

Can We Talk? Babies, Books, and Building World Knowledge

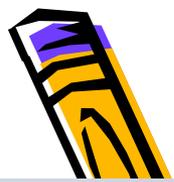
Susan Bennett-Armistead
University of Maine

Today's talk is drawn from:



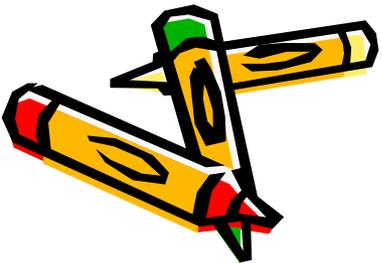
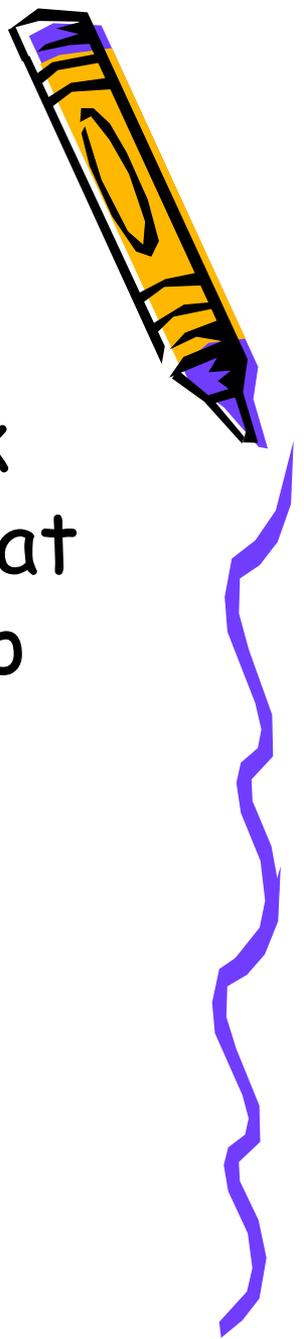
- Bennett-Armistead, V.S., Duke, N.K. & A.M. Moses (2005). *Literacy and the Youngest Learner: Best Practices for Educators of Children Birth to 5*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Otto, B. (2014). *Language development in early childhood*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill.





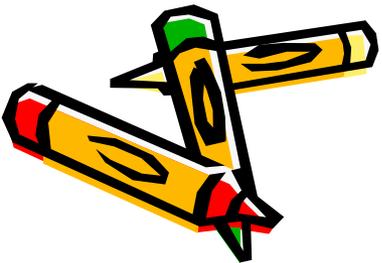
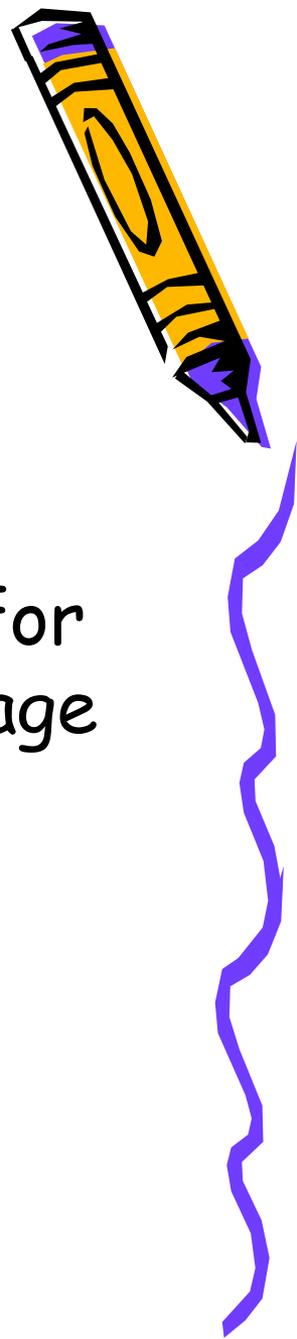
Talk about it....

- With the people at your table, talk about some oral language issues that you've encountered with your group this year.



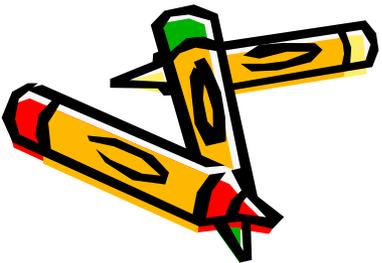
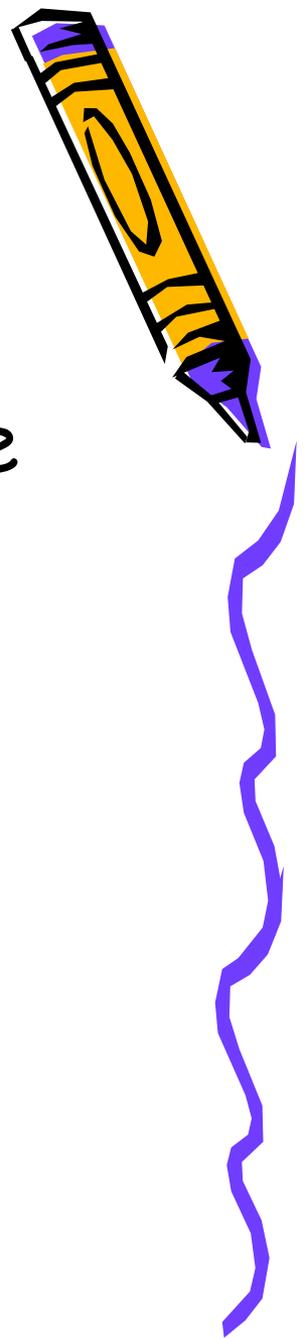
Oral Language

- Evaluated along several dimensions:
 - Phonology
 - Morphology
 - Syntax
 - Semantics
 - Pragmatics
- All dimensions work together for effective language (both oral and written)



Phonology

- Can the child hear and produce the sounds in language?
- Tangles in this area include articulation, substitution, auditory processing of sounds for later retrieval and production



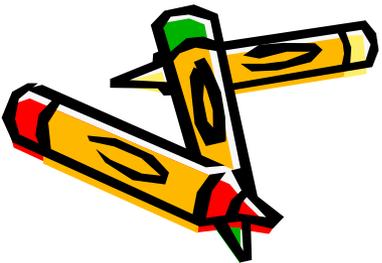
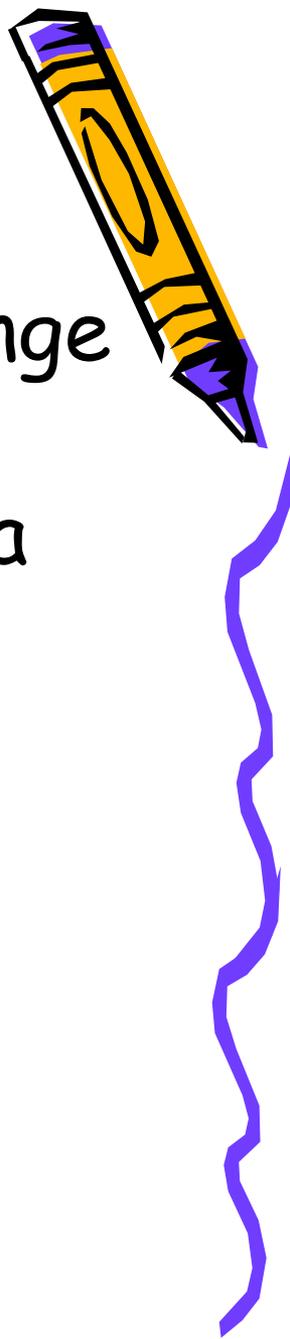
Morphology

- The ability to alter words and change their meaning by adding prefixes, suffixes or changing the tense of a word

House + s = houses

Love + ly = lovely

Un + happy = unhappy



Syntax



- The way we put the words together in our language, for example:

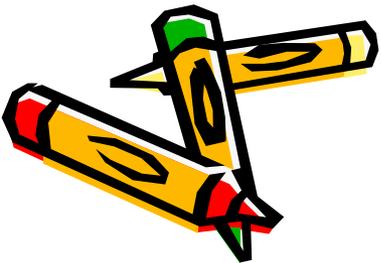
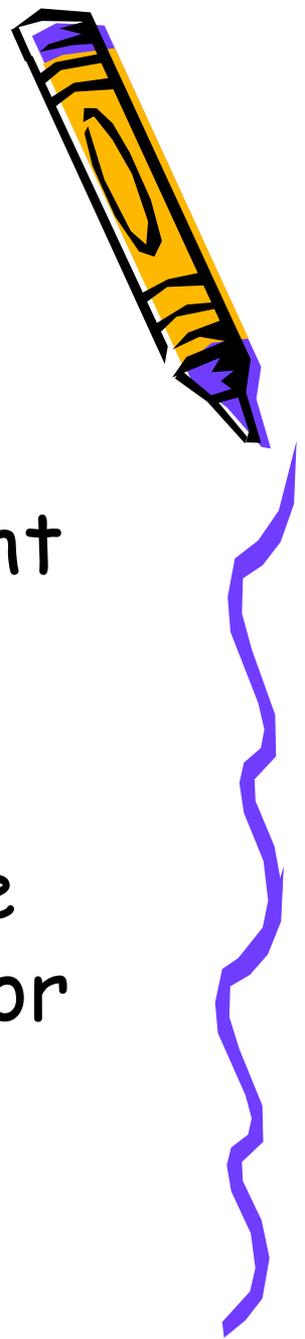
The blue dress v. La chemise bleu

- Tangles with this can include scrambling the sequence and having difficulty with switching between sentence types (questions v. statements)



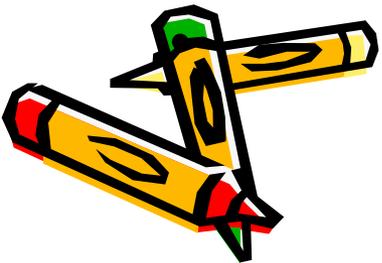
Semantics

- This is associated with word meaning...the right word in the right spot
- Tangles in this area are usually the result of word retrieval problems or limited vocabulary

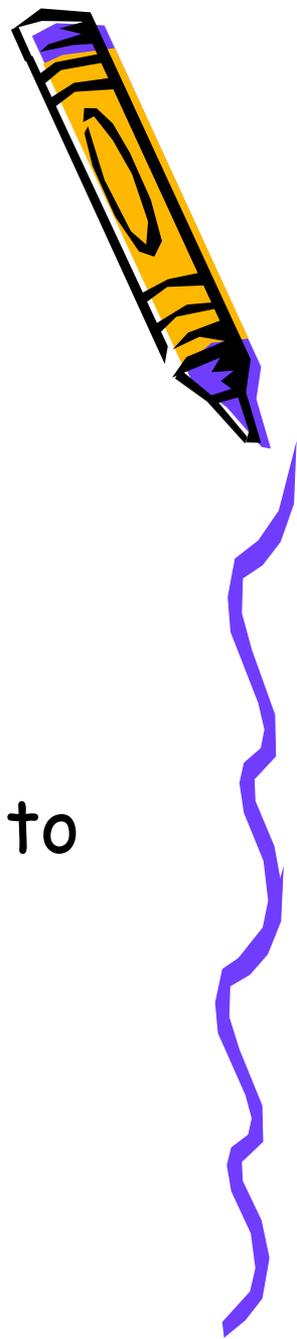


Pragmatics

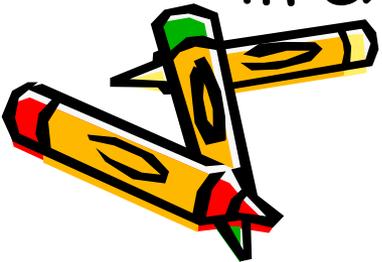
- This is the area of language associated with ability to use differing ways of talking for different audiences, being aware of conventions of language like turn taking, eye contact and proximity



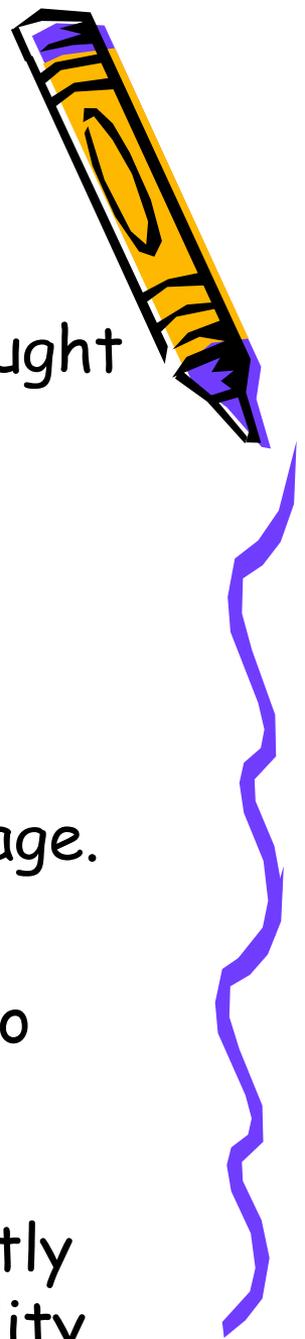
Some Issues in Oral Language



- Small vocabulary
- Little time to talk
- Few experiences to draw on
- Little exposure to language models
- Cultural variation in expectation
- Oral motor development
- Processing breakdowns
- Little exposure to read alouds
- Hearing issues
- Health



Why Oral Language is important



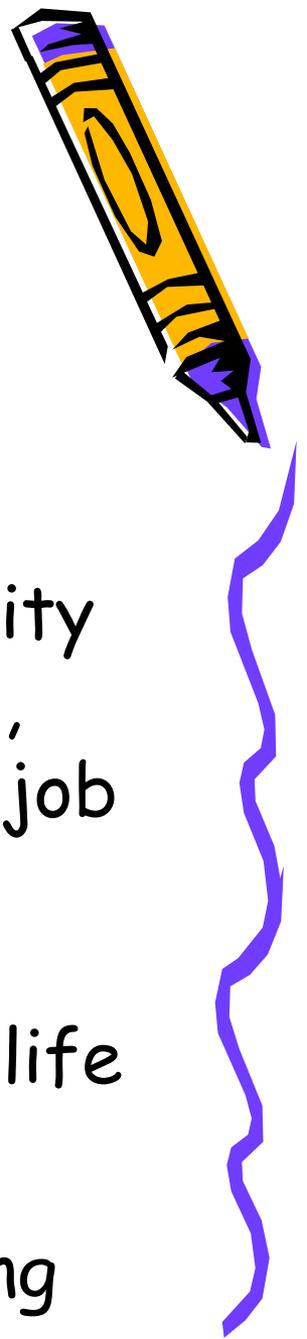
- Children that have language difficulties are at greater risk for reading and writing difficulties later. (Scarborough, 2001)

- The more words you know, the fewer unknown words you encounter.



