

# Developing Literacy Through Projects



Carol Vaage

[cvaage@telus.net](mailto:cvaage@telus.net)

<http://www3.telus.net/public/cvaage>

<http://www.k-3learningpages.net>



# Balanced Literacy Model

- Guided reading
- Independent reading
- Shared reading
- Read Aloud
- Direct Instruction
- Word Work
- Guided writing
- Independent writing
- Shared writing
- Write Aloud
- Direct Instruction
- Projects



# Balanced Literacy

- books - fiction, nonfiction, poetry
- pattern stories
- rhyming stories
- author/illustrator collections
- concept books
- alphabet books
- predictable books
- leveled books
- home reading
- agenda books
- multimedia literacy
- research webs
- pocket charts
- magnetic/other letters
- literacy games/centers
- charts/duotangs of songs and poems
- children's names and language
- morning message
- journals
- printing
- making words
- class books
- key words/theme words
- spelling



# Balanced Literacy:

- Using rich variety of literature to provide strong context for understanding and using print, with specific instruction on needed skills in phonemic awareness and phonological development, and with writing in meaningful ways. This term is NOT a program in intent, but an understanding of how literacy is developed.



# Projects Devoted to Literacy

- Early Literacy - research, strategies, poems
- Literature for Literacy - phonemic awareness
- Learning to Read - K & Gr. 1
- Learning to Write - K & Gr. 1
- Readers Theatre - over 100 little plays
- Author in Residence - writing ideas
- Words for Beginning Readers - sight words
- Kindergarten Literacy - 8 classes
- Franklin - author study
- Canadian Author Studies - Robert Munsch...
- International Author Studies - Mem Fox...
- Canada Goose Rhymes - nursery rhymes



# Moving Beyond the Norm...

- Literacy - not just the instruction and skill development
- Moving to a real purpose, where there is motivation to reach beyond
- How to start?



# Shared Responsibility for Learning Options

- Every September - create a list of everything that the children want to learn during the year...
- You'll begin to see clusters of interests, possible threads to explore
- planets, moon, stars, sun...
- Choose a timely topic, brainstorm, and be ready to extend!



# Looking for the "Wonder"

- curiosity
- discovery
- exploration
- provocation
- possibilities
- research



# A journey together...

- to represent knowledge
- to build background knowledge
- to problem solve
- to follow interests
- to collaborate
- to dialogue
- to experience and explore the world



# Learning Environment

- make the learning environment the discovery zone
- manipulatives or hands-on-learning
- non-fiction and other media for research
- natural materials
- meaningful learning opportunities
- represent their learning



# Projects/Inquiry

Vision: description broad enough for diversity, yet narrow enough to give direction	From microcosm to macrocosm – from individual to classroom collaborative	Inspiring and motivating to others – push boundaries
References – using and creating	Contribute to world body of knowledge	Leading and exemplary practice
Showcase student work	From internalization of concepts to teaching to others	Authentic learning
Document learning	Interact with experts	Constructing meaning



# Space

- In-depth learning project reaching beyond the Gr. 1 curriculum.
- A special interest project
- 8 months of intensive study and exploration
- Eleanor Duckworth... in-depth projects stimulate love of learning



# Higher Levels of Thinking

- multimedia and internet research to gather ideas and information; decision making; responsibility
- writing, sharing orally and viewing information
- comparing ideas, experiences, drawing conclusions
- active participation/working together – small and large group
- creating new resources
- hypothesized about possible concepts
- shared their comprehension through communication of learned information
- synthesized, applied, analyzed, critiqued and evaluated their knowledge
- curiosity and persistence in learning new things
- making choices; persisting; independence



# First Topic: Sun/Shadows

- Why? closest to their immediate world and experience
- September 10 - began to notice where the sun was early in the morning; drawing shadows on tarmac and comparing to later in day; recording 3 shadows
- my role? to guide their queries; to provoke; to give experiences
- literacy? research - non-fiction; making labeled scientific diagrams; representing their experiences



# Provocation

- I wonder...
- Could you show me...
- Let's figure out how that could be...
- So, in other words, if you... then...?
- What would happen next?
- But why would that be?
- So, now our question is...
- Did you notice?
- What have you discovered...



