

Building the Optimum Writing Program: Summer Plans

Meeting the Challenge of Rigorous Common Core Standards in September!



by Nellie Edge www.nellieedge.com

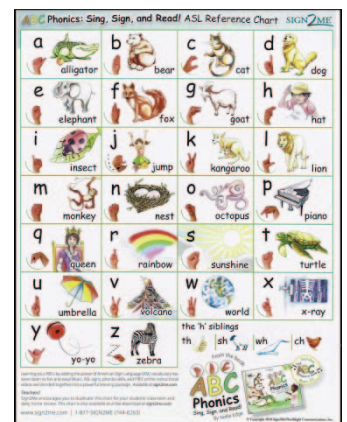
- Relax, unwind, hike, walk, run, and swim—take good care of yourself! Play, read, cook, exercise: recommit to activities that bring you the deepest joy...
- Read (or reread) your writing resource books, [complimentary eBooks](#) and articles from our website: Think about how you want to expand your writing program. What are your writing goals for next year?
- Attend professional development in kindergarten writing this summer! See invitation to [Writing-to-Read workshops](#).
- Reread "[Ten Best Writing-to-Read Strategies](#)" and peruse the writing samples on our [Common Core State Standards](#) link and then consider: What strategies do you want to strengthen? How will you invite children to begin using narrative, informational, and opinion writing while teaching foundational ABC/Phonics skills? Plan to differentiate.
- **The environment is our most important cooperating teacher:** children deserve beauty, organization, and a cozy home-like feel. Consider adding live plants, a rocking chair, art prints, flowers, low lamps and natural objects. Step back and look at your environment. Is it organized, child-centered, uncluttered, and a warm beautiful place in which to learn? Is there a place for everything and everything in its place? Study "The Daily 5 Kindergarten" DVD and [The Daily Cafe](#) website. This site contains high-quality content and great kindergarten videos—consider joining.
 - **Master kindergarten teachers spend a great deal of time working on the environment over the summer!** We clean, paint, build shelves, reorganize centers,



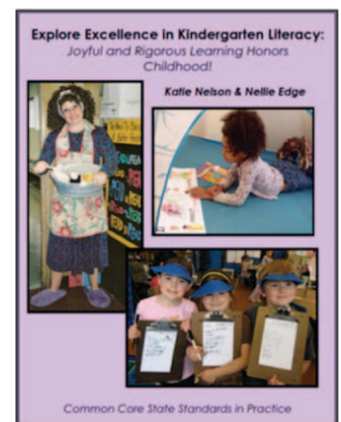
design poetry posters, make "I" charts...

- Do you need to go through shelf by shelf, drawer by drawer, and give away or store things you don't use?



- Do you have black laminated mats in different sizes ready to use as visual frames for children's art?

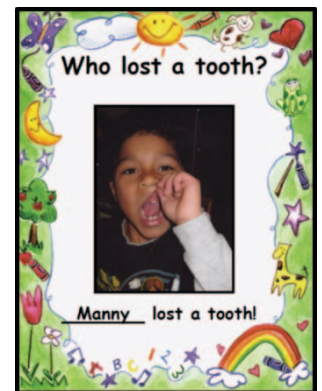


- Do you have one consistent ABC Phonics/Sign Language program with visuals: ABC Wall cards, miniature ABC charts, Family Reference Charts, and dictionary pages for writing notebooks? These are available to Members.
- Are "heart word" props ready: large charts, writing center props, collections of pink, purple, yellow, and green cutout "heart word" sets? (See *Writing-to-Read Accelerates Literacy*, Chapter 4 and CD of templates.)
- Do you have 4-6 independent writing totes ready with 50-100 premade skinny books, folded books, and rubber band books? Do you have writing language models prepared for a Write-a-Message center? Do you have drawing guides, mounted and laminated for the Rubber Band Book Center? (See *Writing-to-Read Accelerates Literacy*, Chapter 6, pages 196-237.)
- **Enhance your "Parents as Partners" program:** Get addresses and phone numbers of your new families.
- **Have you made your Parent Volunteer Notebook** with informative articles? See *Parents as Partners in Kindergarten and Early Literacy*, Chapter 4, pages 69-82 and complimentary articles under [Parents as Partners](#).)
- **Plan several summer work parties: invite parents of next year's kinders to help!** Have a series of "cut-mount-staple-and-fold" work parties. Think groups of 4-6 parents and grandparents getting acquainted, working together (at a home or at kindergarten), and taking several hours of projects home, saving you weeks of time! (They also are delighted to get to know you, their child's wonderful kindergarten teacher!)
- **What is your plan for Back-to-School Open House**, summer home visits, phone communication, post cards, or back-to-school letters? (See *Explore Excellence in Kindergarten Literacy* by Katie Nelson, Chapter 3, pages 59-75. See attached article on Scavenger Hunt.)
- **What is your plan for Name Tickets?** Organize the strategy, and precut Name Tickets and Name Ticket books for parents. (See *Writing-to-Read Accelerates Literacy*, Chapter 3, page 67.)
- **Analyze your class library:** are the books easily accessible for children? Do you have them in categories that work with your deeply integrated curriculum themes? Are there enough quality