- In most of us, thought is governed by language.
- At the very least, communication is governed by language.
- Children's ability to make their needs known and follow directions is directly linked to their ability to process language.

Why Oral Language is important...

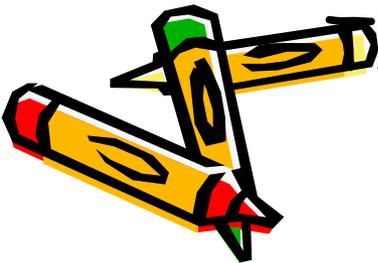
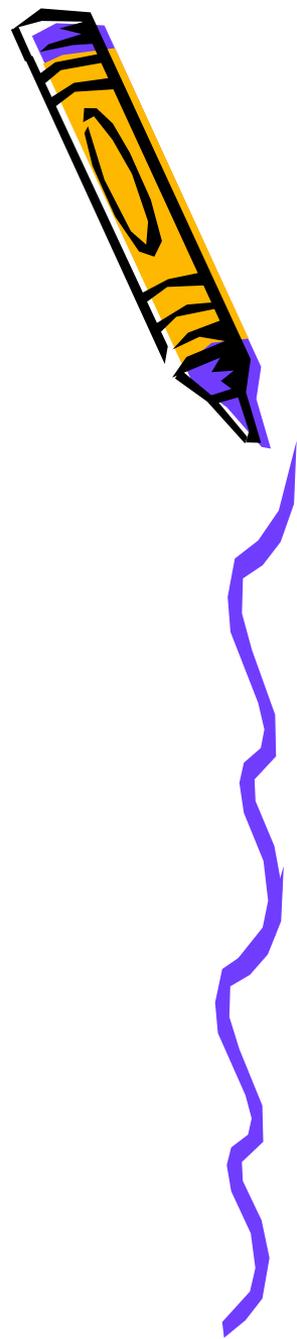


- Children that are tangled in language, are also more likely to be tangled in content areas such as math
- Oral language has a direct link to written language
- Our ability to communicate impacts our ability to make friends, find and keep a job and develop satisfying relationships in life
- It's a big stinking deal!!



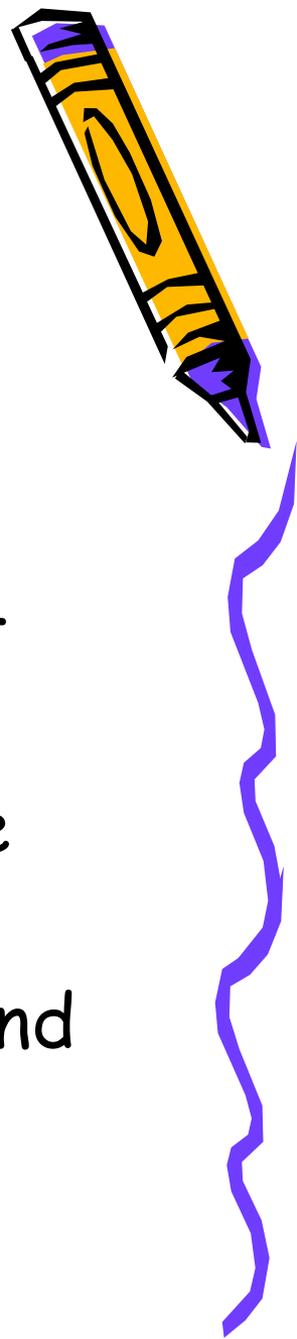
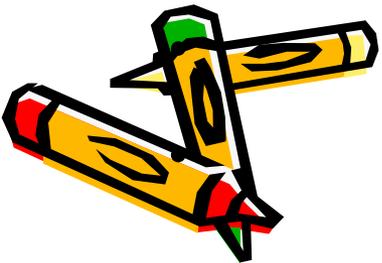
Talk about it.....

- With the people at your table, generate a list of the things you currently do to promote children's oral language in your classrooms
- Consider:
 - The environment
 - The materials in the environment
 - The opportunities you provide



Strategies for Promoting Oral Language Development

- Create an environment that allows for talk
- Talk...a lot
- Create the "small space" using proximity and eye contact
- Really listen
- Respond
- Expand on what they say
- Talk about what you're doing
- Talk beyond the here and now
- Engage in pretend talk
- Ask open ended questions

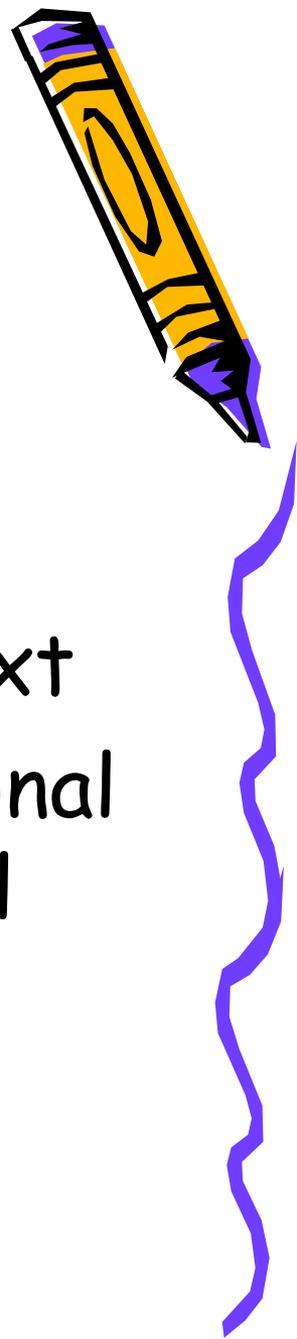


More Strategies



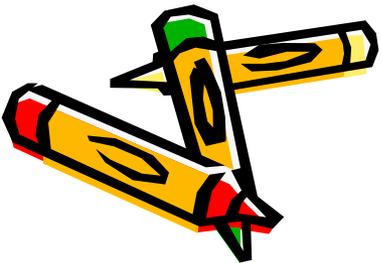
- Tell stories
- Tell and *Explain*
- Find time to talk with children individually
- Sing!
- Consider Baby Signs
- Encourage Peer to Peer talk
- Beyond "Drag and Brag"...
- Provide props that promote oral language
- Make time for extended discourse

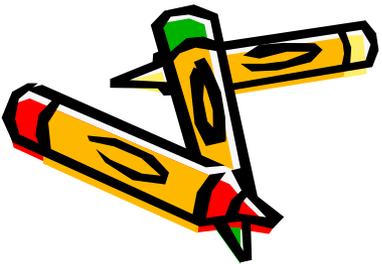
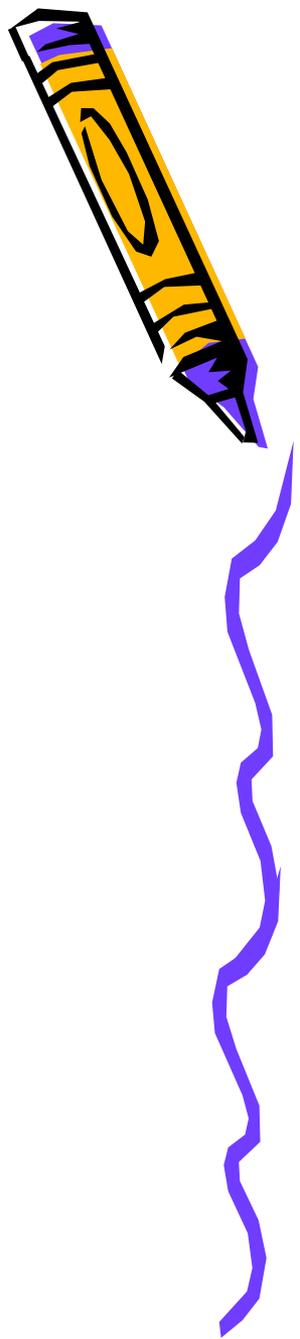


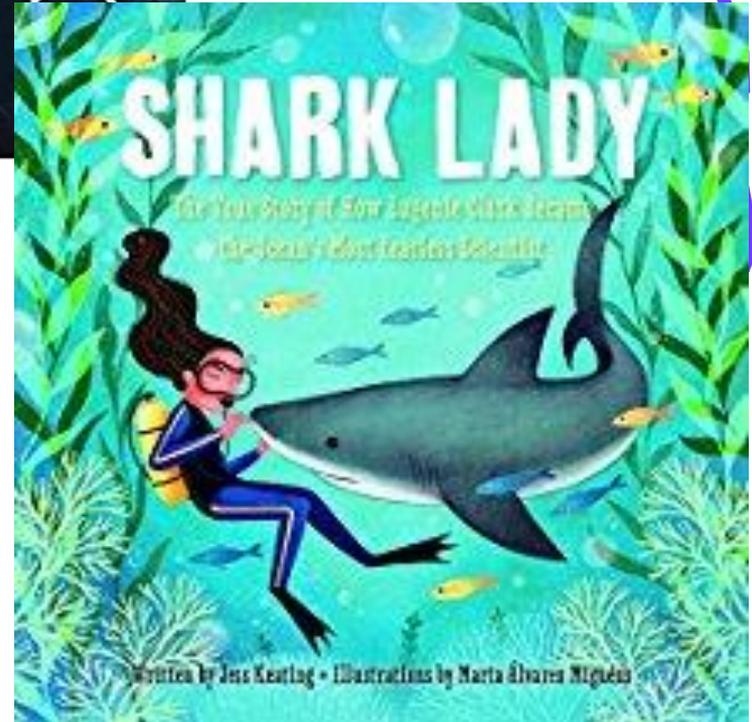
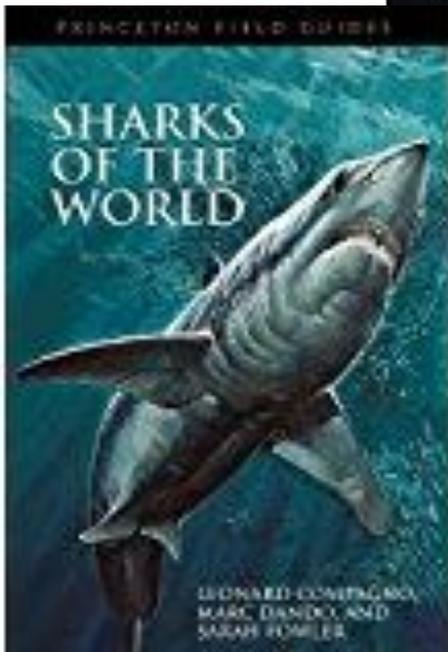
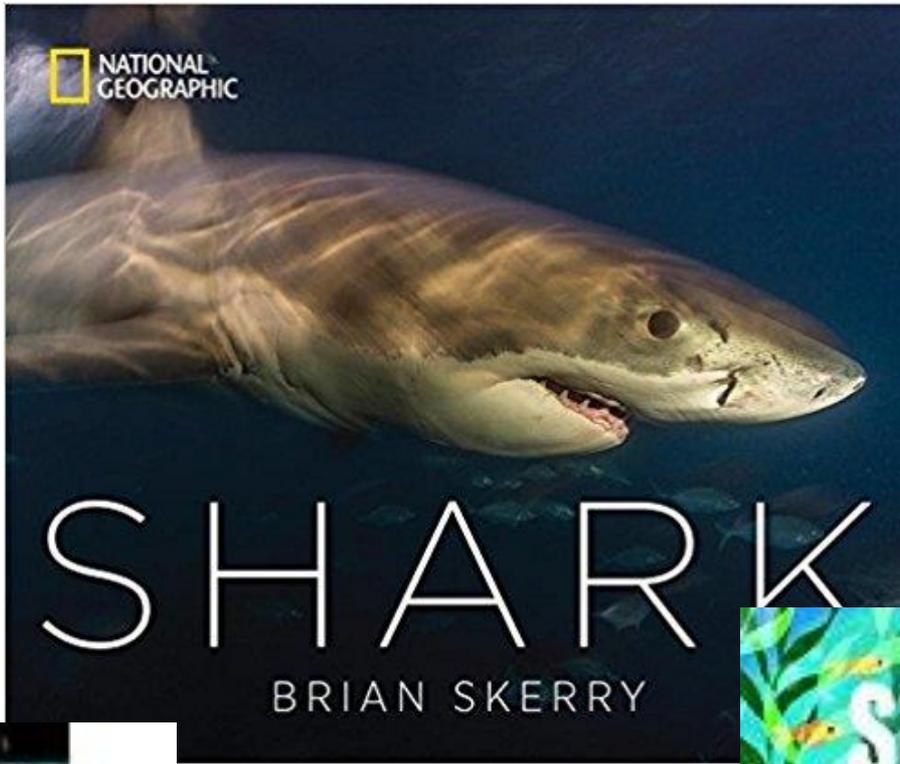


Perhaps most important...

