

Integrating Reading,

Writing,

and Words Lessons:

A Thematic Approach in Balanced Literacy

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Four-Blocks is a Balanced Literacy Program

(Reading Teacher, Feb 2000; Reading Teacher, Nov 2000)



Resources

- www.wfu.edu/fourblocks
- www.blocks4reading.com
- www.debfourblocks.com
- April 1991 & May, 1998 Reading Teacher, another article in next month's Reading Teacher, November, 2006.
- September 2007 is our next Four Blocks Conference in NC
- Jan. 13-15, 2007 is the Four Blocks Leadership, NC
- June– Providence, RI
- July– St. Louis, MO
- August- Canada tour (Victoria, BC; London, ON; and Montreal)
- Books and materials from Carson-Dellosa Publishing--- including a new “direct to school” kit this year.

What do you read aloud to your class?

- Bookstores sell 80% of fiction to females.
- 80% of informational books to males.

Read both fiction and non-fiction in your teacher read aloud.

Writing

1. Starts with a mini-lesson where the teacher writes for the students.
2. Next, the children write and the teacher conferences (over the shoulder or sit down).
3. The block ends with an author's chair where some children share their writing.

Mini-lesson: Showing the students how writers think as they write.

Apples

Apples are red, yellow, and green. Apples grow on trees. There are many different kinds of apples. My favorite is red delicious.



Because children write best about what they know. . .

Most of the time students should write on self-selected topics

Writing to a prompt: “ Write about a time you made something with apples.” This story should have a beginning, middle, and an end.

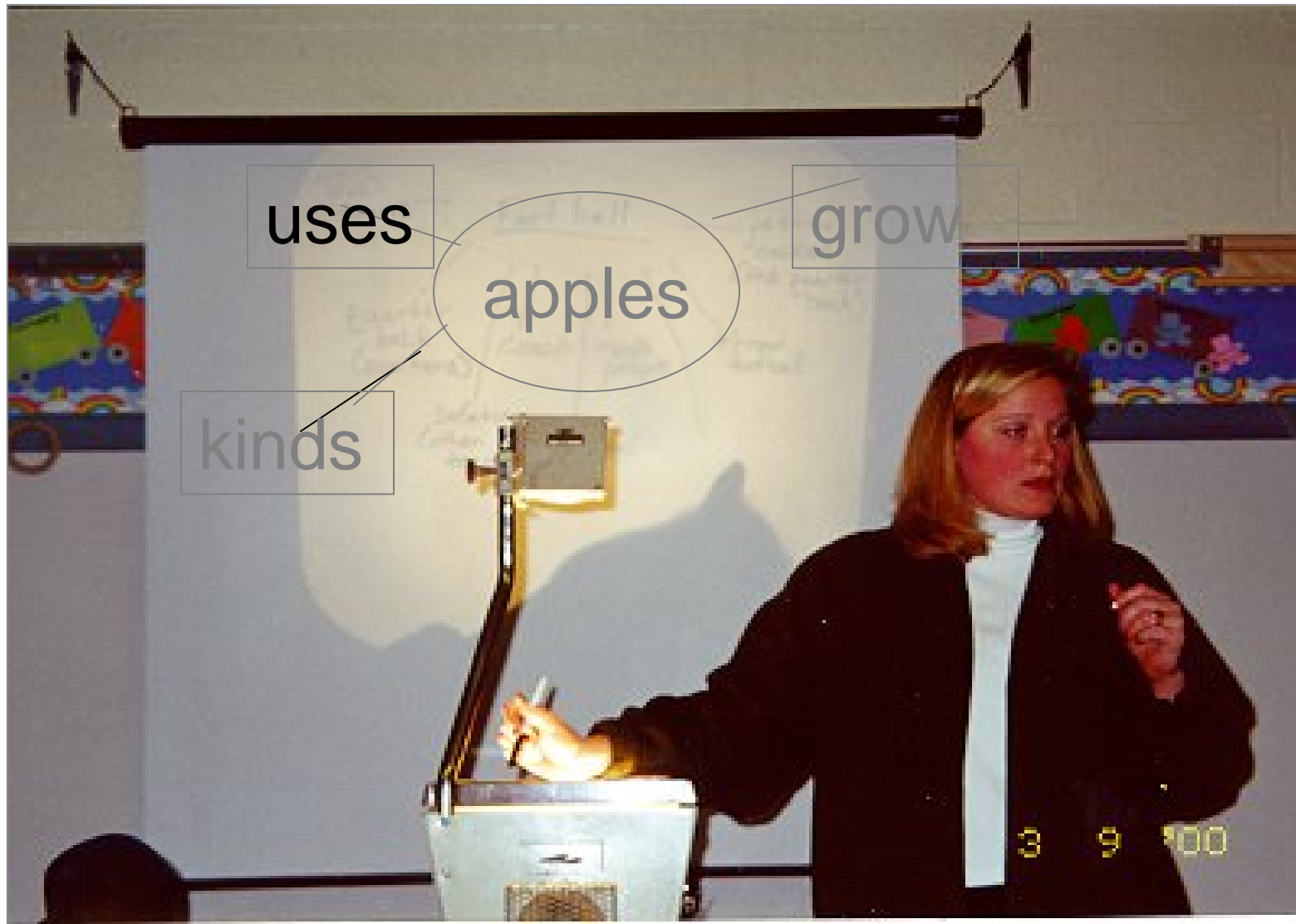
Writing in Response to Reading.

