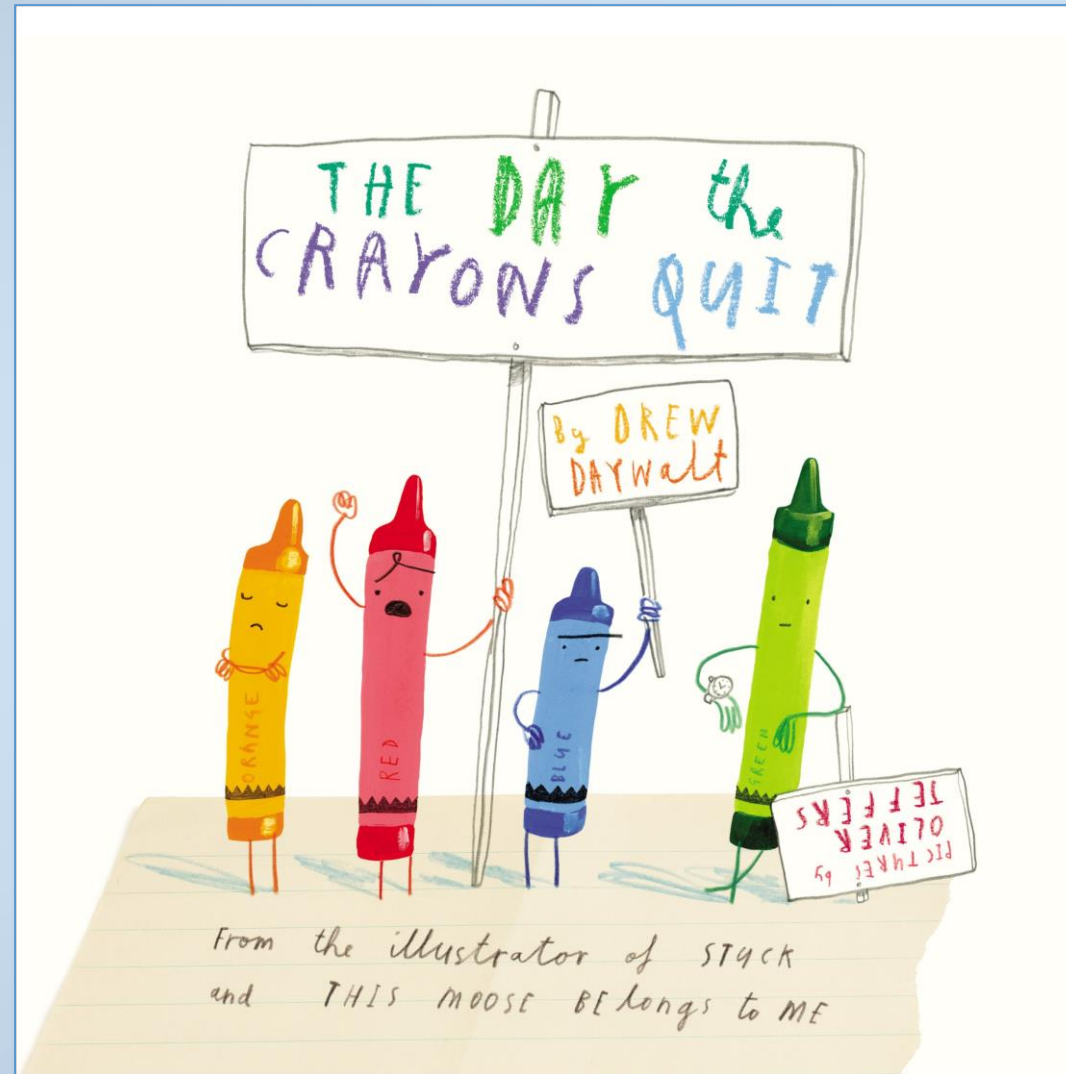
Sensory Imagery

Powerful Leads



Examples of Mentor Texts

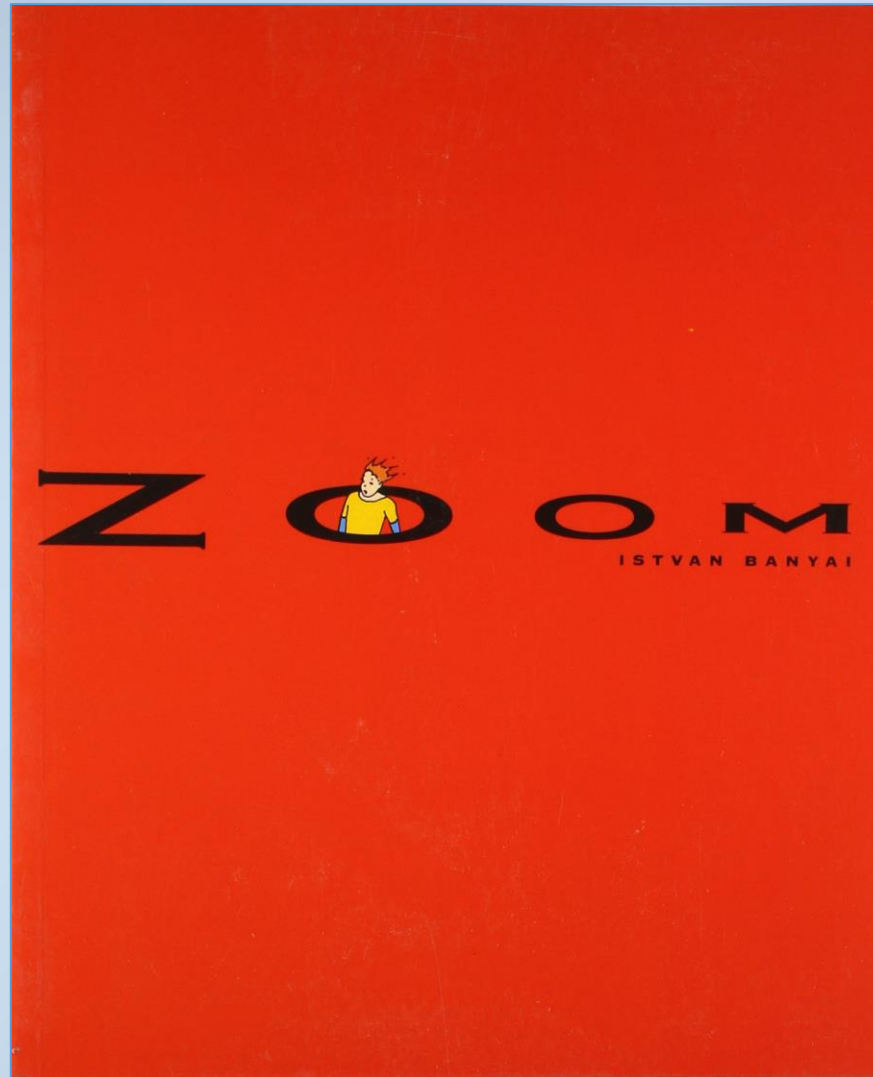
Argument Writing



Examples of Mentor Texts

Sequencing

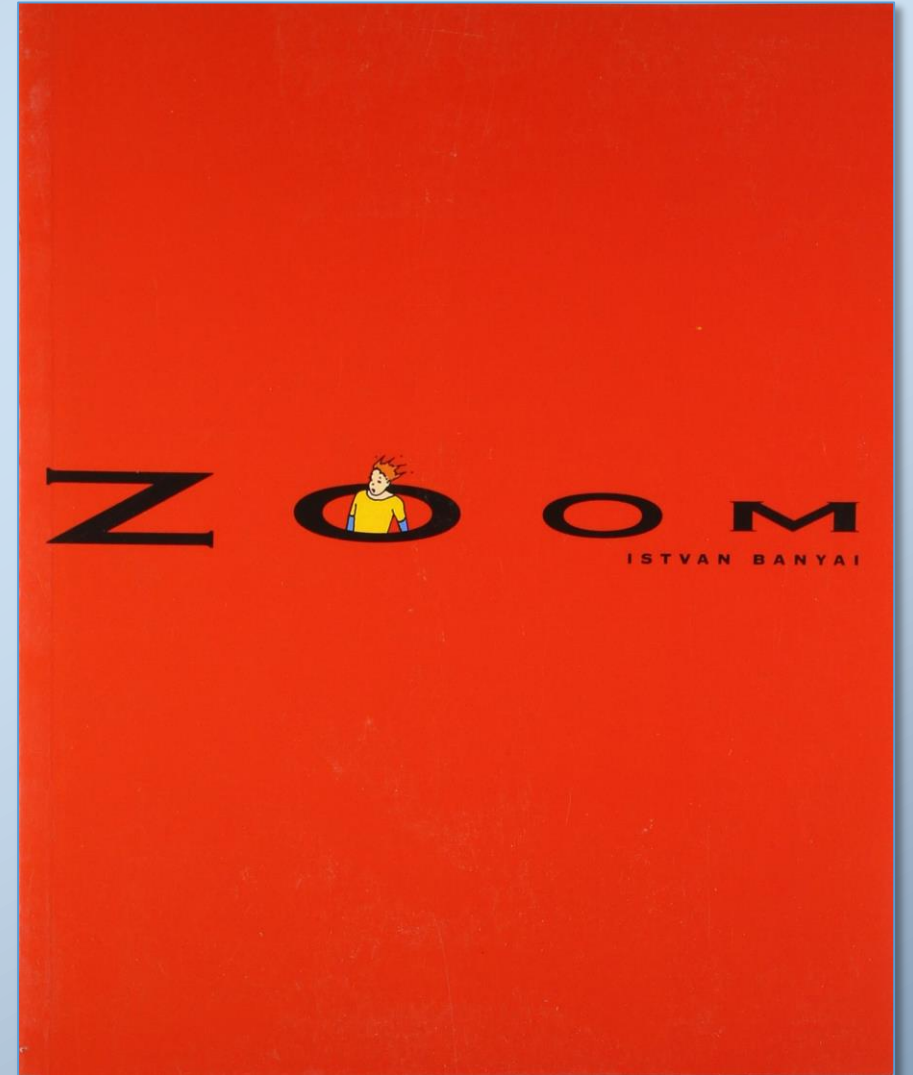
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Examples of Mentor Texts