- Read aloud!
- Consider multiple genres but definitely include informational text
- The primary purpose of informational text is to inform about the natural and social world so it's a direct connector to building world knowledge



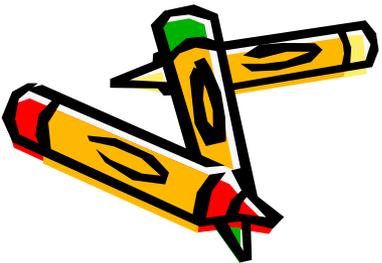




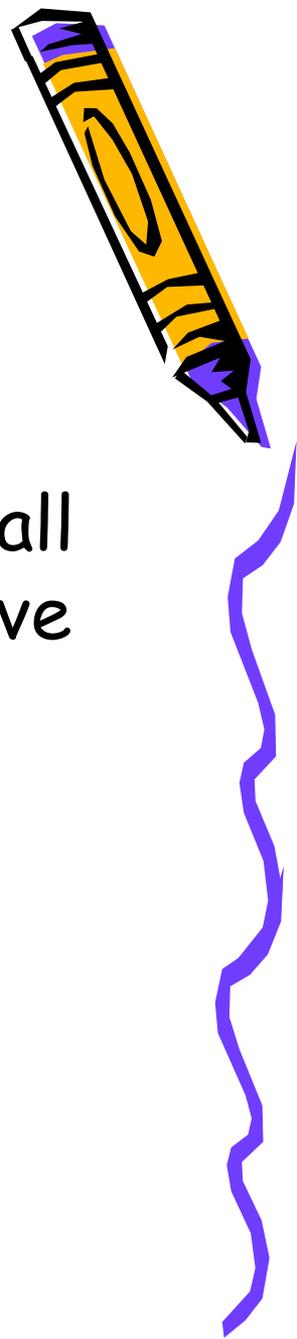
Determining Quality Info text



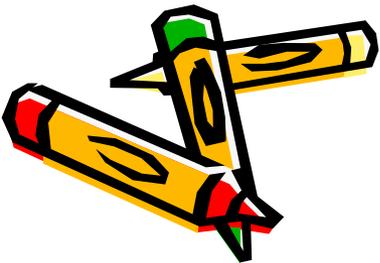
- Accuracy
- Authorship
- Accessibility
- Appropriateness
- Appeal
- Text Type
- Recommendations from others
- **YOUR STUDENTS!**



Choosing Informational Text for very young children



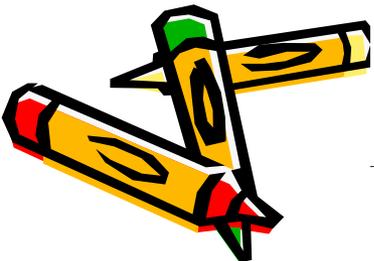
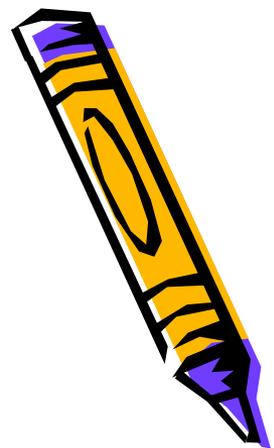
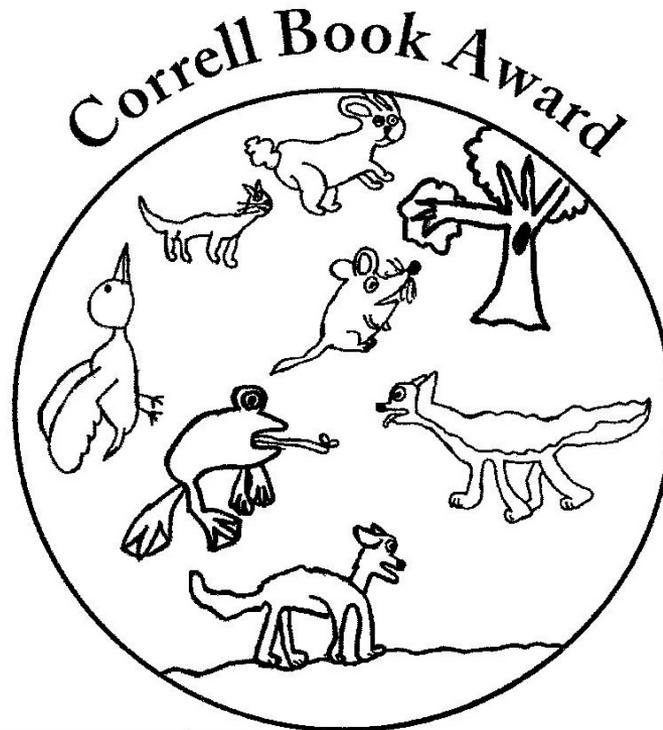
- Relationship of illustrations to text
- Accuracy of illustrations
- Avoid misleading illustrations/
information
- Recognize that infotext for small children may have different characteristics than for older children

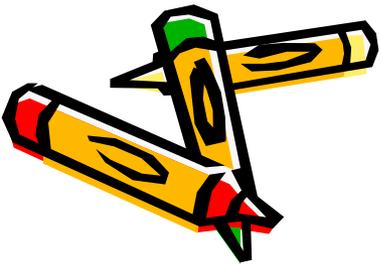
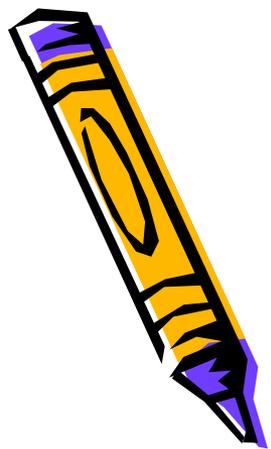
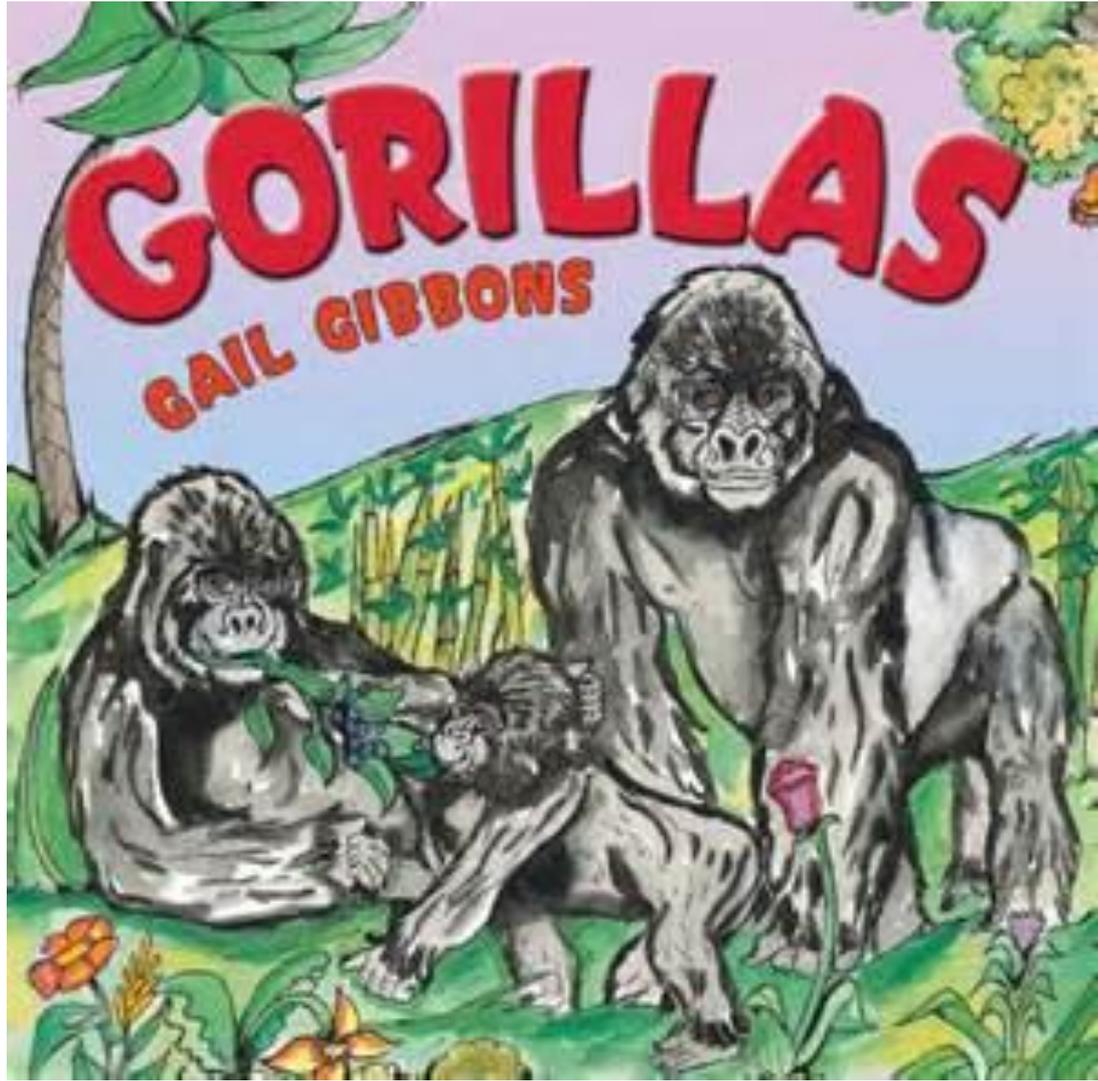




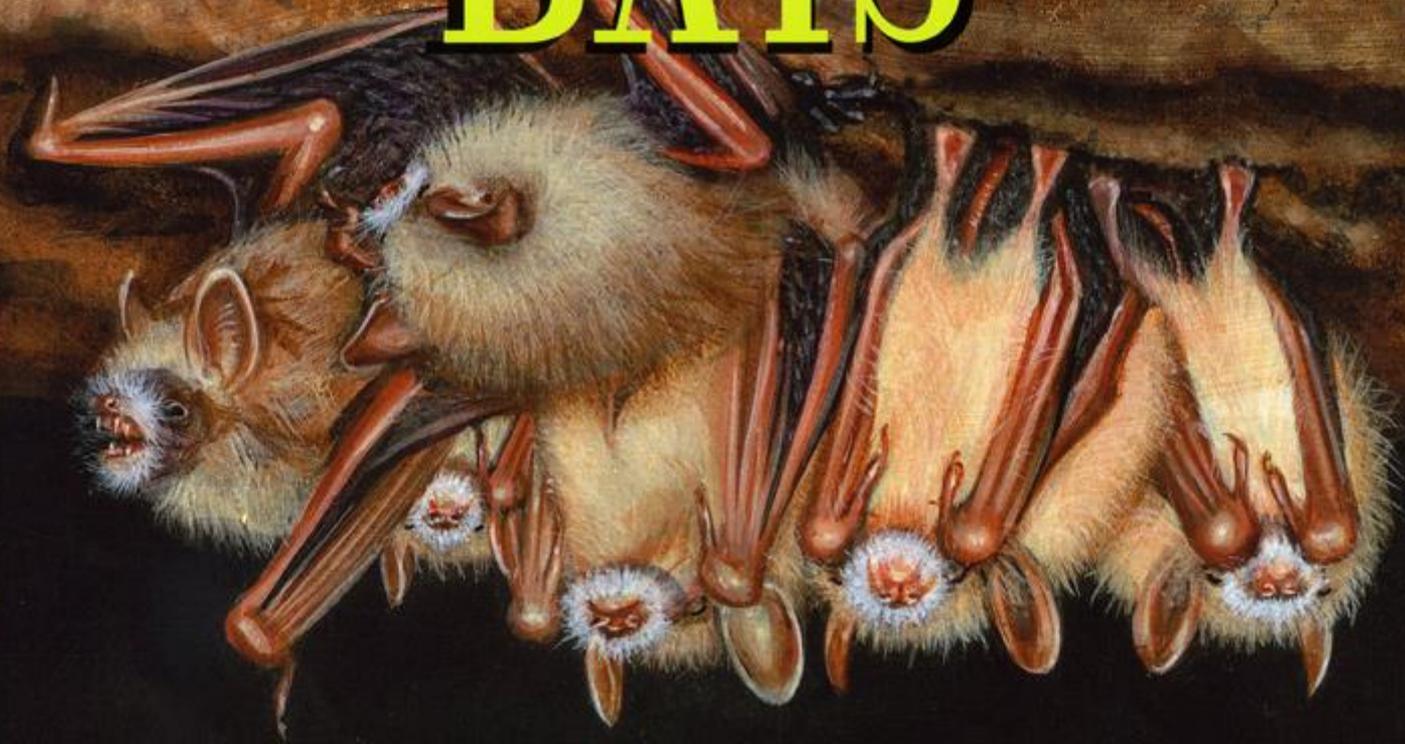
The College of Education and Human Development