A “quickwrite” might be: Write three things you learned about apples today.

When the students all write on the same topic, apples, it is focused writing.

This writing needs to be organized in some way—a web, outline, or timeline.

Using a web for your mini-lesson one day.



During another mini-lesson the teachers writes for the children; showing them how she uses her web to organize her writing.



Working With Words

1.) Word Wall



2.) Letter-Sound Pattern Activity



Word Wall

Theme words would NOT go on a word wall. There might be a theme board---perhaps a large apple---somewhere in the room where these theme (apple) words would be written during the time they are reading and writing about apples.

Making Words (letters needed: a,e,l,p,p,s)

Make these words:

as sap/ slap/ lapse apples
spa pals
ape/ peas
pea
sea
pal/
lap

Sort: __ea (pea, sea) __ap (sap, lap, slap),
plurals (peas, pals, apples)

Transfer: clap, tea, flea, fleas

Guess the Covered Word

(Use the names of the students to keep them engaged)

There are many ways to enjoy apples

Cooper likes apple **slices**.

Zannie likes apple **juice**.

Lafe likes apple **jelly**.

Alex likes apple **butter**.

Merrill Kaye likes apple **tarts**.

Using Words You Know

tree

seed

plant

grow

bee

need

slant

flow

see

feed

chant

mow

knee

weed

scant

bow

glee

bleed

blow

free

speed

show

throw

degree

exceed

eggplant

below

carefree

indeed

enchant

outgrow

disagree

agreed

transplant

rainbow

Guided Reading

“**guided reading** reading instruction in which the teacher provides the structure and purpose for reading and for responding to the material read. *Note:* Most basal reading programs have guided reading lessons.” (p. 102)

T.L. Harris & R.E. Hodges (Eds.).
(1995). *The Literacy Dictionary*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Three Ways to Teach Guided Reading

- The Leveled-Groups Way (Each leveled group meets with the teacher while the other students are occupied with independent work)
- The Single-Level Way (All the students are taught at the same time using a grade-level book)
- The Four-Blocks Way (The teacher uses a variety of large- and small-group formats to make guided reading more multilevel)

What to Read

Fiction ---good stories, good literature

Non-fiction---informational books, are good literature too.

Magazines --- full of information also.

Articles off the internet (search)

Before and After Reading Activities

Teach Comprehension Skills and Strategies by. . .