Sequencing

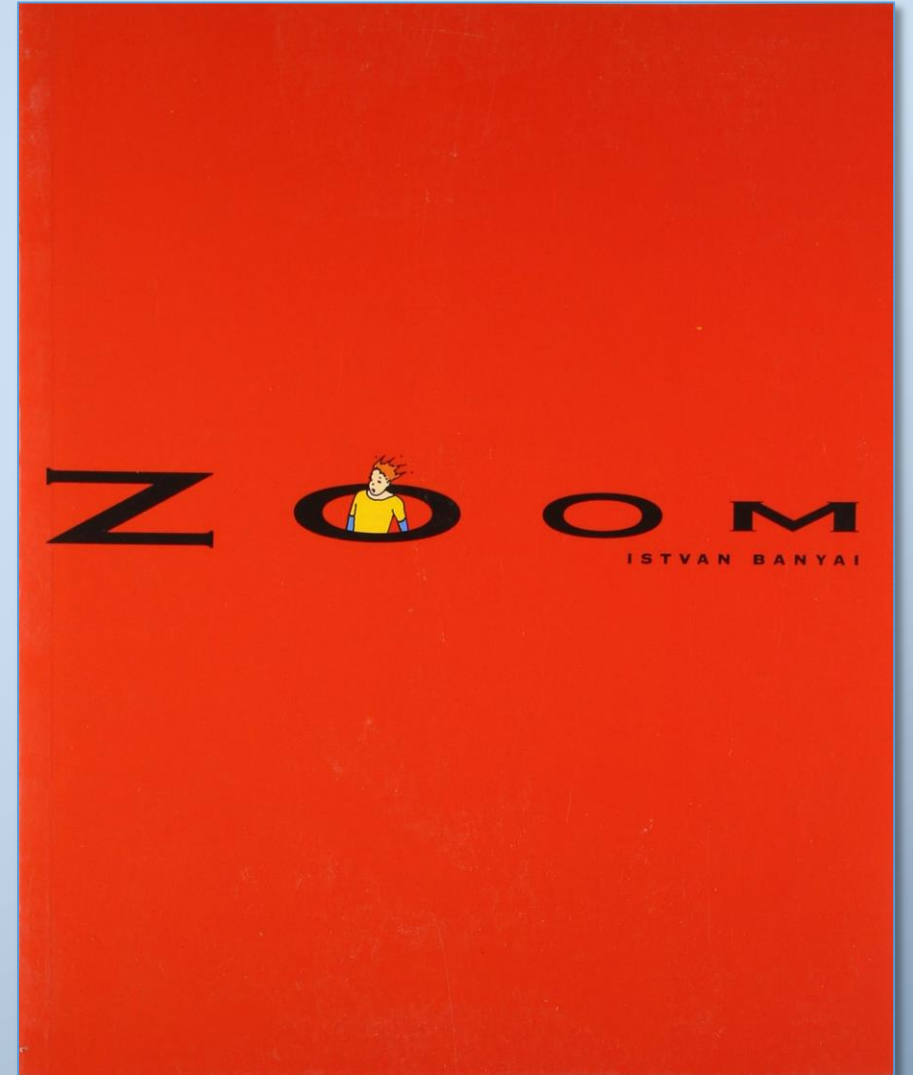
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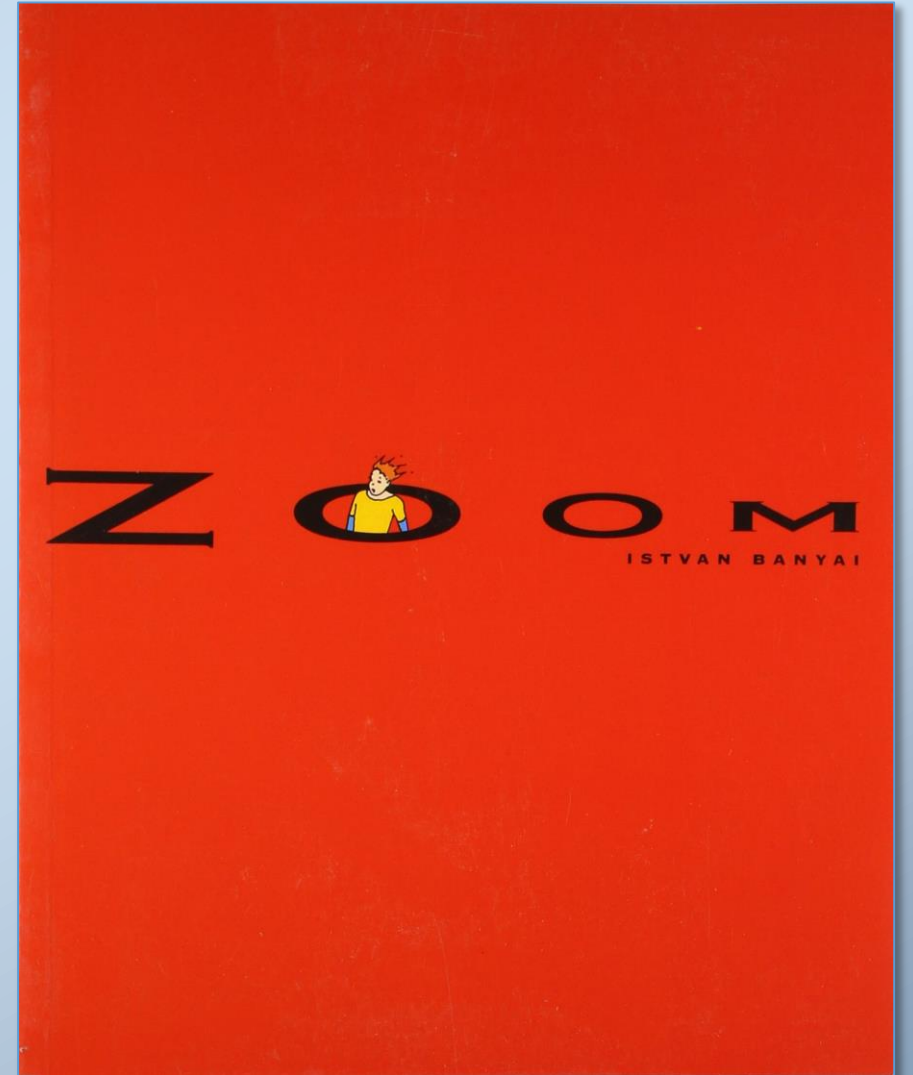
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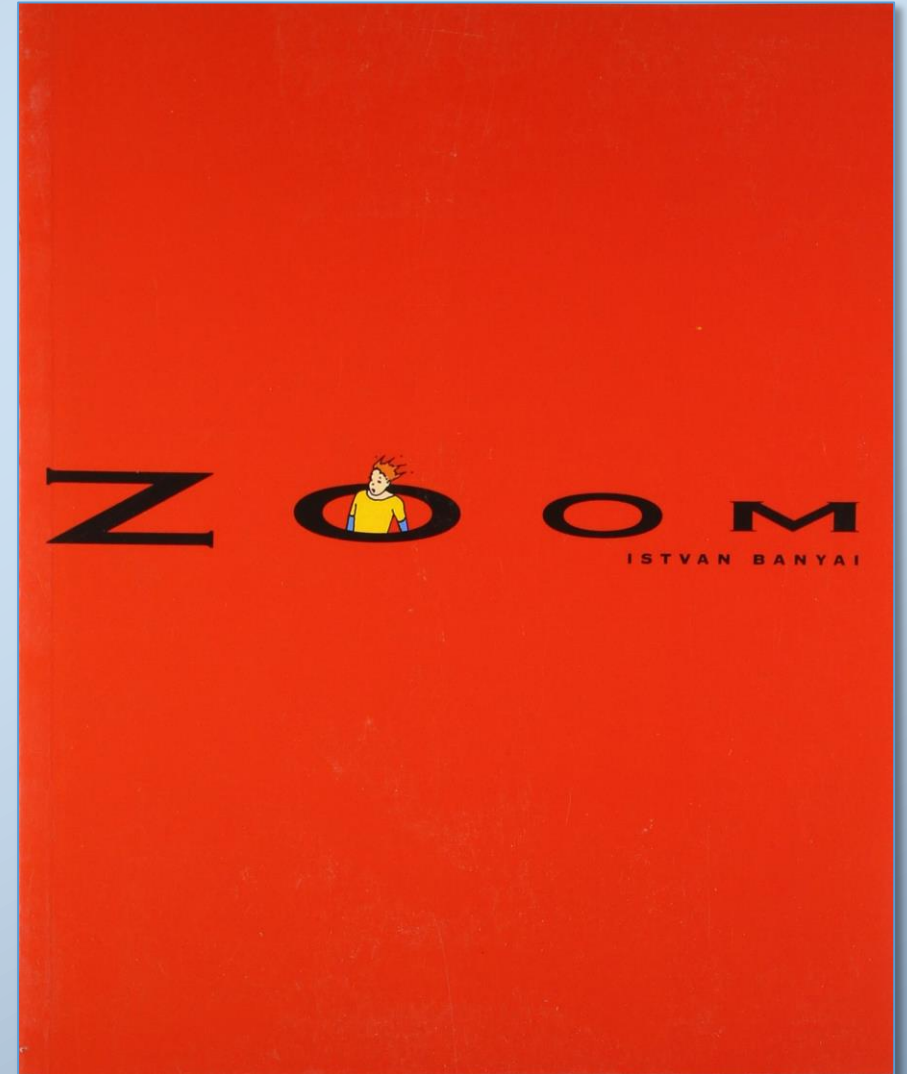