The Correll Book Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Informational Text



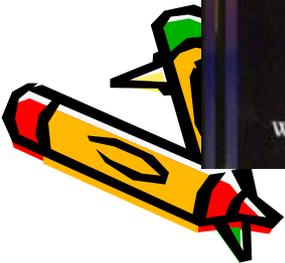


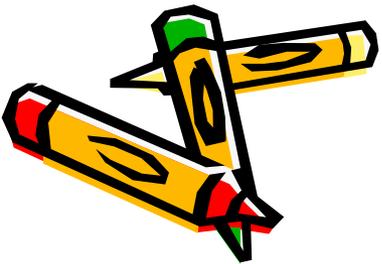
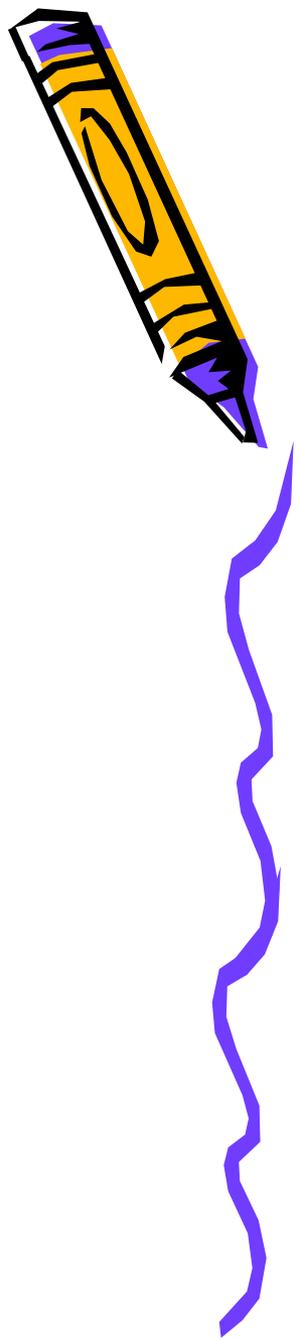
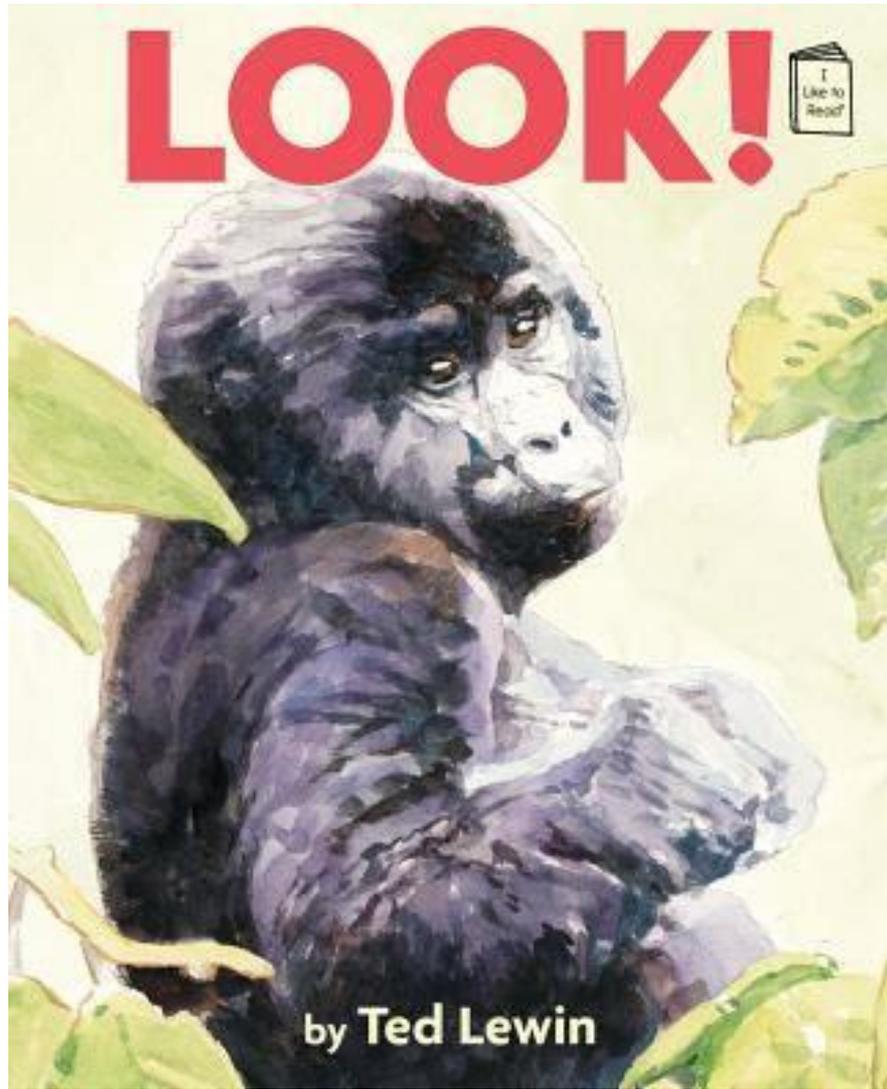
A PLACE FOR BATS

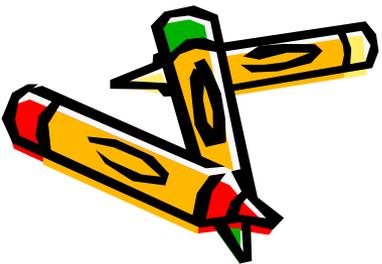
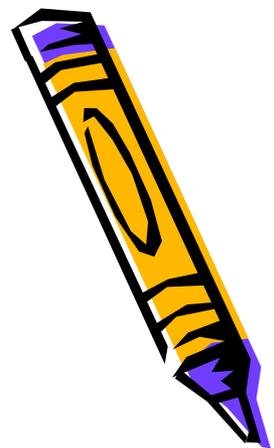
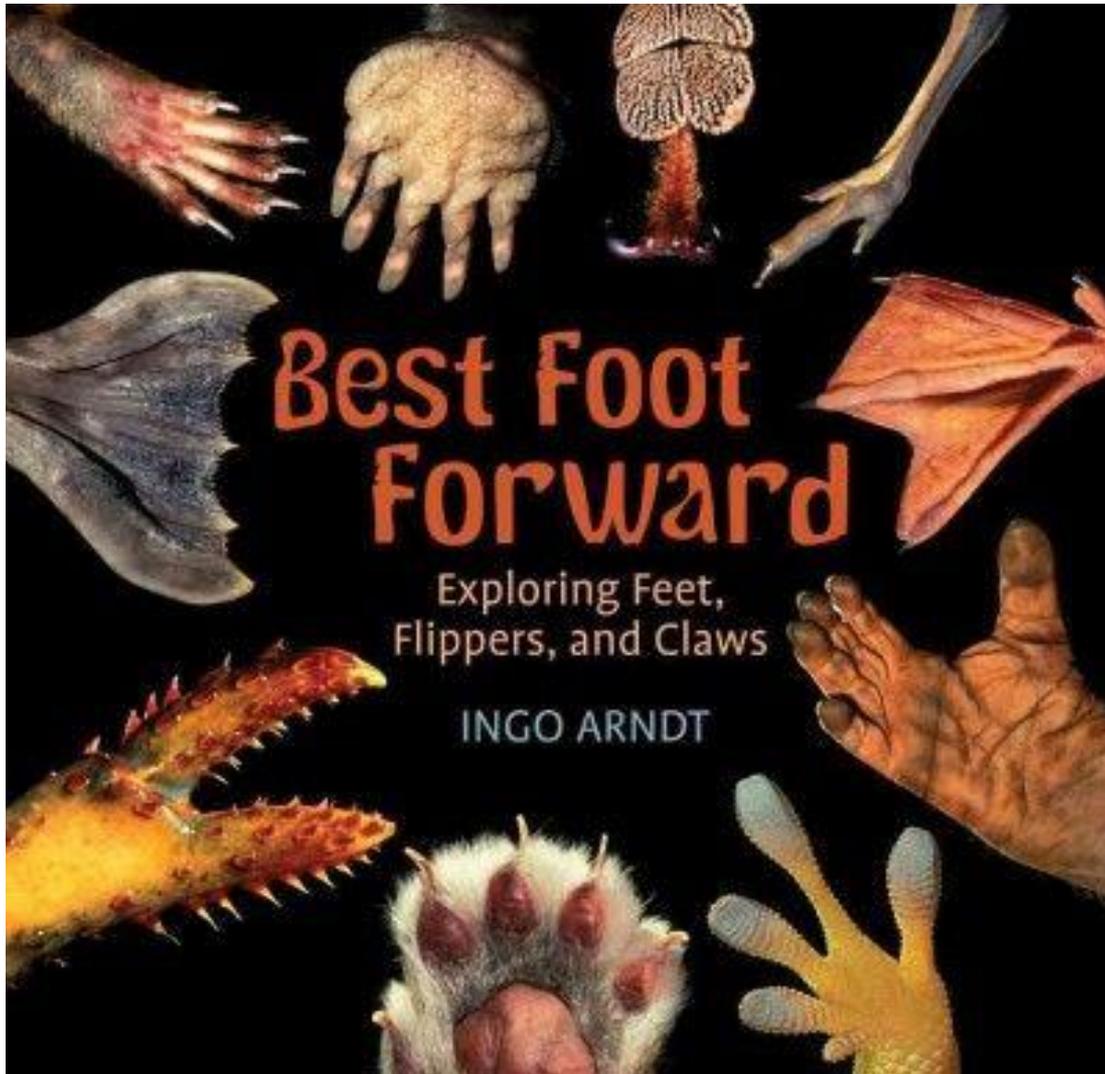


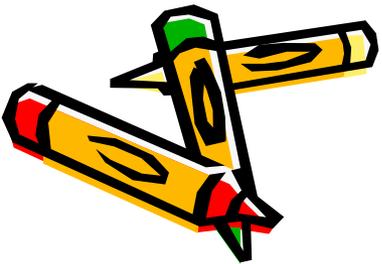
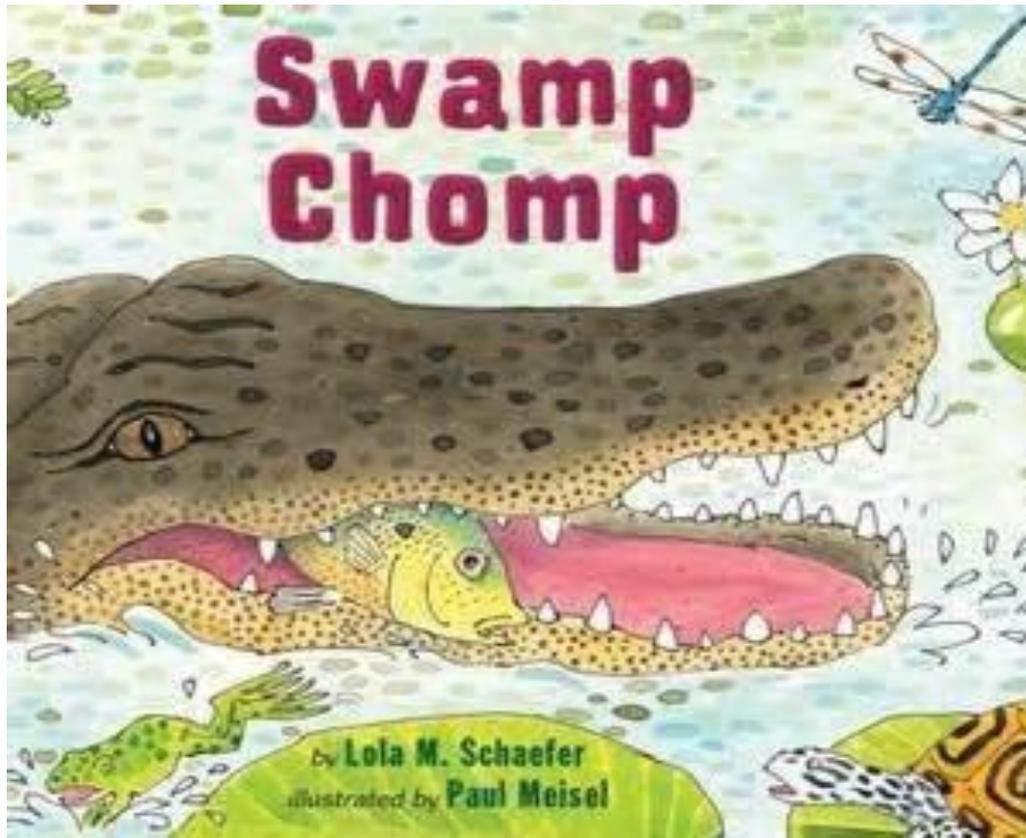
WRITTEN BY MELISSA STEWART