- Previewing
- Predicting
- Think-Alouds
- KWL Charts
- Graphic Organizers
- Story Maps
- Rivet
- Anticipation Guides
- Beach Ball
- “Doing the Book”
- Group Discussions
- Sentence Detectives
- Paragraph Detectives
- Writing
- Drawing
- Souvenirs

During Reading Formats

- Shared Reading
- Choral Reading
- Echo Reading
- ERT...
- Partner Reading
- Playschool Groups or Reading Teams
- Three-Ring Circus
- You'se Choose
- Coaching Groups
- Book Club Groups
- Literature Circles
- Pick-A-Page

Bookmarks, Sticky Notes and Highlighters

Fiction

Before Reading---go over a story map

My Story Map

Name of the story/book _____

Author _____

Setting:

When _____ Where _____

Characters: _____ Who _____

Problem:

Beginning

Middle

End

Conclusion:

During Reading

The students read quietly (“whisper reading”) with a partner assigned by the teacher.

The teacher roams the room and monitors the partners.

Are they reading it easily?

Are they helping each other appropriately?

Is their talk “good” talk?

After reading do they begin the activity?

Partner Reading

1. Arrange marriages carefully.
2. Change partners when needed.
3. Decide where they will read.
4. But my partner is absent!
5. Make sure they know how to read it.
6. Make sure they know the purpose.
7. Set a time limit.
8. Have a filler.
9. Model and role play.
10. Spy on the partners.

Partner Reading

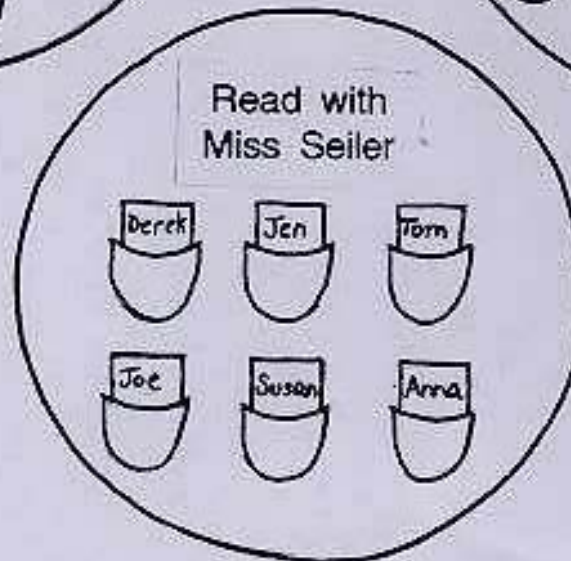
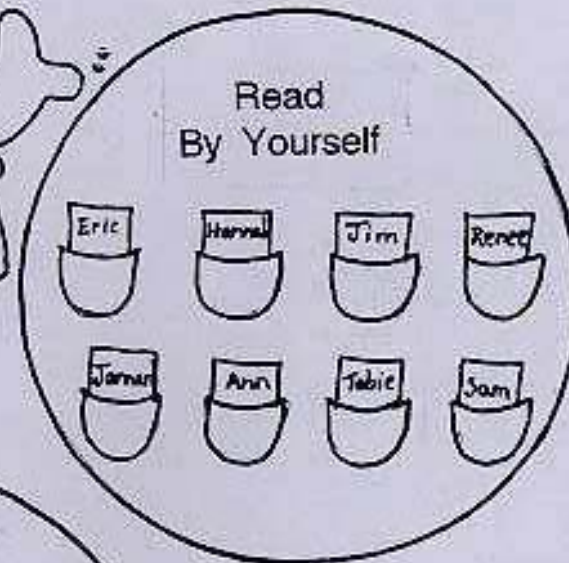
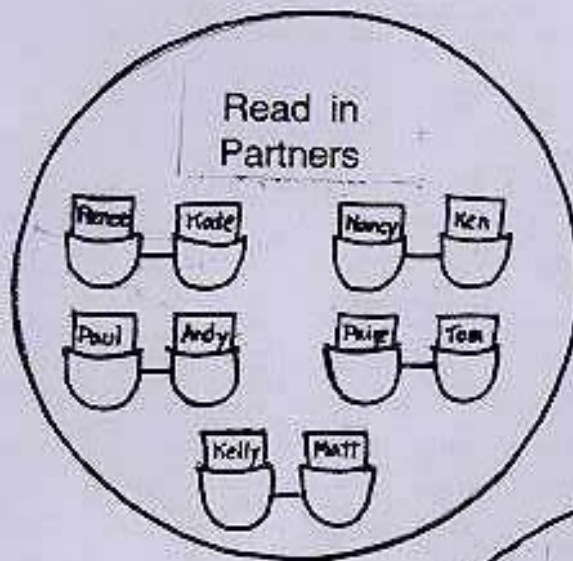
1. Take Turns
2. Read and Point
3. Ask Questions
4. Say Something
5. Echo Reading
6. Choral Whispering
7. ERT...
8. You Decide