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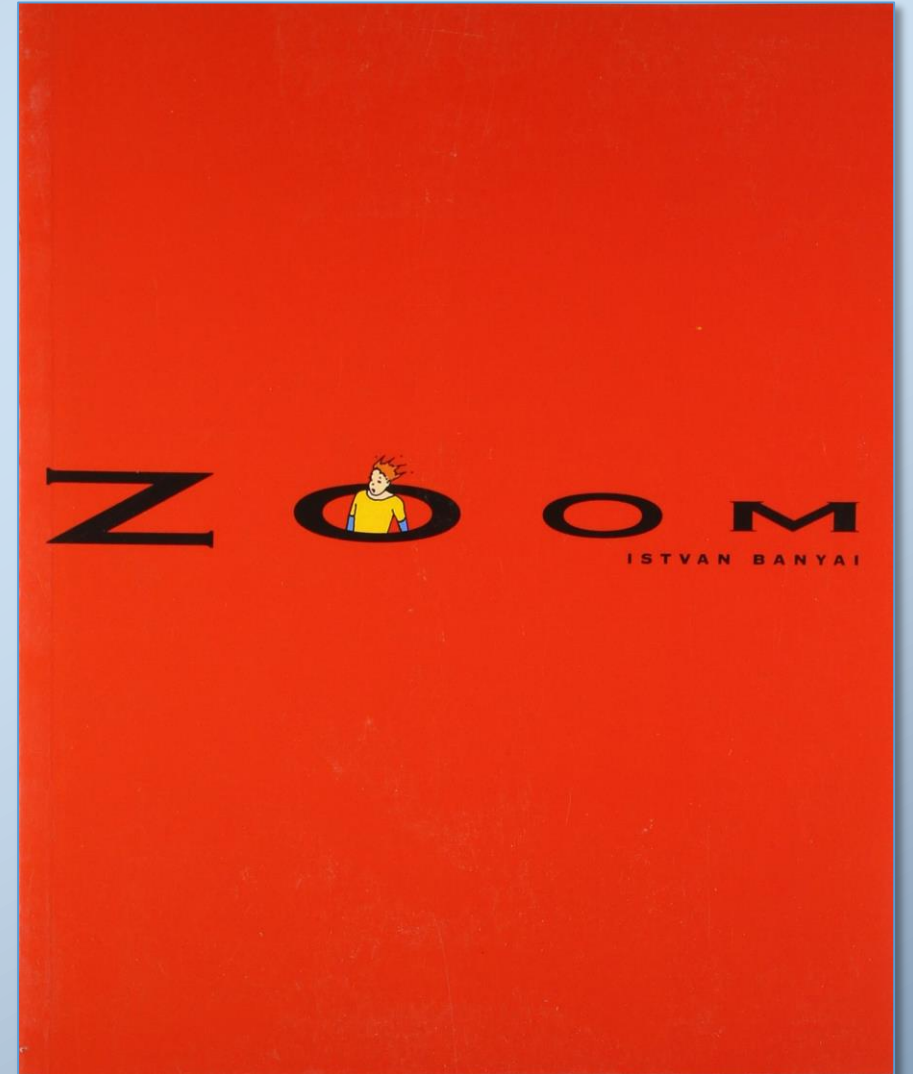
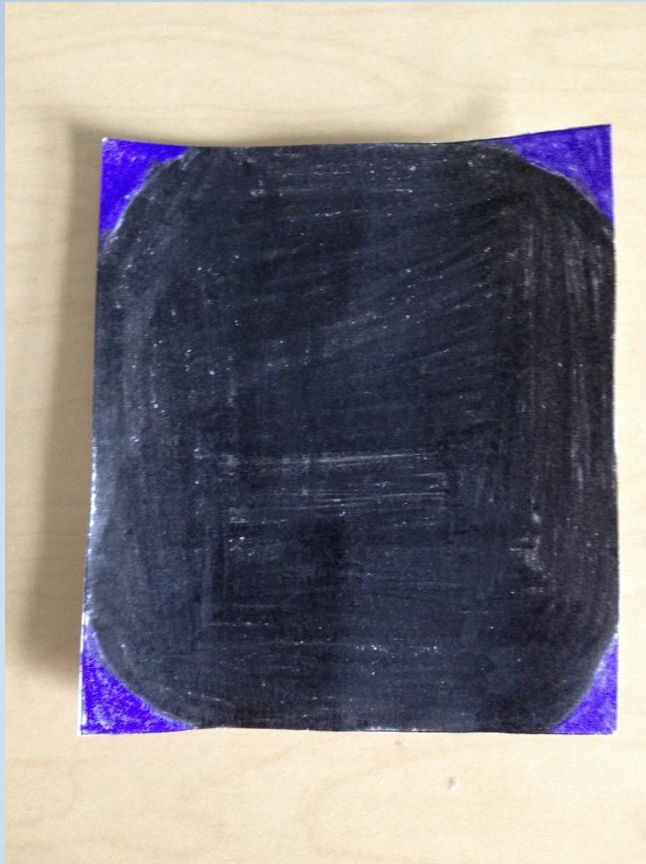
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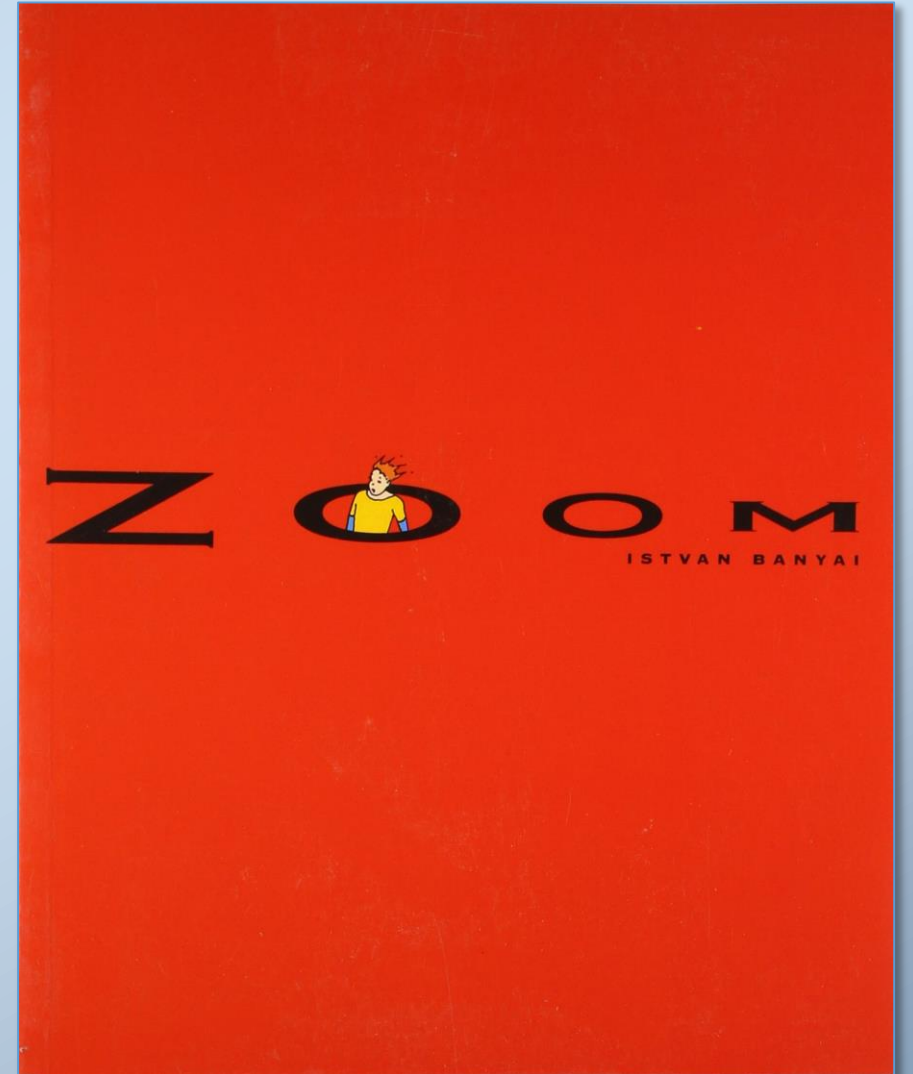