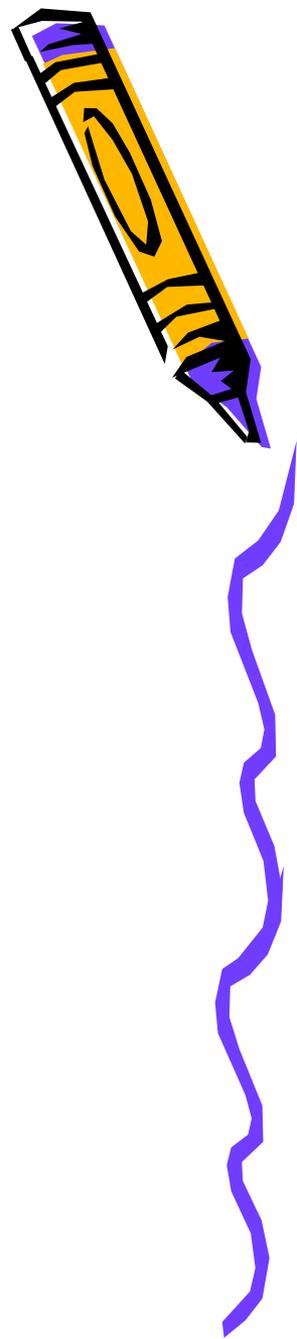
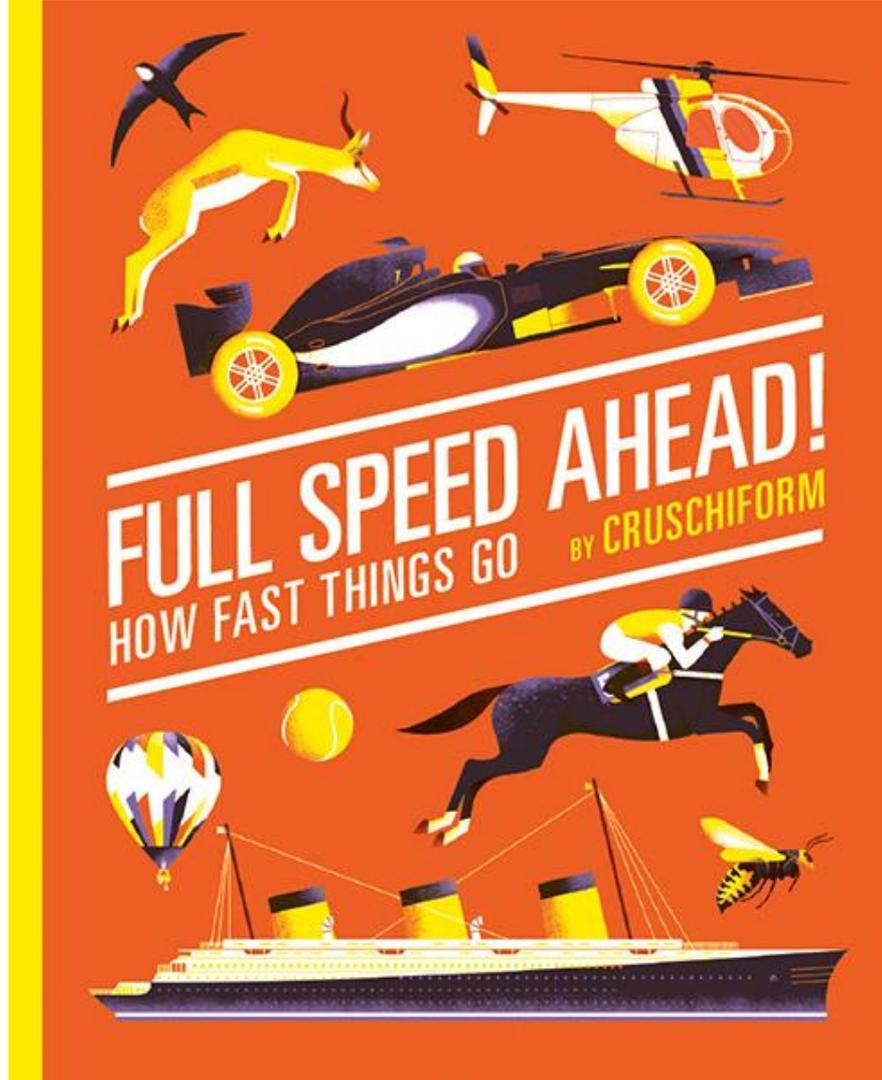
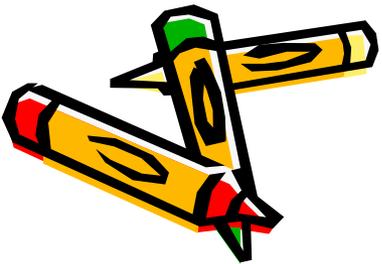
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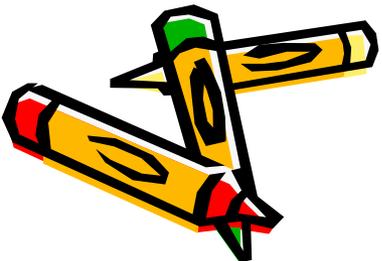
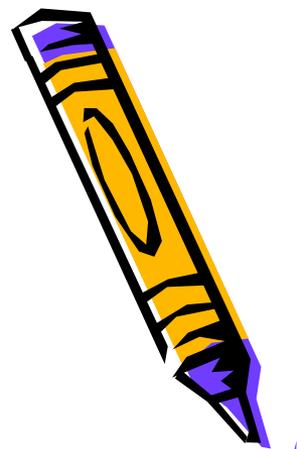
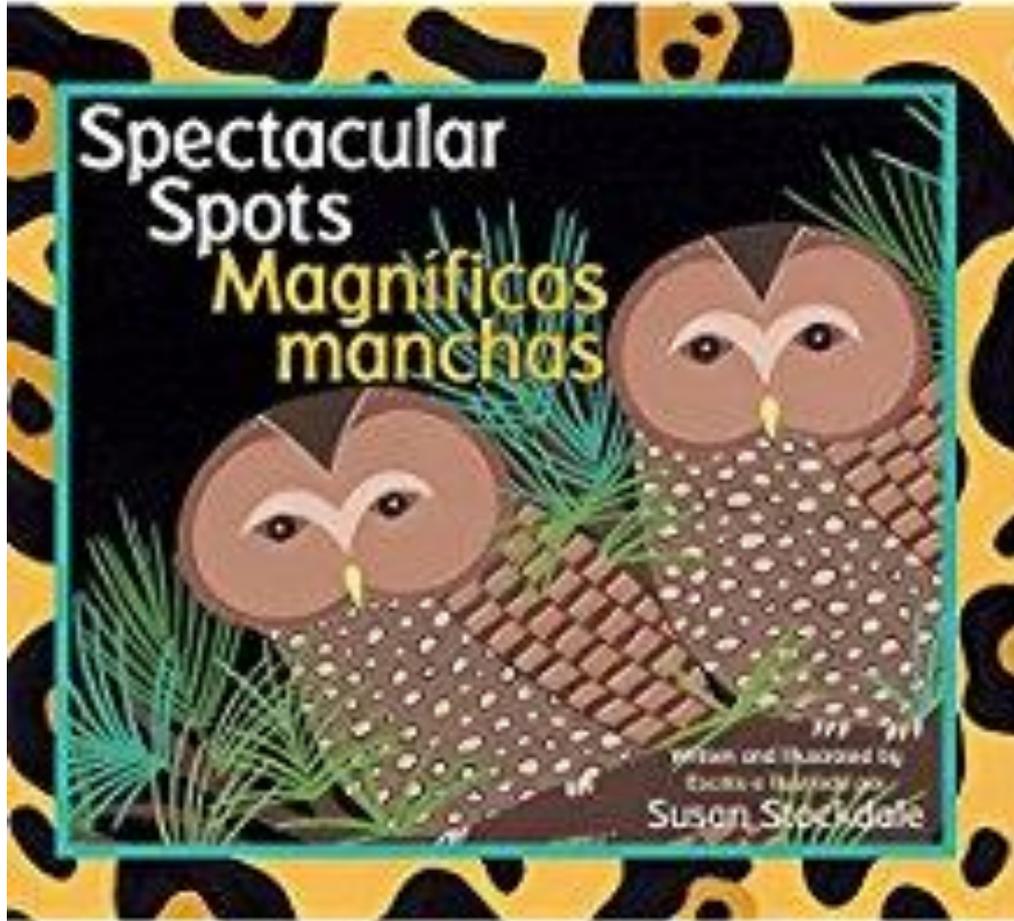


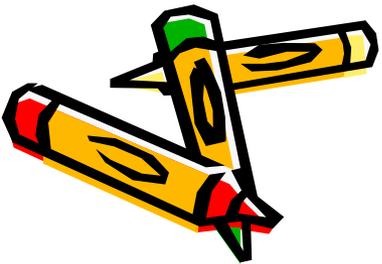
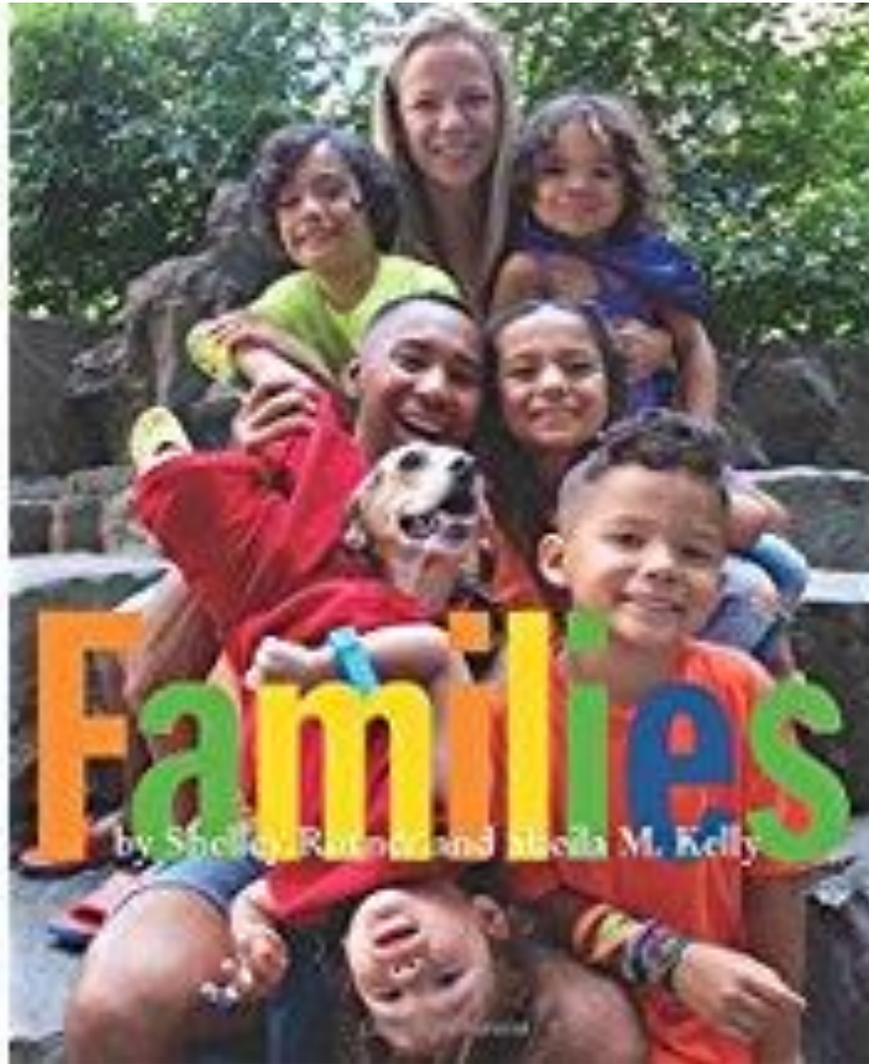