Playschool Groups or Reading Teams

1. All the things partners can do-plus!
2. Can “do the book.”
3. Can complete graphic organizer/KWL.
4. Can do discussions!
5. Form heterogeneous groups.
6. Match “Teacher” and purpose.
7. Good Readers for ERT..., echo reading.
8. Struggling readers—choral reading, preparing to “do the book”.
9. Give “teachers” some kind of prop.

Three Ring Circus Page 182-183

Three-Ring-Circus



What's For Reading?

“What kind of text will we read?”

“What are all the things we will read about?”

Give them one minute with everyone's lips zipped--teacher included--to preview the text.

“What kind of text will we read?”

“What are all the things we will read about?”

Predicting

Prove it!

Anticipation Guides

Rivet

Writing and Drawing

- Connecting
- Predicting/Anticipating
- Summarizing/Concluding
- Questioning/Monitoring
- Imaging/Inferring
- Evaluating/Applying

Quickwrites/Quickdraws

Sticky notes, Bookmarks, Index cards,
Reading Response logs

Small Group Discussions

Talking Why and How

How did Johnny Appleseed live as he traveled?

Why did he sell apple trees?

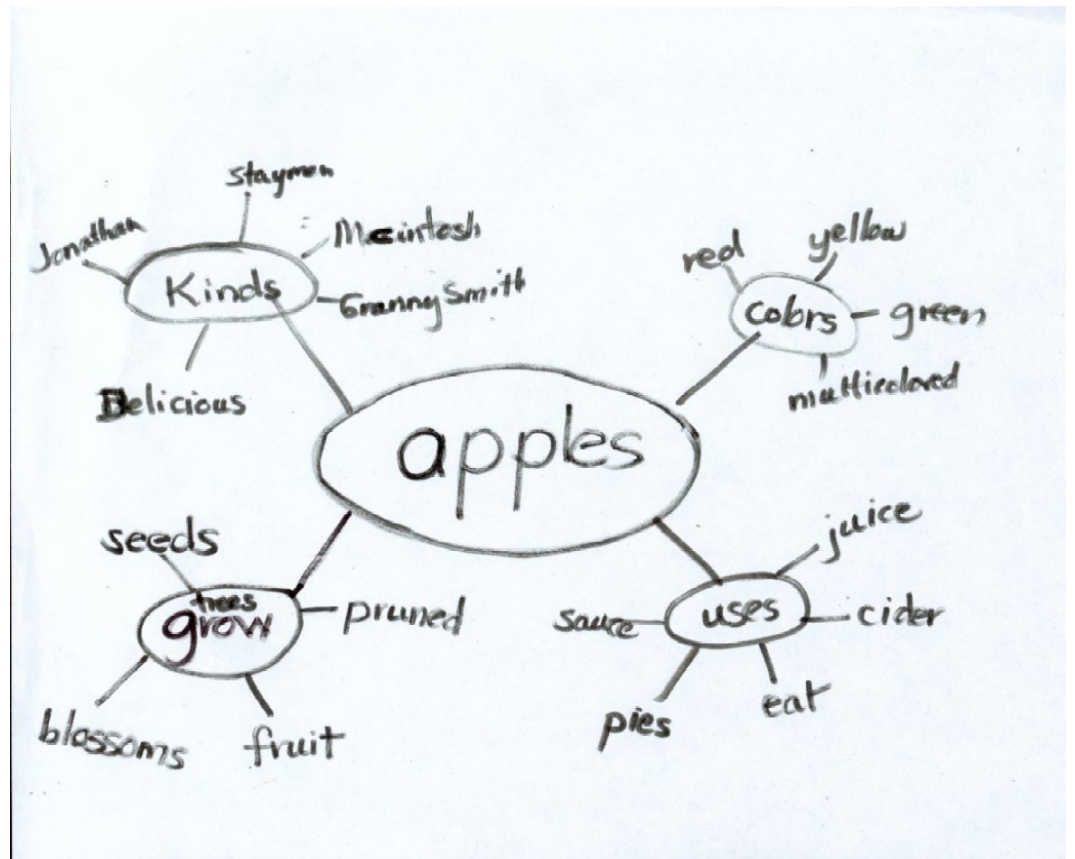
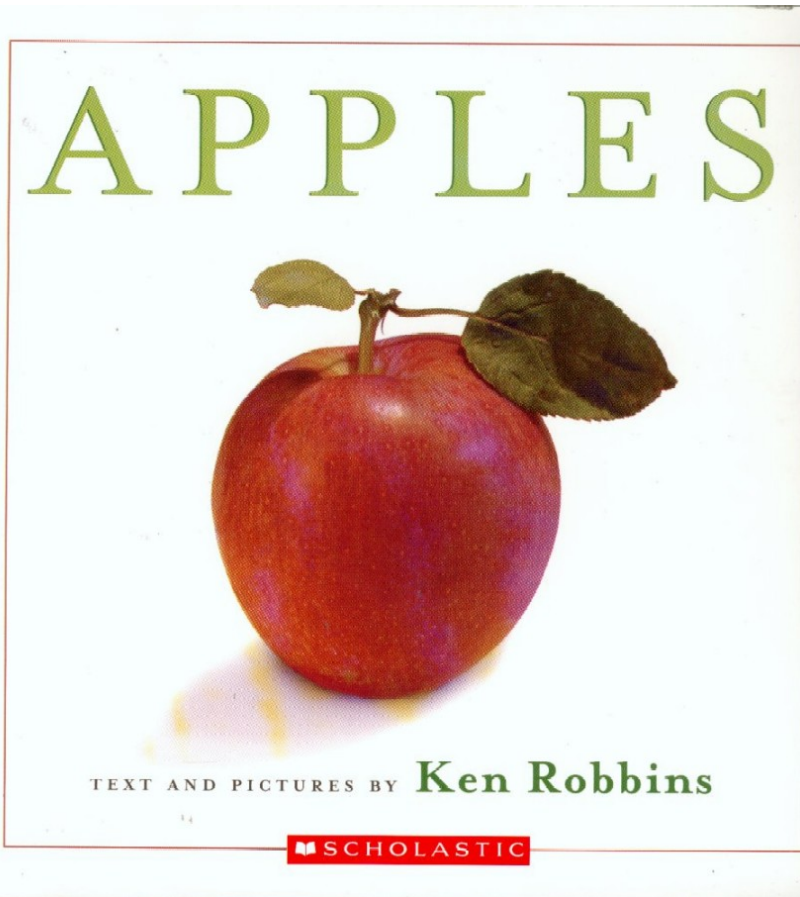
How did people change the stories he told?

Why do you think they did this?