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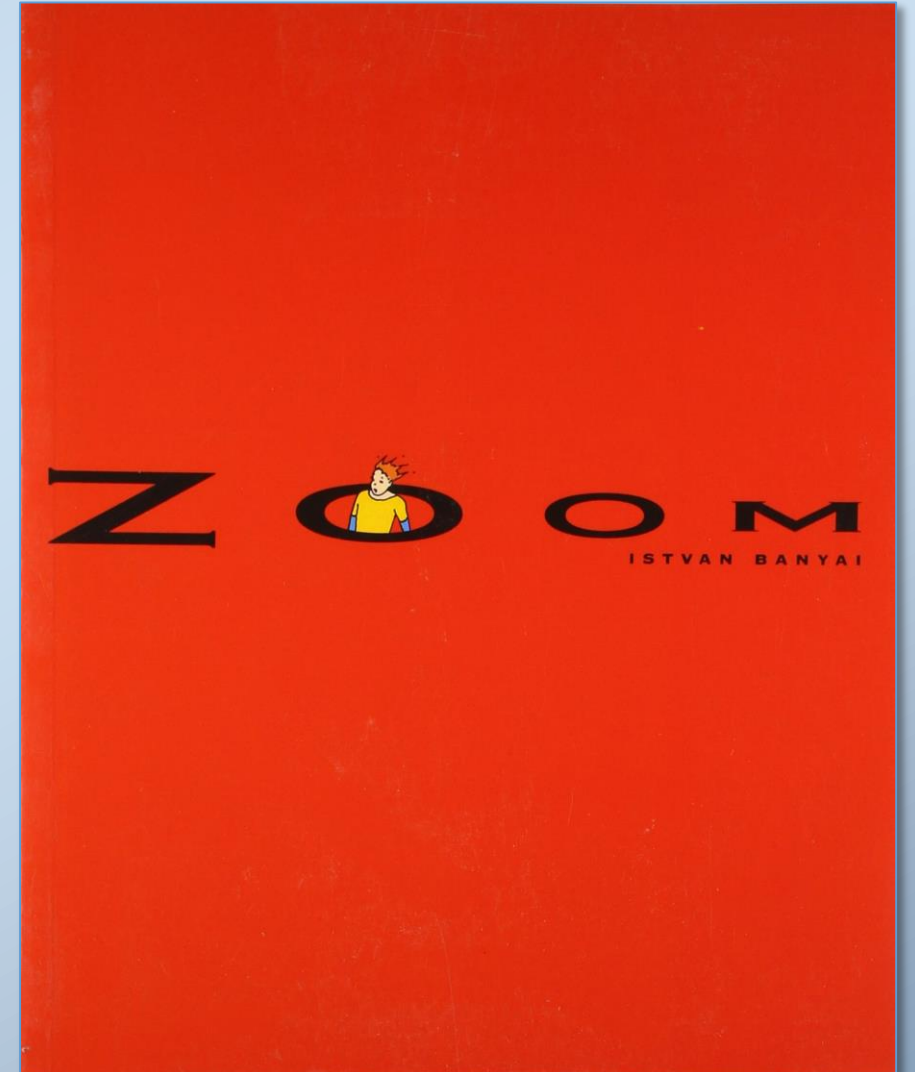
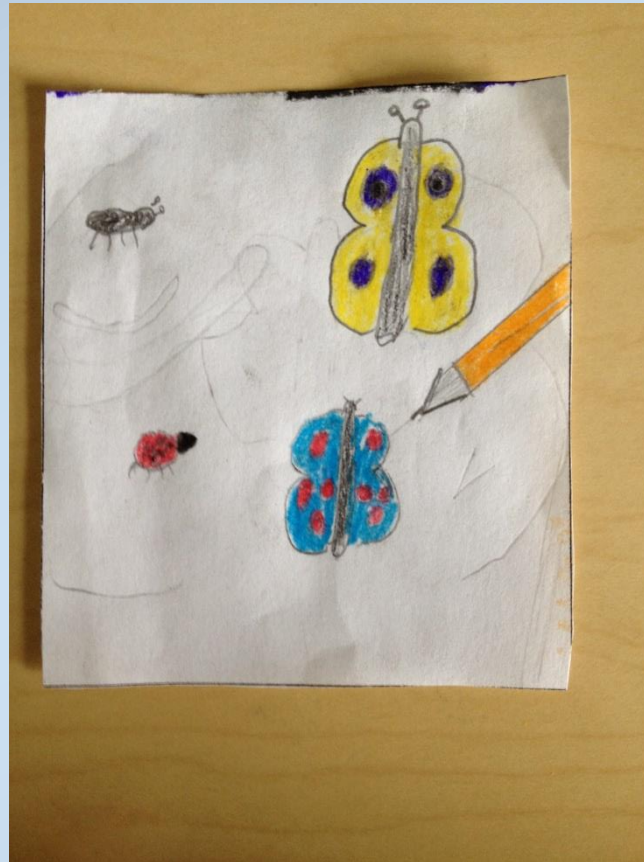
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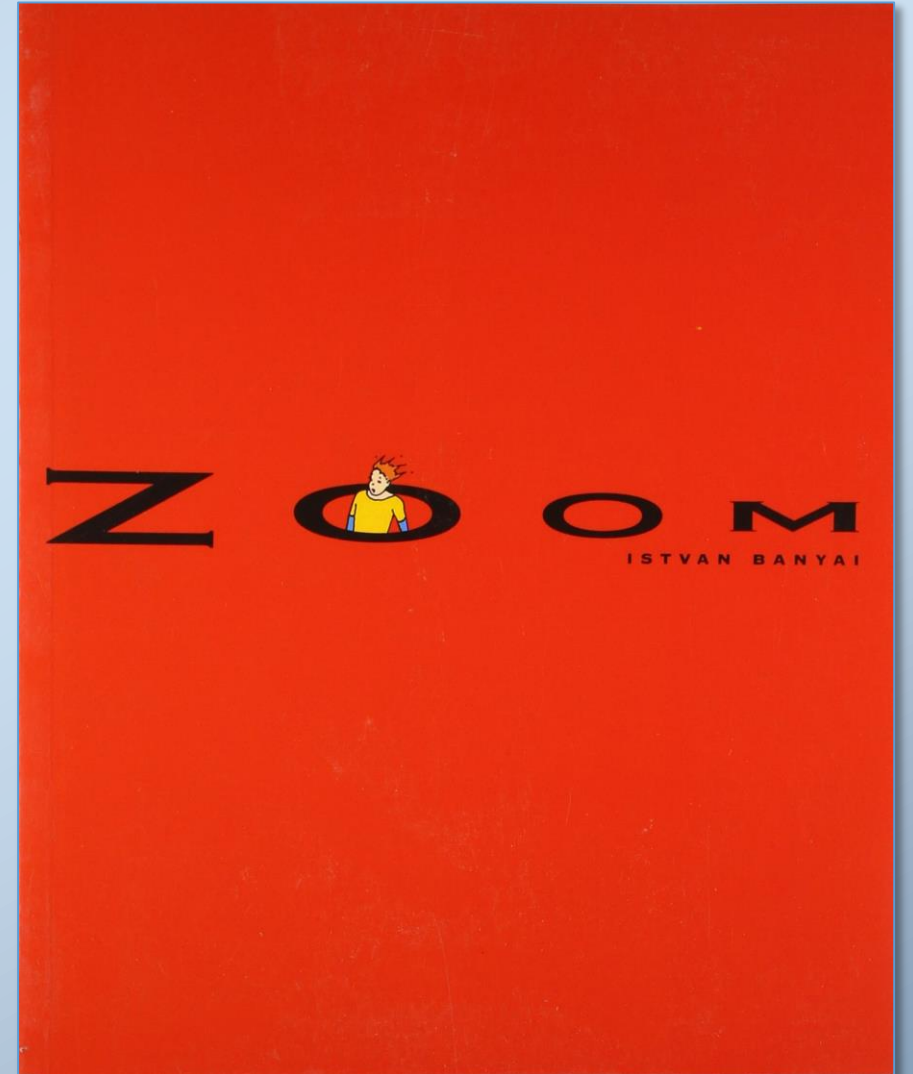