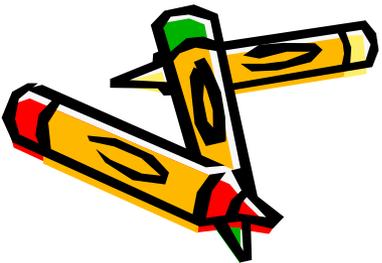
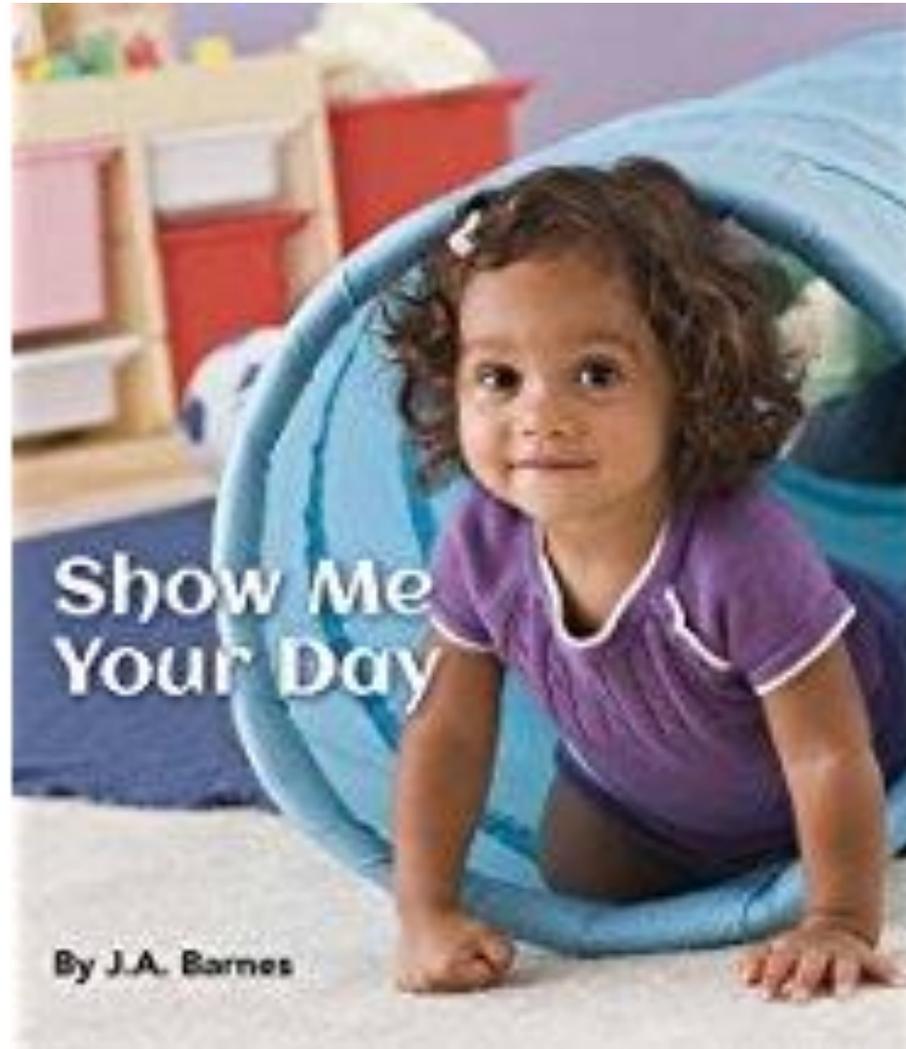
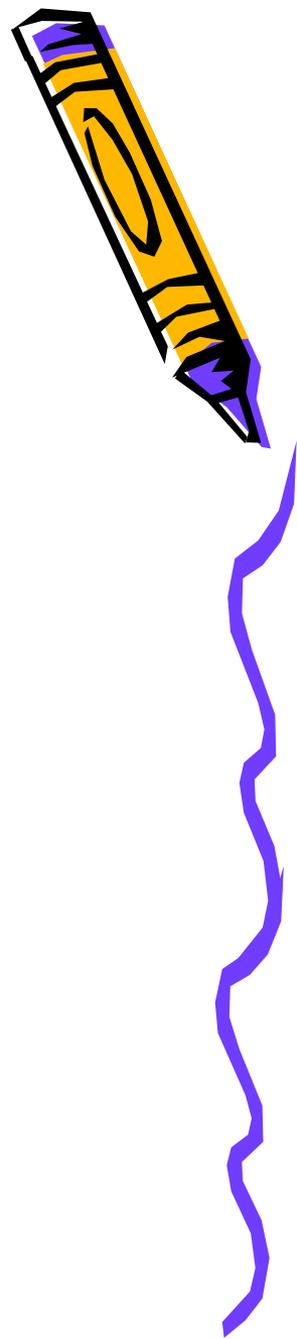




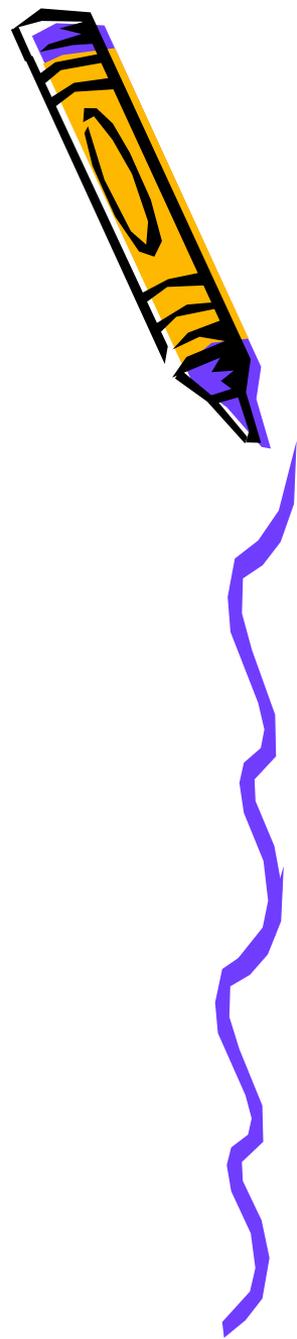




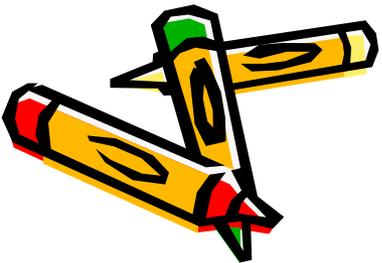
2017 Award for birth to 3



2017 Award for 4-8 year olds



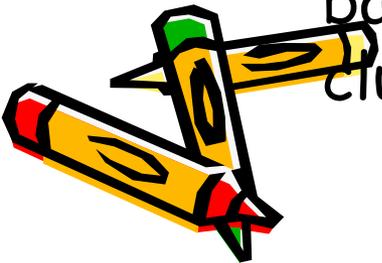
Their Great Gift



Building Vocabulary



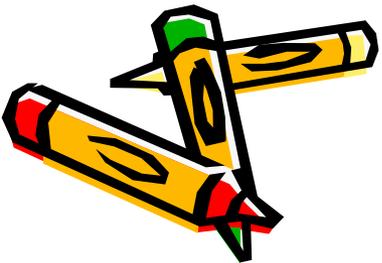
- Use rich but not too rich vocabulary
- Use vocabulary in supportive contexts
 - Use words that really fit
 - Provide language-based and visual clues
- Include taxonomic information
- Recognize that for our youngest children, we're creating a baseline of language so labelling things by pointing and touching them works best



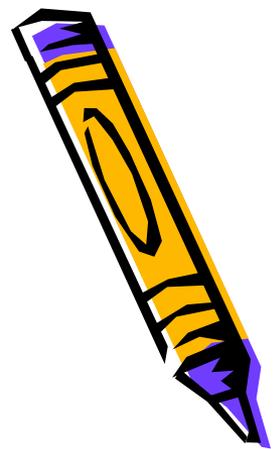
Promote Curiosity



- Praise children when they ask about a word they don't know
- Praise children when they let you know they don't understand
- Model questions and curiosity about words/ideas
- Generate interest in words/ideas

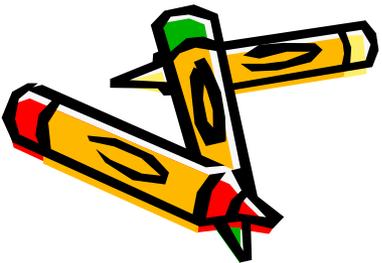


Nature is a natural place to
promote language and build
knowledge



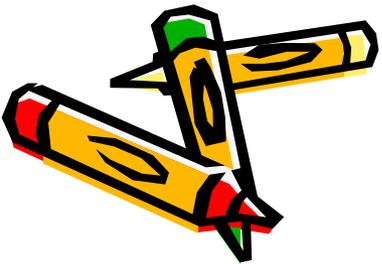
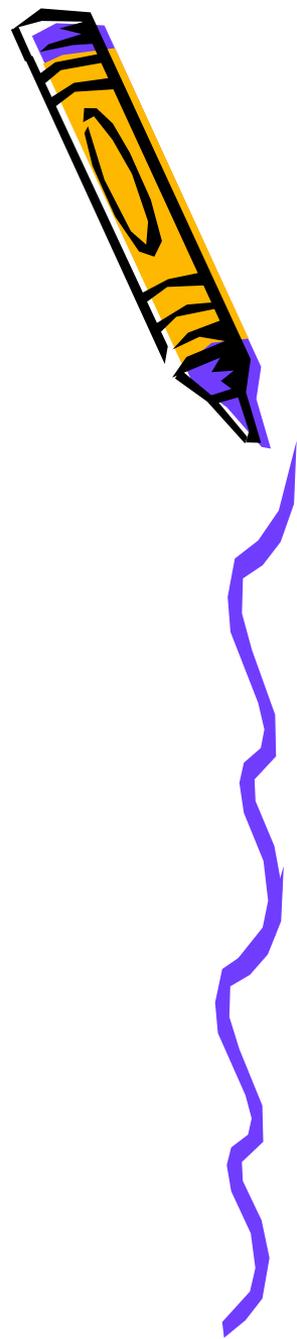
*"I never go out knowing what I'm going
to find. The interest is in finding what
I didn't know I was going to find."*

H.D. Thoreau



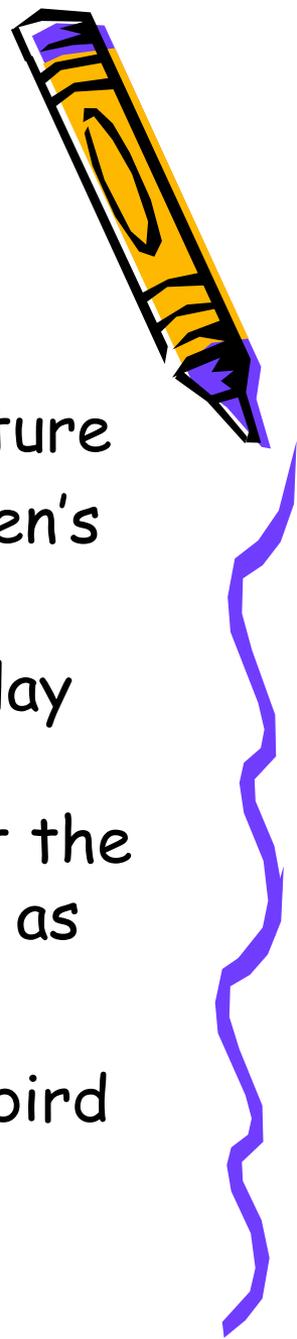
Designing Nature-based Experiences

- Learning about Natural World
- Nature in
- Children out





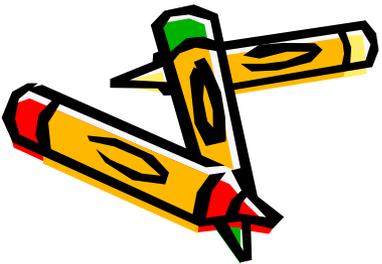
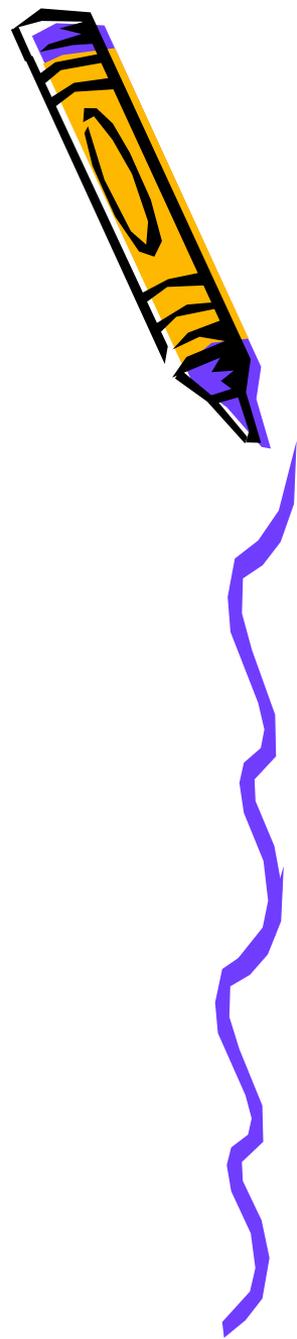
Learning about Natural World



- Read aloud, stories and informational text
- Show video of natural world
- Place nature guides in science area
- Writing about experiences in nature
- K-W-L about natural topics
- Advocating for nature
- Investigate children's interests
- Create dramatic play areas that invite pretend play about the natural world such as
 - Flower shop
 - Campouts with bird watching
 - Submarine



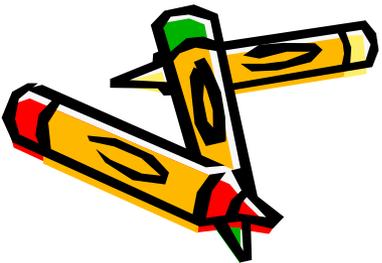




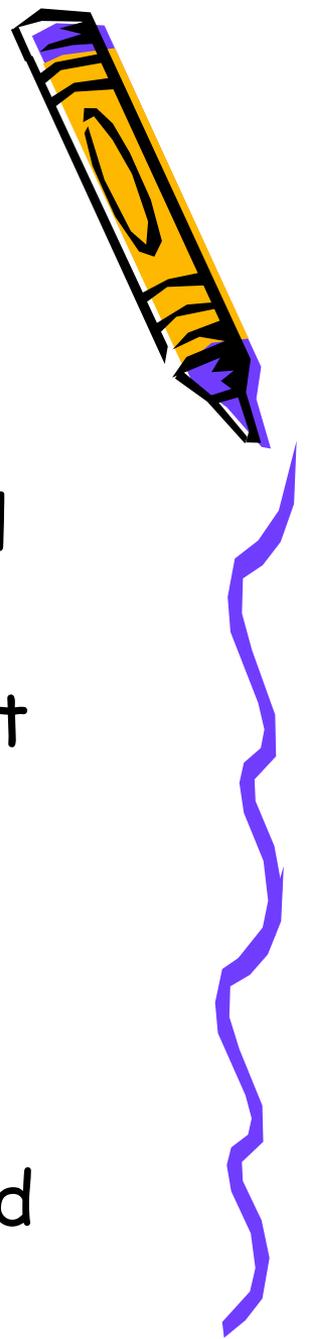
Brainstorm

- You try:

With your tablemates, generate some of the ways that you have learned about the natural world in your classroom. What can you add to this list?



