

# Primary Writing Ideas



## Action Verbs – “Verb Volume”

Looking for a book full of action? Read aloud *Add It, Dip It, Fix It: A Book of Verbs* by Richard Schneider (Ticknor & Fields Books for Young Readers, 1996) for a unique look at verbs. After sharing the book, choose a common noun such as a ball. Then demonstrate how to coming the noun with 26 verbs, each beginning with a letter of the alphabet. For example, arch the ball, bounce the ball, catch the ball, dribble the ball, etc. Then pair up your students. Give them an AlphaSmart and a common noun and challenge the pair to combine that noun with 26 different verbs. (Mailbox, 97-98 Yearbook, p. 266)

## Nouns – “Nouns About All Around”

Give your students a break from the classroom and lead them on a noun tour! Divide your class into four groups (1) people; (2) places; (3) things; (4) ideas, thoughts, and emotions. Designate 3 members in each group as the recorder, noise monitor, and reporter. The recorder takes the AlphaSmart on the tour wand writes down all the nouns that are spotted by her teammates and fit in her group’s category as they walk around the school. Instruct the noise monitor to keep down his group’s noise level. Upon returning to class, the reporter gets to read aloud his group’s noun list. (Mailbox, 97-98 Yearbook, p. 86)

## A Large Order of Silly Sentences

Serve up a large order of sentence building – sprinkled with a dash of silliness- by playing this creative-thinking game! Divide your students into groups of four or five; then have each team select a recorder and give that person an AlphaSmart. Start the game by announcing a simple subject, such as cats. Then challenge each group to make up a sentence using that subject with other words that begin wit its first letter (Clever cats claw clean couches constantly). Direct all group members to stand as soon as their recorder has keyed in their team’s sentence. After each recorder has read her team’s sentence, award one point for each word that begins with the designated letter. Award a bonus point to the group that stood first. Declare the group with the most points at the end of the game the winner. (Mailbox, 98-99 Yearbook, p. 64)

## Snapshot Sentences

Have each student bring a snapshot to class. Have them type an interrogative, imperative, declarative, and exclamatory sentence into one of the files on the AlphaSmart that would give others a clue as to what picture was being talked about. For example, if you have a picture of folks sitting around a lake, their sentences might be:  
Are the fish biting?

Don't swim without your life jacket on.

The water is really calm today.

Wow, is it hot out here today!

If you have a computer that will project onto a screen or TV, have the student hook their AS to the computer and display their four sentences to the class. The other students try to match the photographs on display to the sentences on the screen. Another option is to print the questions and display them randomly on the bulletin board with the photographs and have students match them on the board.

(Mailbox, 98-99 Yearbook, p. 63)

## **Pen Pal Punctuation Day**

Passing notes in class? You bet, when you hold a special Pen Pal Punctuation Day! For morning work, have each student decorate a file folder as a personal "mailbox." After the mailboxes are completed, have each student draw a classmate's name out of a container of name slips. Then have him write his pen pal a brief letter on the AlphaSmart with no punctuation. Print it out and deliver to her mailbox. After all the mail is delivered, have each student edit his pen pal's letter and then return it to be checked. How's that for a special delivery of letter-perfect punctuation practice?

## **"A is for Alaska" - Autobiographical Alphabet Books**

Students will begin with the letter A and think of something that relates to them using that letter – for example "I was born in Alaska". Open up a file on the AlphaSmart and title that page "A is for Alaska" and follow with a paragraph that talks about being born in Alaska. Go to the printer and print out that page. For the second page of the book, they might title it "B is for Basketball" and follow that with a paragraph about their favorite sport of basketball. Continue this over a series of days until all the letters of the alphabet are used. They can bind their pages together to make their own bio-book. As enrichment, you can have students add their own art, or upload to a computer and add computer graphics to the pages.

## **Vocabulary Stretchers**

Here is a basic game that gives students a good workout vocabulary. Put the following information on the board:

Country	Adjective	Profession	Action Verb	Vegetable
File 1	File 2	File 3	File 4	File 5

Now, give the students a letter of the alphabet....for example B. Have them key in words in each file that correspond with the category and that letter of the alphabet -

Bolivia	big	baker	burp	beet
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For words that match someone else's, they get 5 points. If no one has their word, it is worth 10 points.