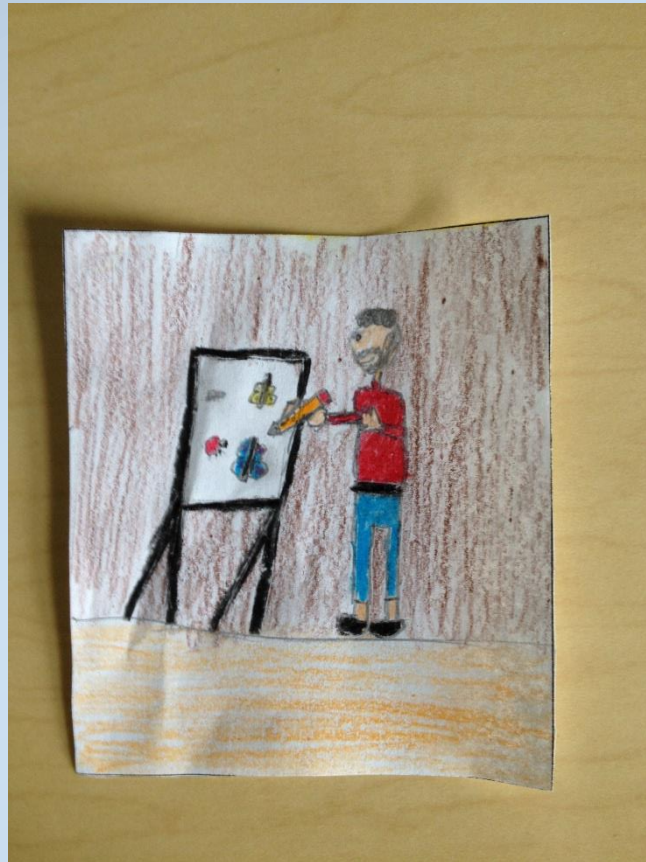
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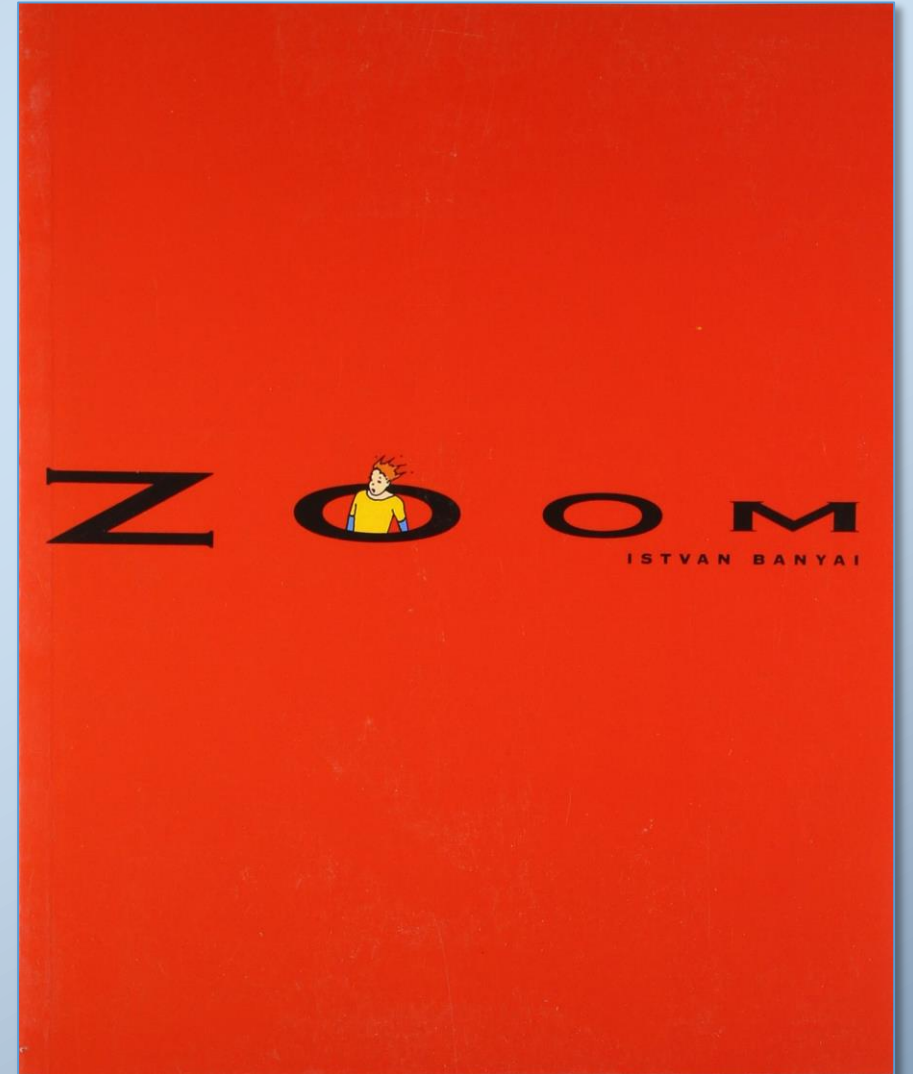
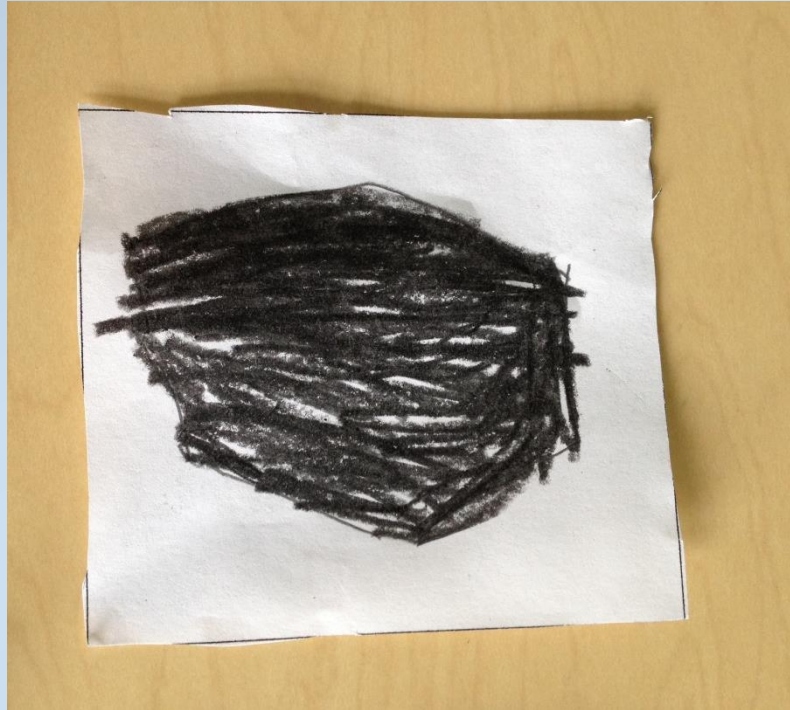
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