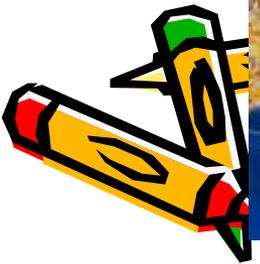
Nature In



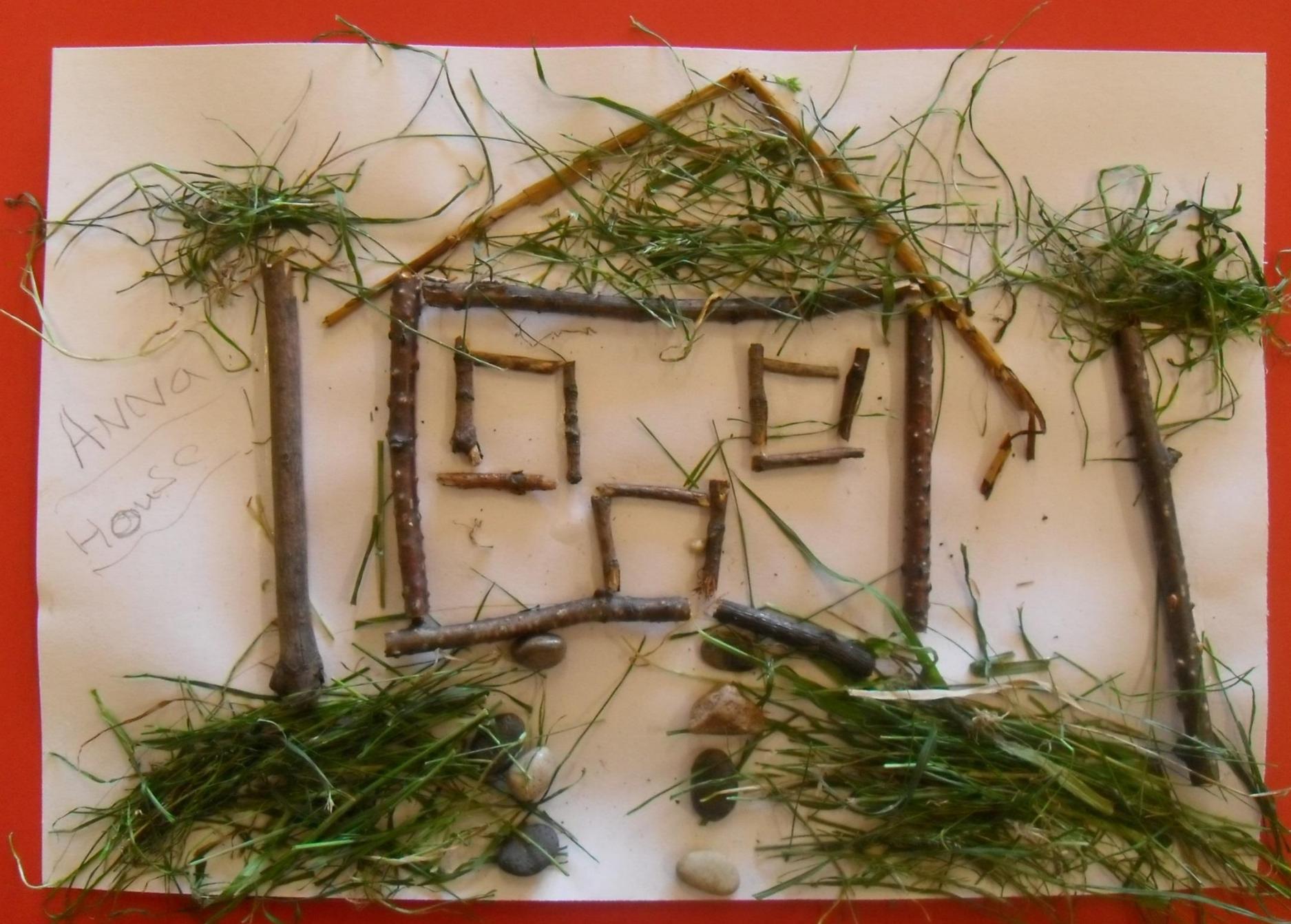
- Natural materials added to science area
- Natural materials added to texture table
- Natural materials added to block play
- Having an aquarium/animal care
- Journaling about animals in classroom
- Guest speakers with "stuff"
- Nature show and tell
- Start a garden

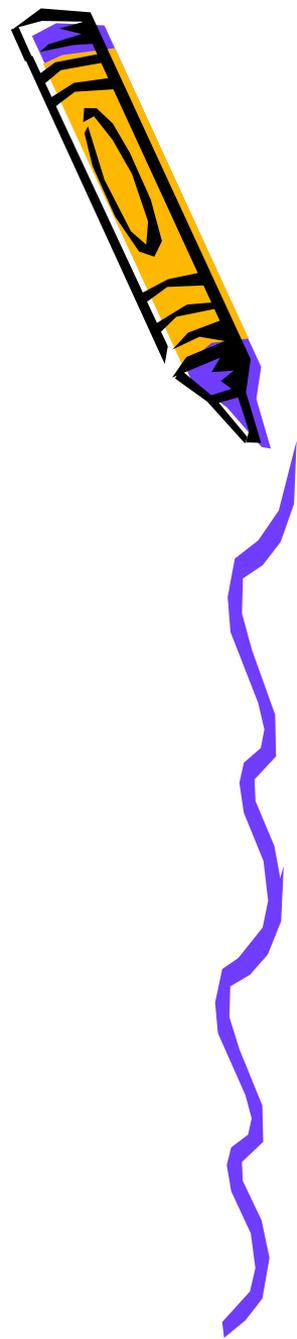
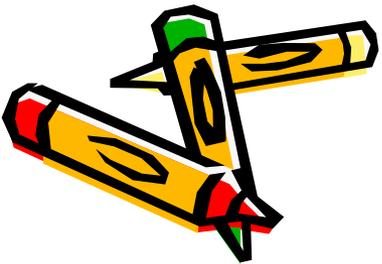


- Painting with natural materials
- Creating with clay



ANNA
HOUSE

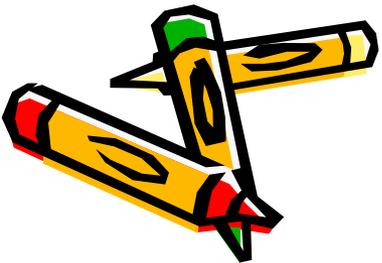
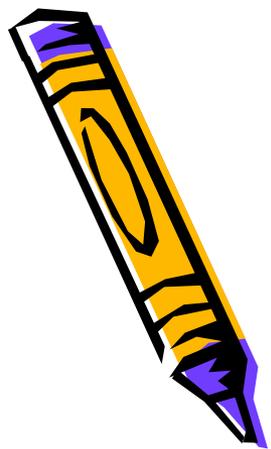




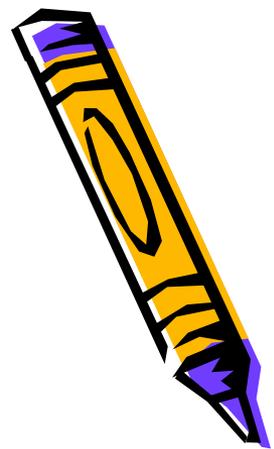
Brainstorm

You try:

With your tablemates, generate some of the ways that you have brought the natural world into your classroom. What can you add to this list?



Children Out



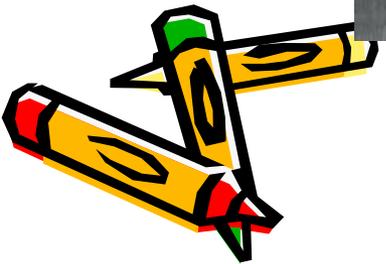
- Nature journals
- Personal nature spot
- Bird watching with guides
- Leaf identification
- Building with natural materials
- Book picnics
- Field trips
- Messy activities like painting, working with clay
- Water experiences
- Letter Scavenger hunts
- I Spy Beginning Sounds

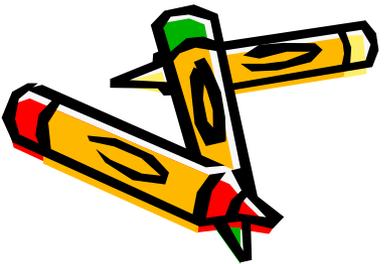
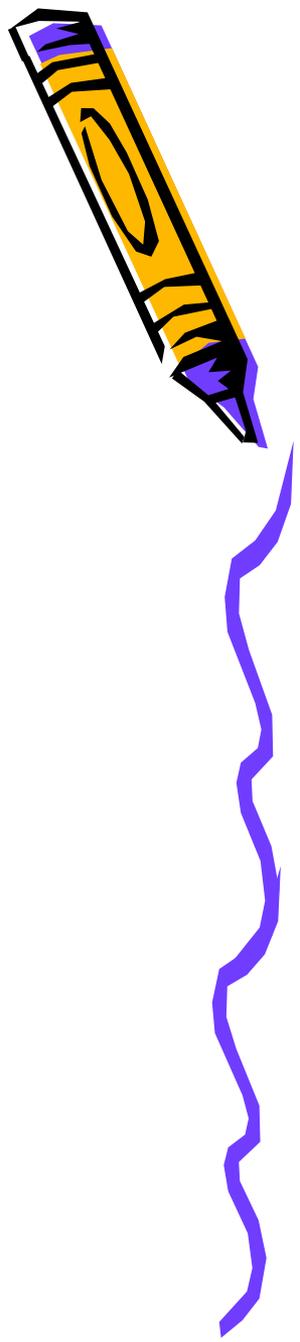




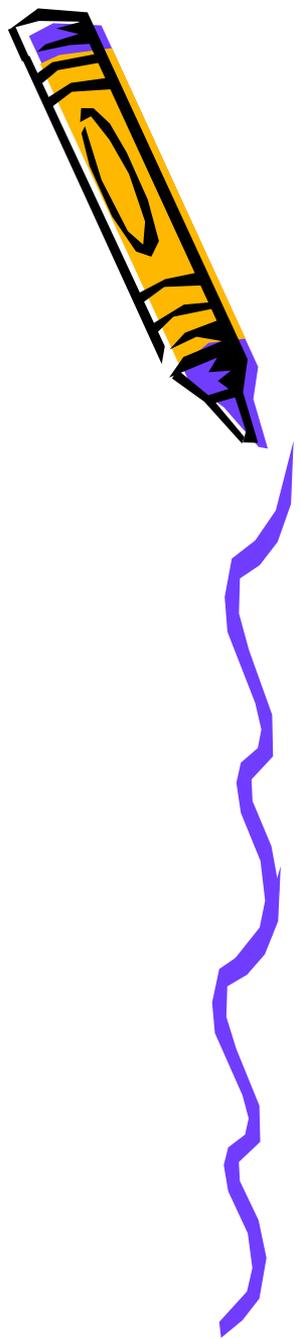
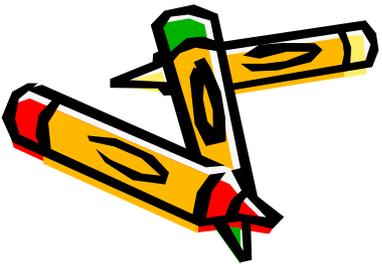