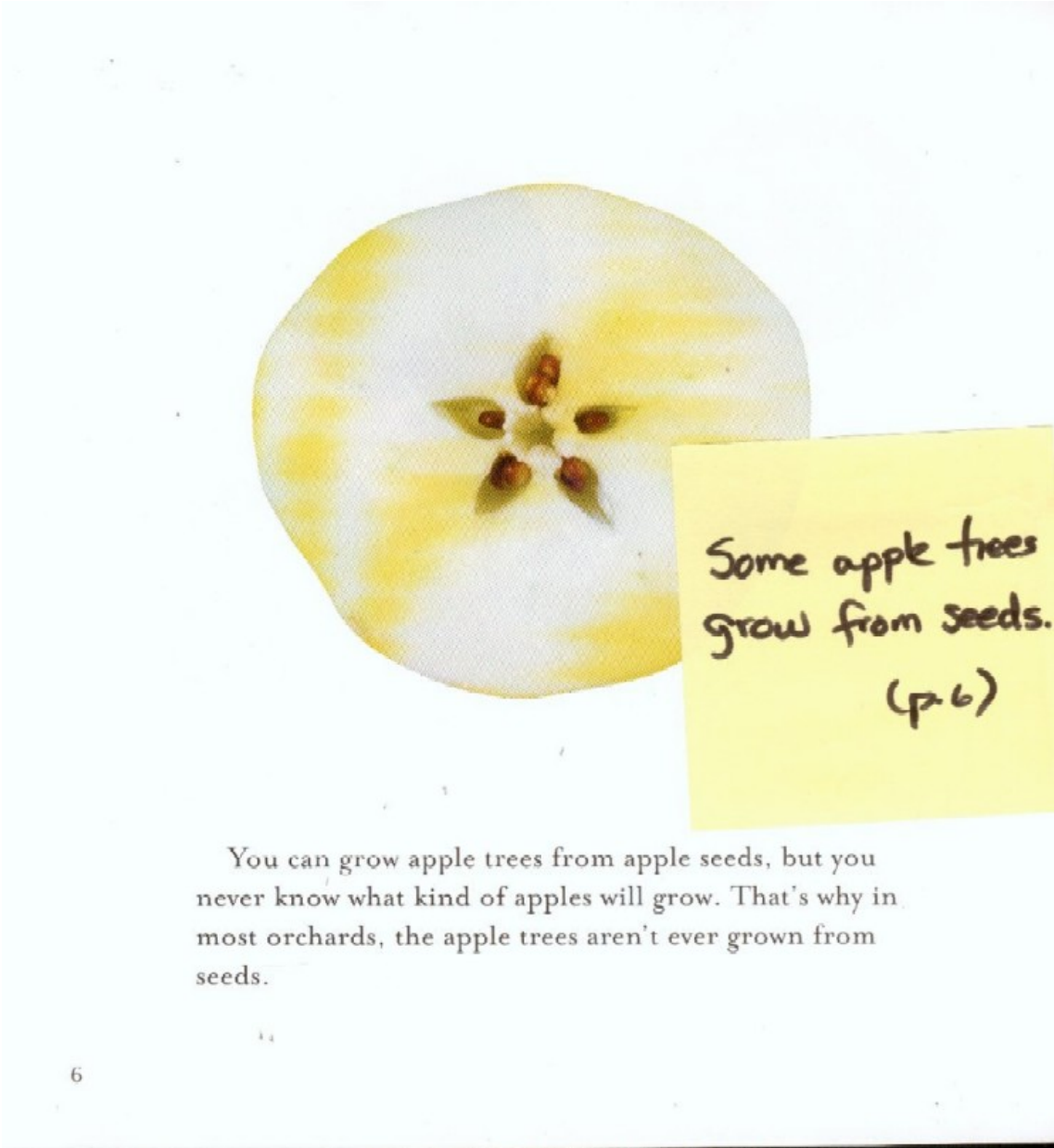
ME purposes

Decide if you would like to live in the wilderness as Johnny Appleseed did and tell why or why not.