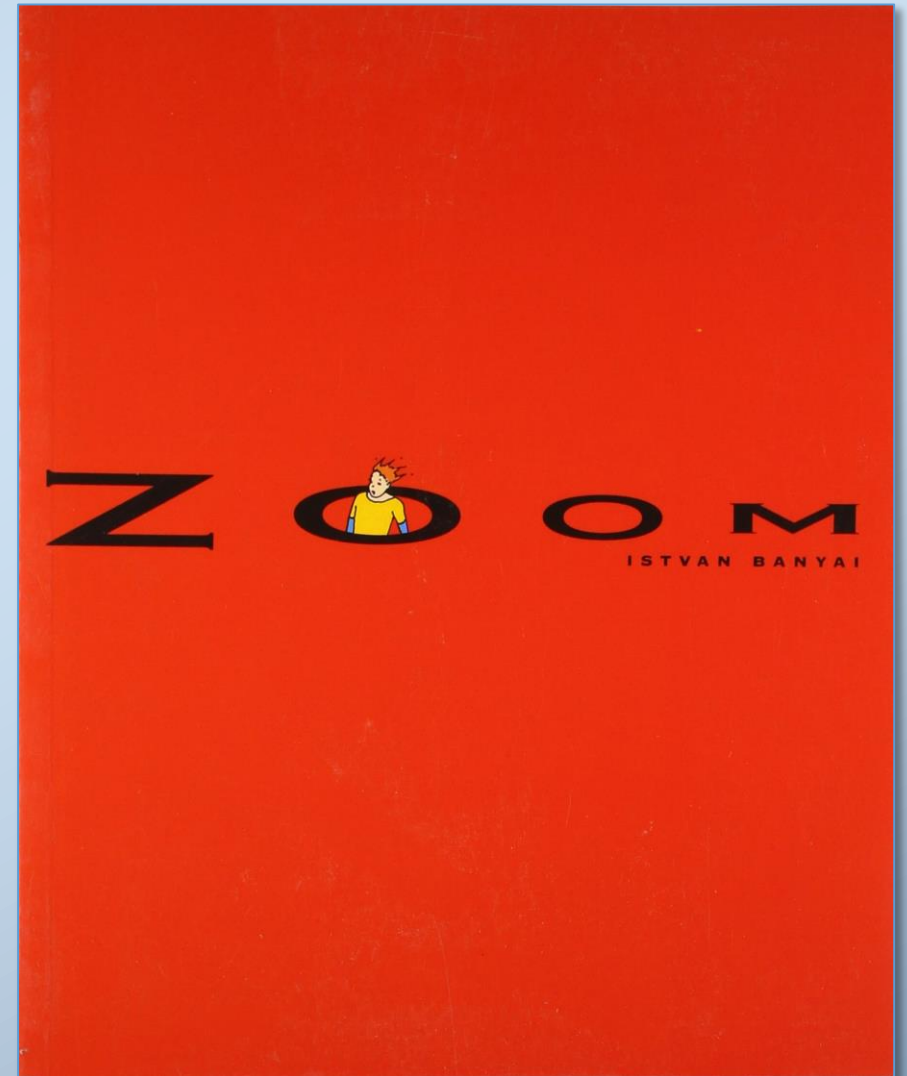
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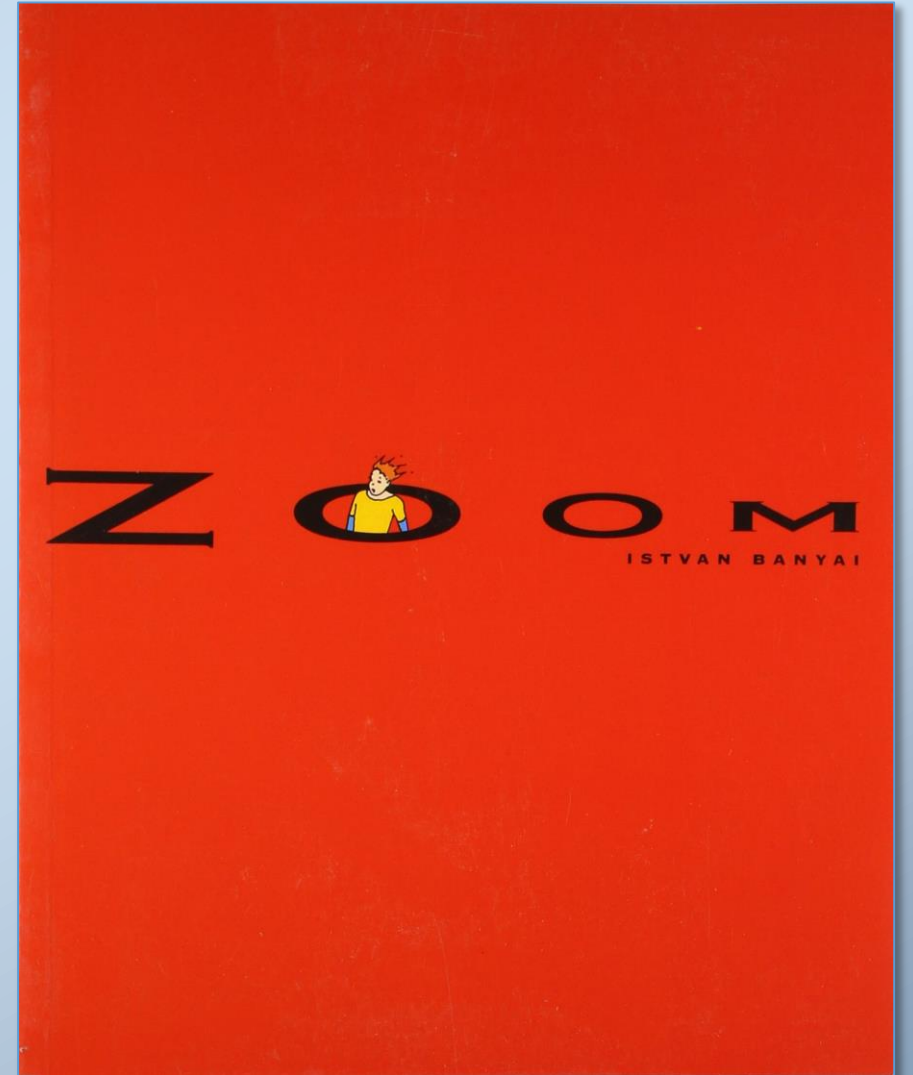
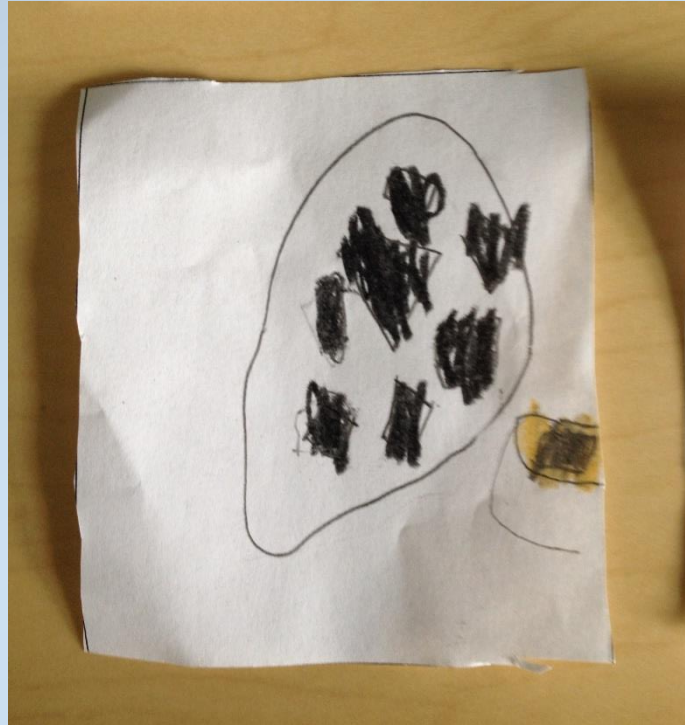
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