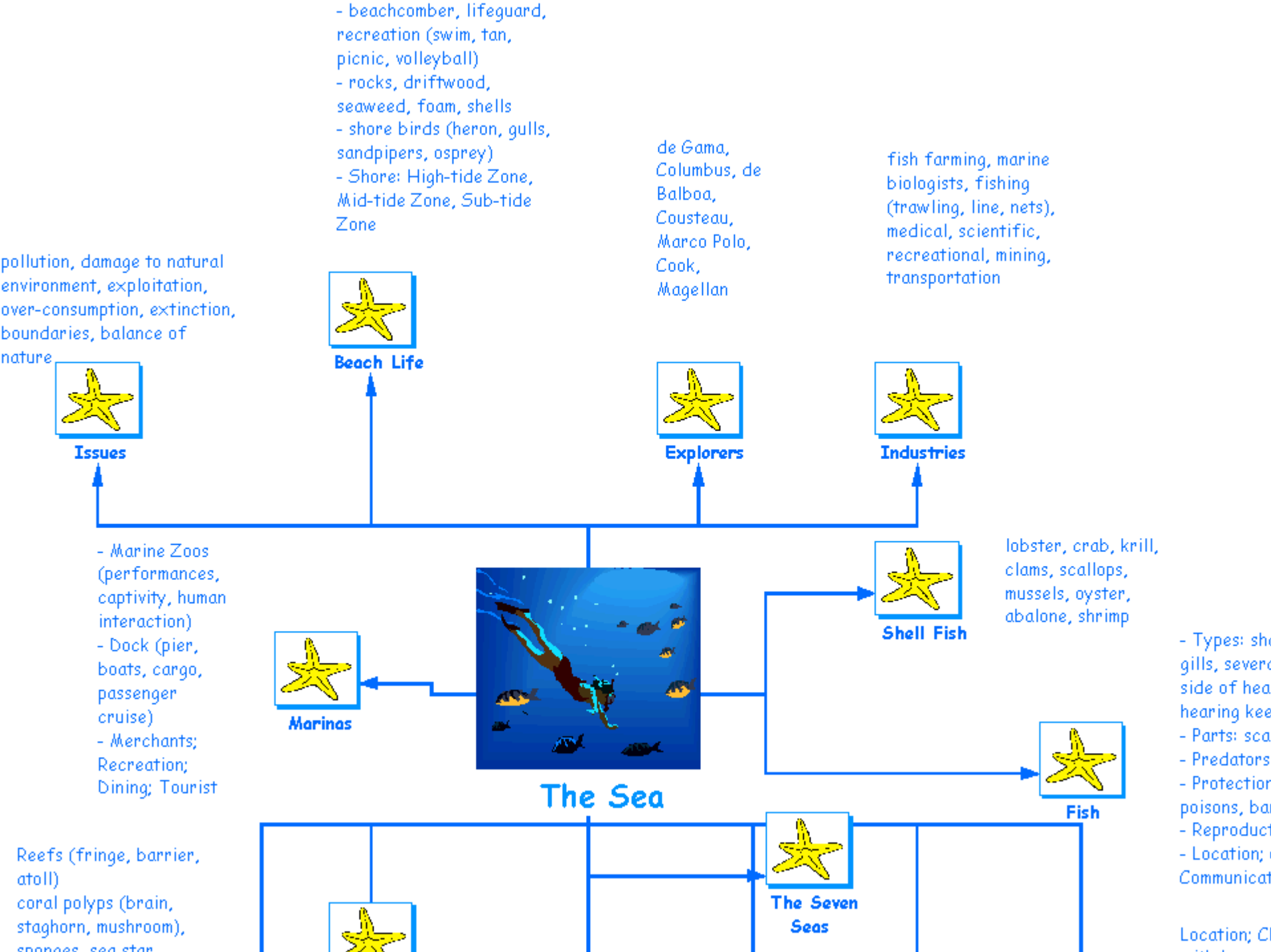
# Inventing Theories

- Maybe it's because...
- I think...
- I'll tell you how it works...
- Let me show you...
- Last year, \_\_\_\_\_ happened and so I know that...
- I saw...



# Planning

- Brainstorm a web for real world context and extension
- Apply to subject areas
- Create resource supports
- Gather materials
- Access experts
- Allow for flexibility of time







# Classroom Supports

- Theme words
- Print resources - non-fiction, fiction, newspaper, internet resources,
- Models, photos
- Documentation panels
- Integration into other subject areas



# Moon Study

- In October interest was sparked in the moon - fall moon... non-fiction
- Research - non-fiction texts, multimedia
- Completing a map of the moon/legend
- Sequencing phases; vocabulary (waxing/waning gibbous)
- Making it concrete - moonscapes



# Galaxies and Stars

- Research - visual, multimedia, non-fiction
- Multimedia movie online from Hubbles telescope (using SMART board)
- Hands-on experience - creating their own galaxies - art projects
- Visual environment



# Mars Research Report

- Research using multimedia - newspaper articles; internet reports and data; TV debriefing about findings on Mars
- Scaffolding - being a conduit for recording their implicit knowledge, making it explicit for them
- Showing editing process



# Building a Space Shuttle

- Problem solving throughout
- Dramatic role play - engineering teams
- Authentic purposes for dialogue, creative thinking, team work, reflection, analysis
- Diagrams to record recommendations, plans
- Research



# Author Study - Robert Munsch

- Book reports
- Favorites poll
- Illustrating
- Noting special features, motifs
- Creating our own story (internalizing, applying, synthesizing)



# Author Study - Joanna Cole

- Read all of MSB books
- Understand predictability, characterization, plots, humor, style
- Favorite story illustrations
- Recreate our own MSB story - including the student reports...



# Rovers

- Multimedia research
- Online video streaming for models
- Photos from Internet
- Realization on how fast information can change - purposes of media - e.g.. books versus Internet or TV
- Diagrams/ Plans/Creation - debrief to other engineering teams



# Universe Space Movie

- Using photos from non-fiction books, students created their own narration and comments to create a non-fiction movie.
- Authoring for multimedia; real audience



# Culmination - Blast Off to Mars

- Creation of crews to divide responsibilities; lists, needs, and expectations discussed in whole group
- Deadline date for launch
- Media and parental, administrative invitations
- Reports prepared; rehearsals; agenda written
- Multimedia PowerPoints - launch, agenda



# Priorities to give young children:

- to think

- to wonder

- to interact with the world



# Literacy...

- incredible growth - 8 students reading at gr. 6 and beyond
- all believed they could write non-fiction reports
- all confident they could research - all media
- increased confidence in presentations to audience
- drama skills enhanced
- active dialogue and problem solving skills improved
- vocabulary enriched
- several literary forms understood
- ownership of two original texts modeled after authors
- surpassed Gr. 1 curriculum expectations!



# A parent's story...

■ a rock

you share the wonder of learning!