Sticky Notes Comprehension

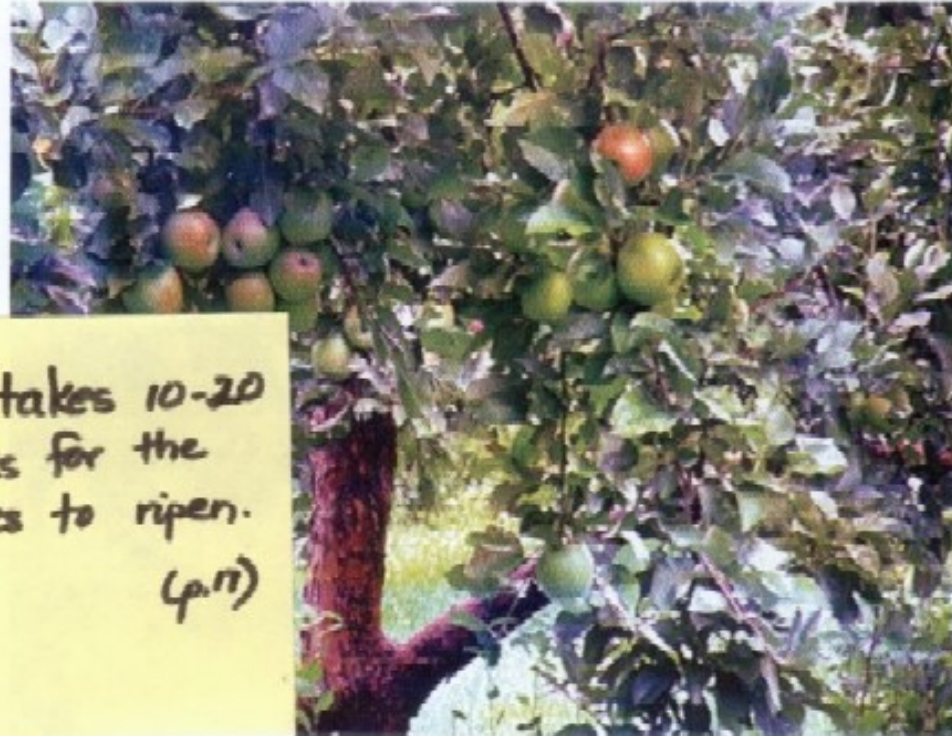


Sticky Notes



You can grow apple trees from apple seeds, but you never know what kind of apples will grow. That's why in most orchards, the apple trees aren't ever grown from seeds.

Sticky note web info



It takes 10-20
weeks for the
apples to ripen.
(p.17)

It takes ten to twenty weeks for the apples to reach full size and ripen. By August, the limbs of the tree are chock-full of fruit.

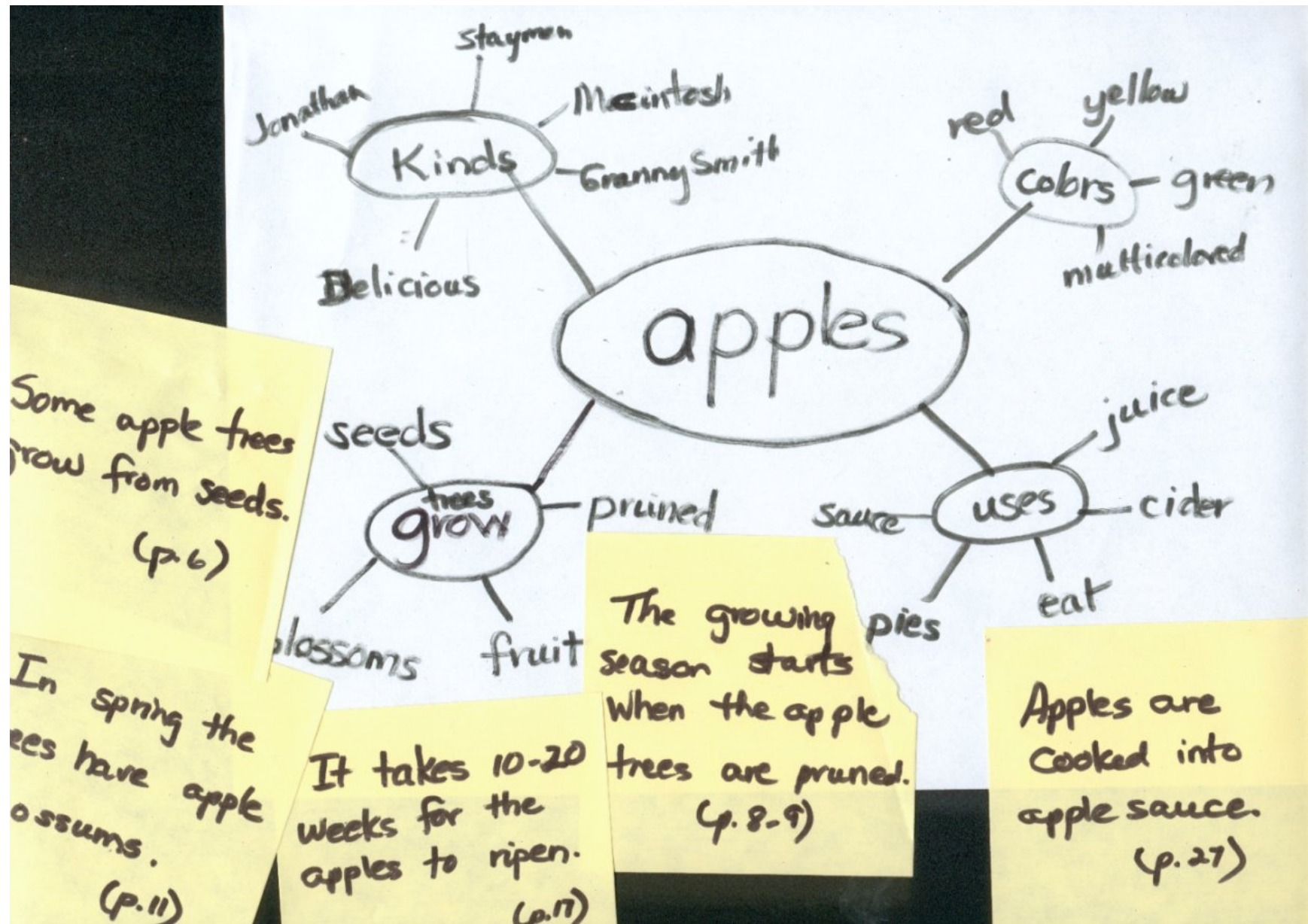
Sticky Notes (continued)