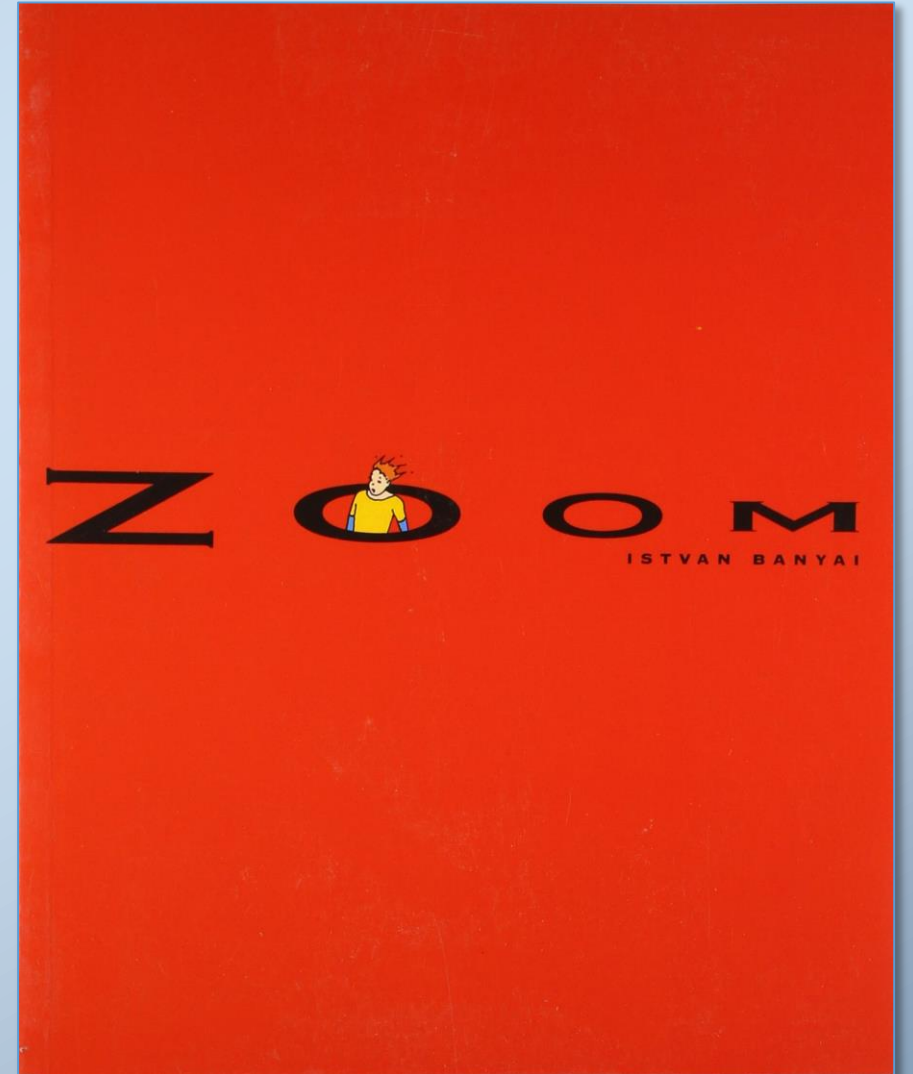
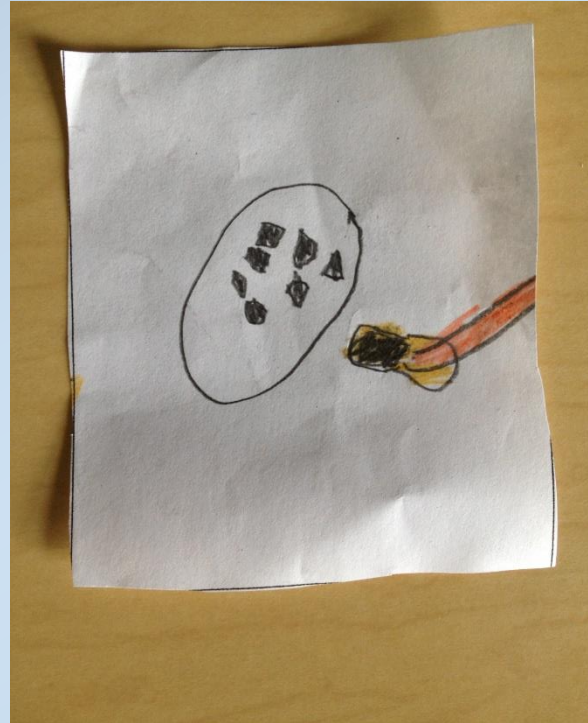
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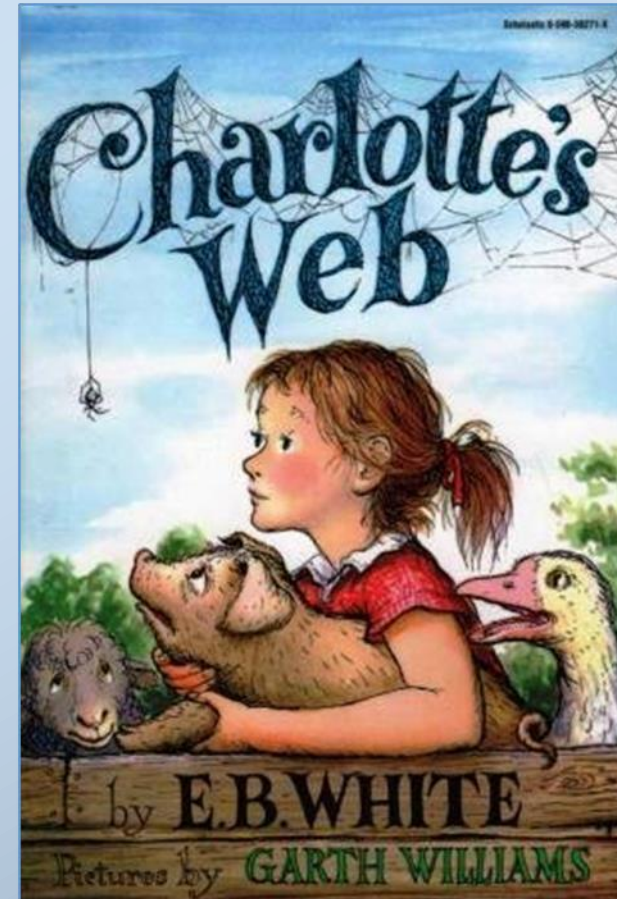
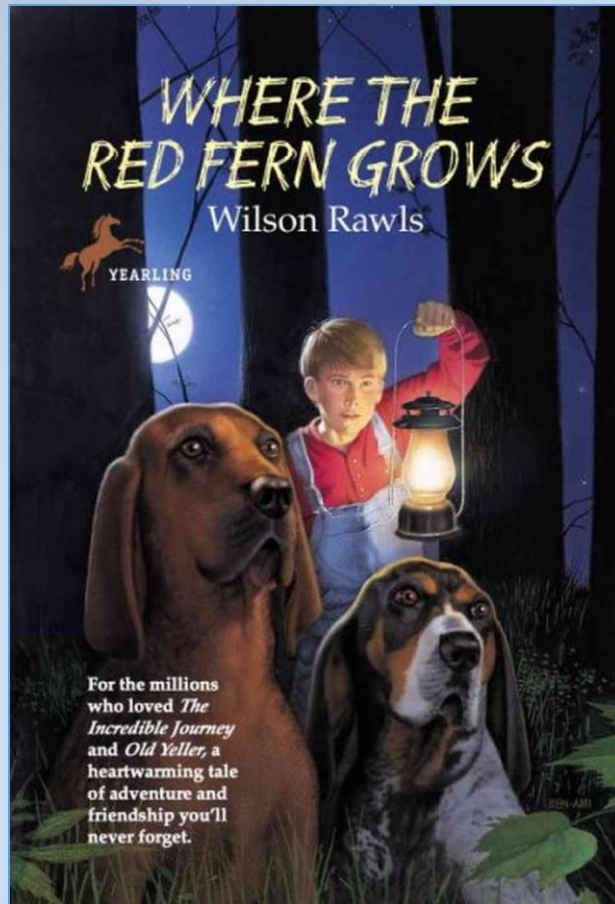
Sequencing