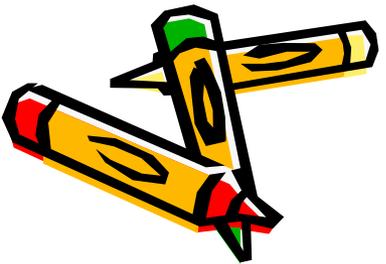
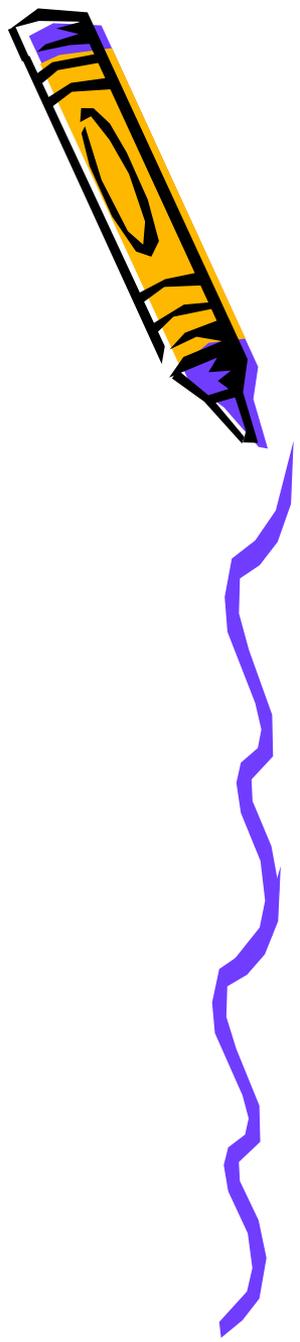






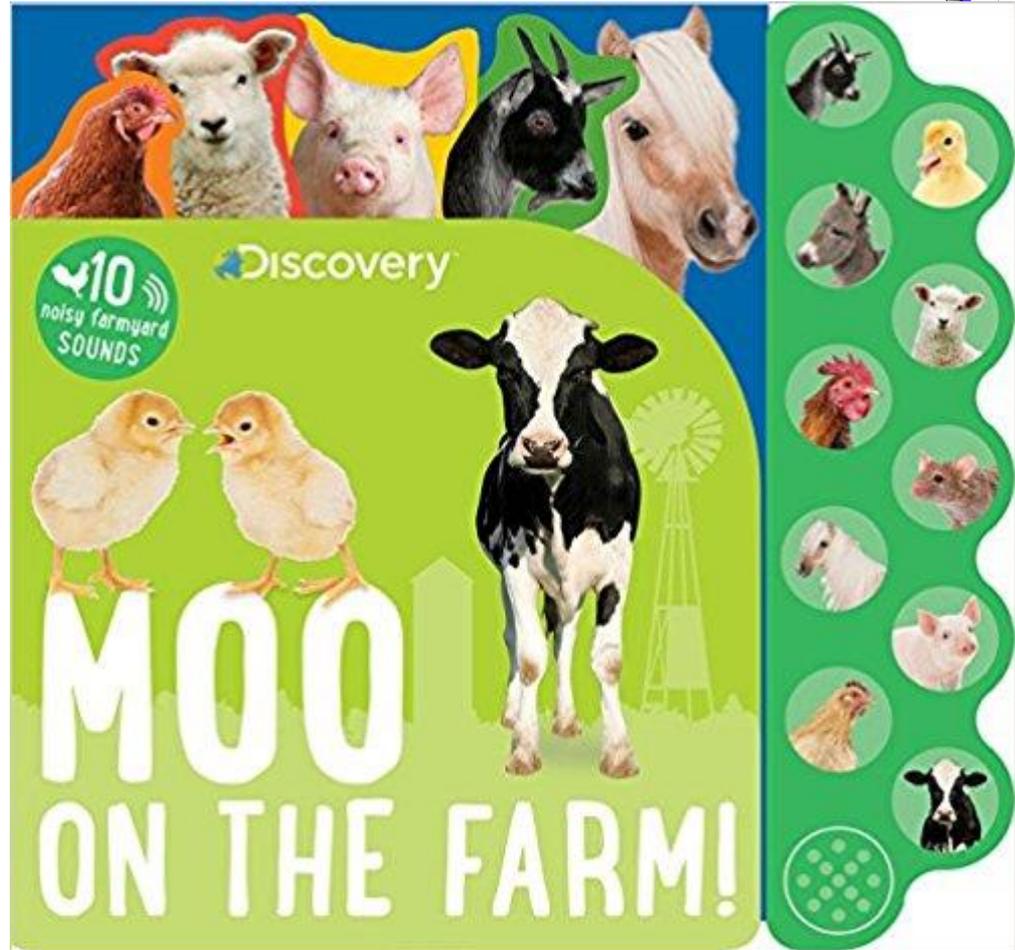
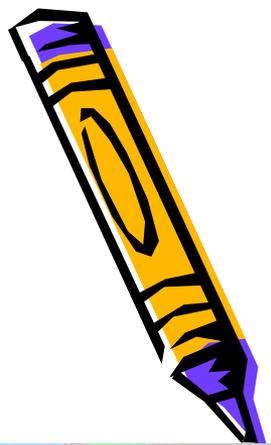




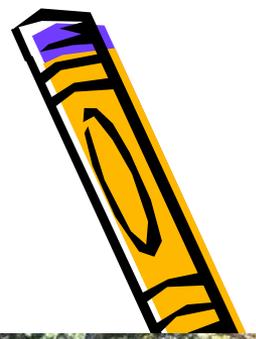


RAISIN

the Littlest Cow



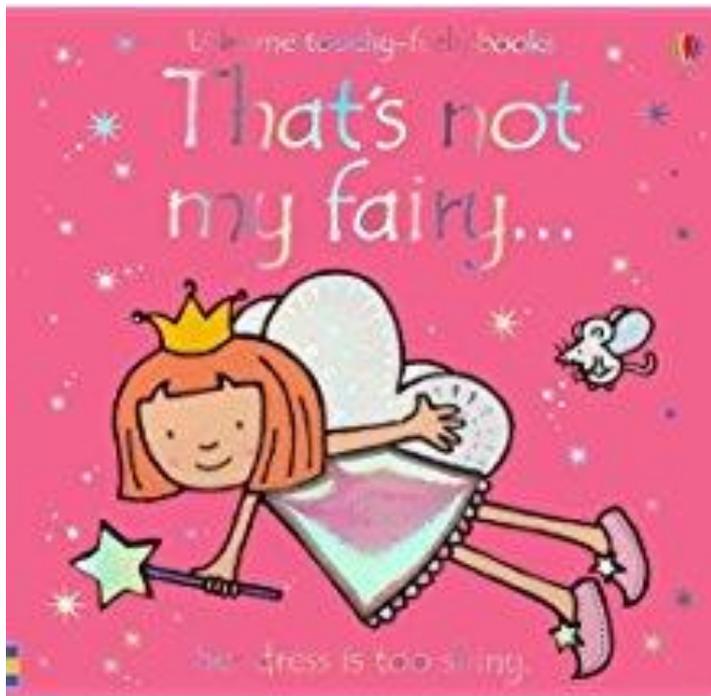
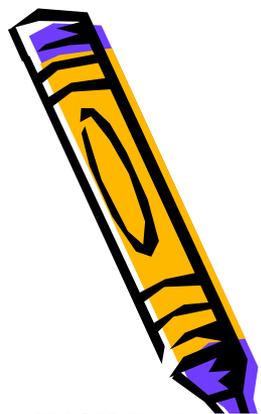
Remember:



*Anything you
can do inside,
you can do
outside*

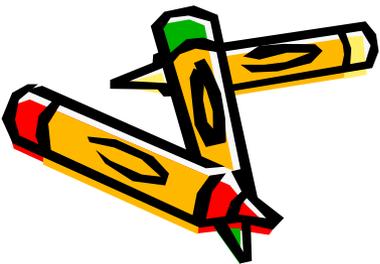
*(and probably
better!)*





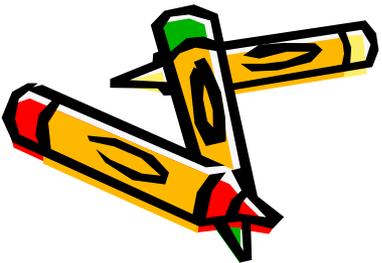
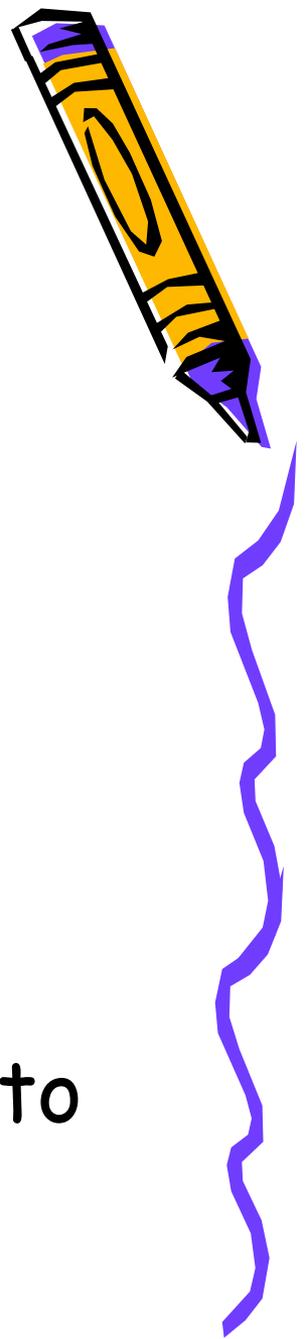
CASTLE

DAVID MACAULAY



Talk about it....

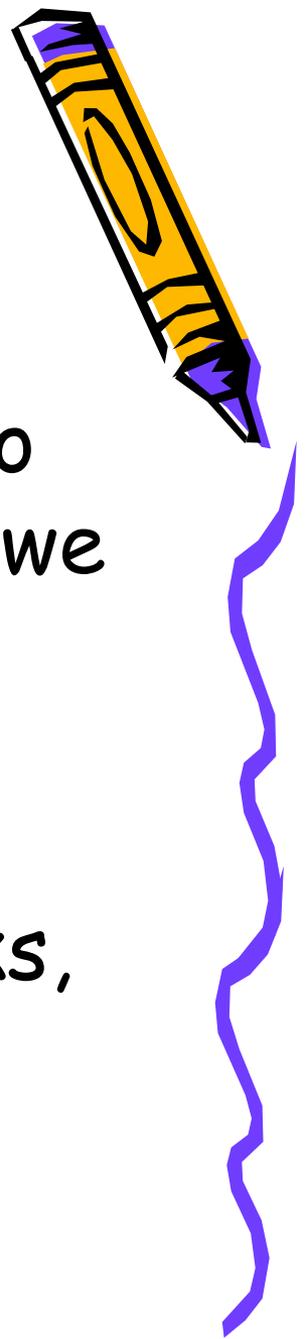
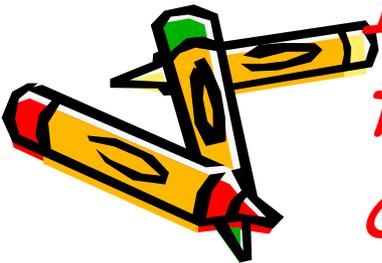
- With the people at your table, generate 2 things that you'll do differently right away to promote oral language and build knowledge with your children.
- How might you encourage families to do similar things?

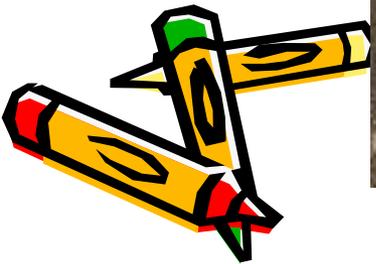
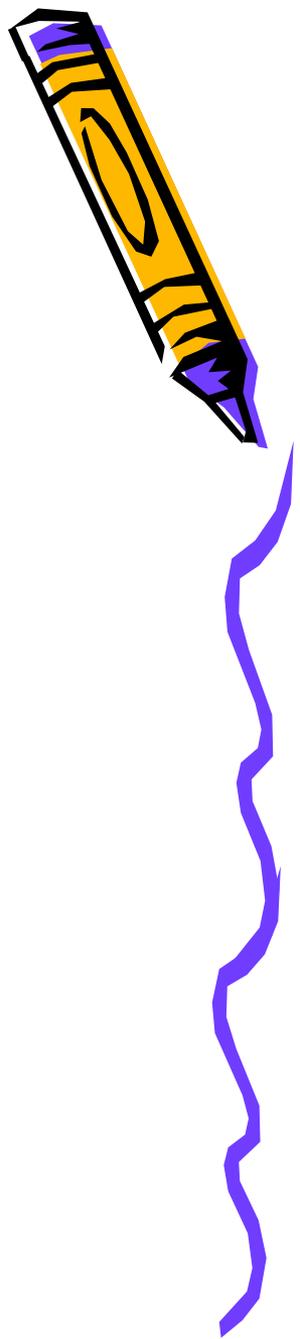


Concluding thoughts:

- Oral language is part of what we do all day. Even in a packed schedule, we can squeeze in time for purposeful instruction that promotes oral language and builds knowledge through play, read aloud, book looks, and exploring the world around us.

It's an important investment in their success across the curriculum and life!





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