Apples are
cooked into
apple sauce.
(p. 27)

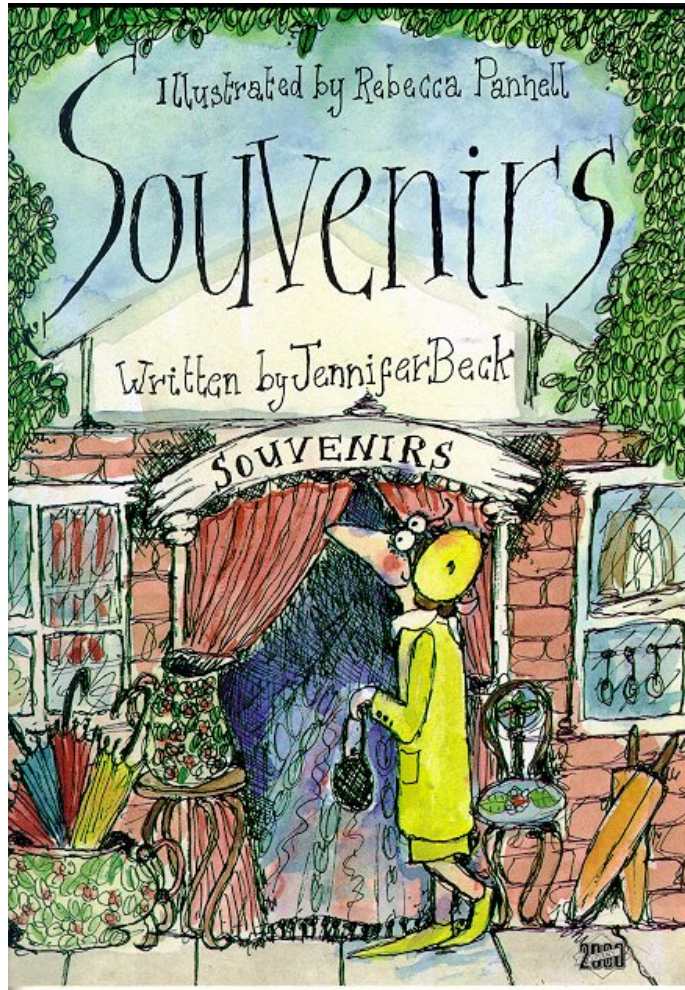


Some are fated to be cored and quartered and tossed into a pot to make applesauce.

After Reading: Put the sticky notes on the web.



Souvenirs



An apple!

Make apple sauce or an apple pie.

Apple prints ---cut out apples on an apple half and press and paint.

What we know about how children learn:

- Children need cognitive clarity---I know what I am trying to do and why. “I am learning about characters (setting, sequence, etc.) so I will become a better reader.”
- Children need to actively engage in instruction; you learn by doing!
- Motivation comes from success, self-confidence, and enjoyment.
- Children learn in different ways.