Details



Examples of Mentor Texts

Good books teach



Your Turn

Looking at Mentor Texts



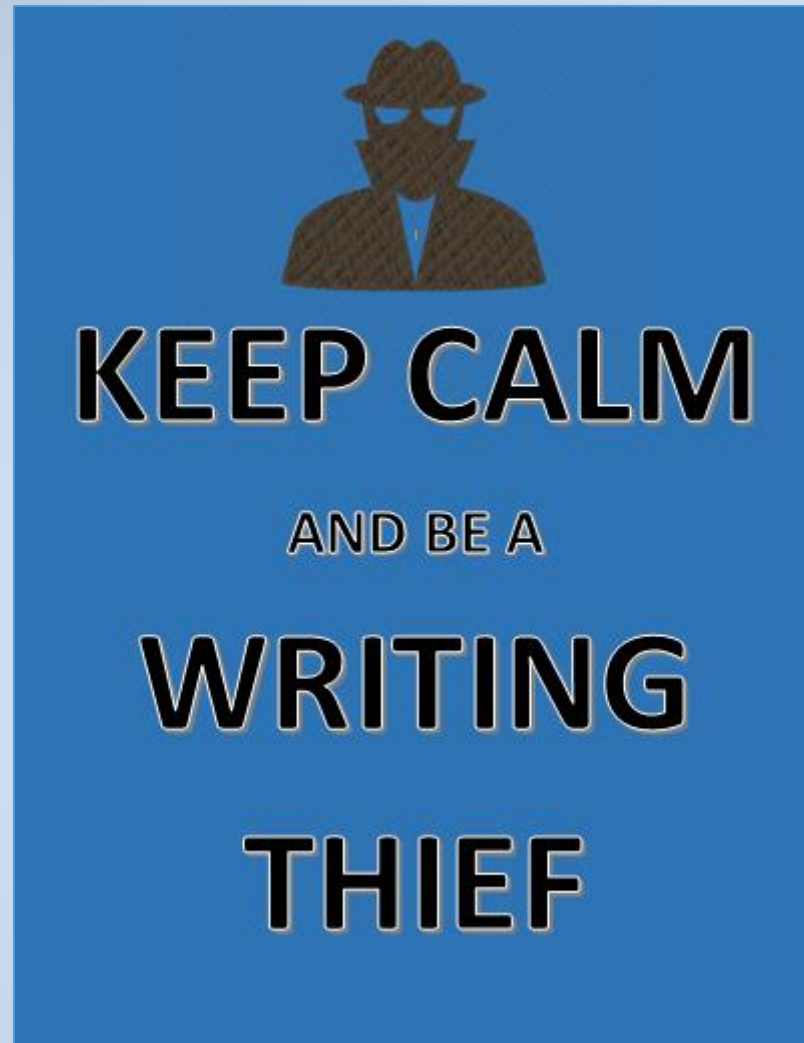
Using Mentor Texts



Key Qualities for Each Writing Trait

- Choose a book and work with a partner to find something from the book that you want to “steal”

Thanks for being a writing thief 😊



Writing Exemplars



Writing Exemplars – Ministry of Education



<http://goo.gl/hjnMm4>

- SPDU website
- Resources
- English Language Arts Resources K-Grade 10 & ELA 20
- Scroll down to “Writing Samples”

Accessing Materials



Accessing Materials

Writing Wiki



- Wiki link on Sun West website – under the “Teachers” tab
- www.supportingwriting.wikispaces.com
- Resources on the Writing Wiki:
 - All handouts from today
 - Forms of writing expected to be taught at each grade level updated – from Danielle – outlines the forms of writing students are expected to be able to do at all grade levels.
 - Poster of writing expected for each grade level
 - Writing Forms across Grade Levels 1-8 – Danielle
 - Plus Much, Much More!!! – Check it out ☺



Exit Slip

2 things I learned today:

1 thing I plan on trying when I get back to my school:





Thank You ☺

Have a great year!