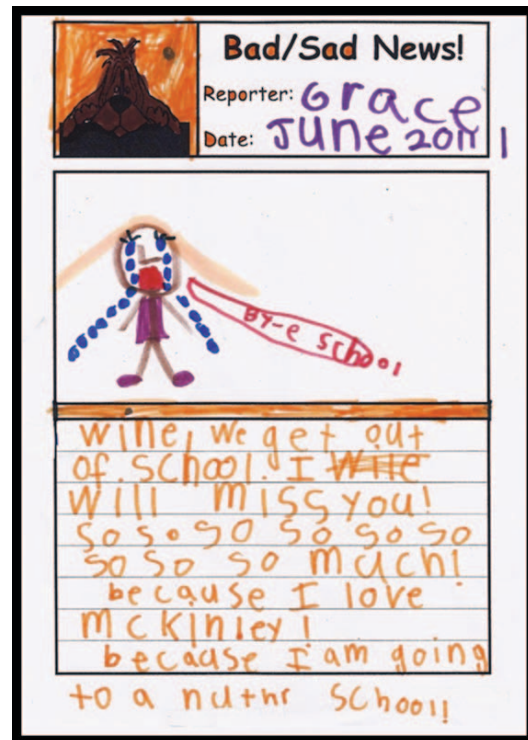
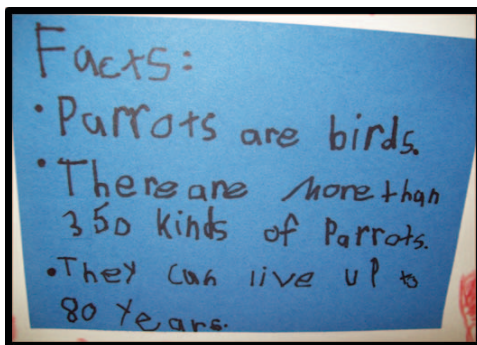


"just-right" I Can Read books? Great nonfiction? (See Favorite Literature under [Children's Books](#) tab.)

- **Is your Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting plan ready?** Do you have a fingerspelling font, a, b, c, d guides, word models of "I love you" and "heart word" sentences available? (See [Great Writing and Drawing Resources](#) and Writing-to-Read CD.)
- **Plan for the class books your children will make together.** Do you have notebooks, sleeve protectors, paper, and a plan ready for several class-made books? (See *Writing-to-Read Accelerates Literacy*, Chapter 1: *Mary Wore Her Red Dress*, *The More We Get Together*, *Who Lost a Tooth?*)
- **Practice fingerspelling and signing songs.** (Access free  videos under [Video Clips](#).)
- Have clear plastic sleeves (mounted on colored construction paper) ready for the child's first drawing and writing "This is me in September" page.
- **Place a district order for white 3-ring binders** with cover sleeves for your "I Can Read" poetry and song (reading fluency) notebooks. Have Fall Songs and Rhymes—printed and organized in folders. Download free from [Free Poetry](#) tab. (See *Explore Excellence in Kindergarten Literacy*, Chapter 7, pages 118-148.)
- **Make friends with Mother Goose.** Download free Mother Goose Little Books under the [Little Books](#) tab and Poetry Anthology pages (September: Illustrated Mother Goose Rhymes) under [Free Poetry](#) tab. (See *Celebrate Language and Accelerate Literacy*, Chapter 4, pages 45-64.)
- **Make play dough abc and "heart word" mats.** The recipe and mats are free downloads for Members at www.nellieedge.com. Also see *Writing-to-Read Accelerates Literacy*, Chapter 4.
- **Decide on the format for your students' first Kid Writing notebooks** (aka writing journals) and have them ready. See *Writing-to-Read Accelerates Literacy*, Chapter 5, pages 152-194.) Also view Kid Writing  [Video Clip](#) with Julie Lay.
- **Create a name for your class and decide on a welcoming door** with photos of the children.



- Plan for fall science explorations and science writing notebooks. (See links to Diane Bonica's and Laura Flocker's awesome websites for inspiration, found under the Literacy Award Sites tab at www.nellieedge.com.)
- Which books, songs, chants, and management rituals will you introduce on the first day and weeks of school? (See [Boot Camp](#) for new teachers.)
- Read the past August and September newsletters from www.nellieedge.com (see Newsletters tab) for additional inspiration and helpful links.
- Consider reading:
 - [Why We Are Optimistic about Kindergarten Common Core State Standards: ELA](#)
 - [Excellence in Kindergarten and Early Literacy](#)
 - [The SMILE Approach to Joyful, Accelerated Kindergarten Literacy](#)



Have high expectations! Be systematic and intentional. Consider the new Common Core Standards as an opportunity to pursue excellence...Ask for help and have a **GRAND ADVENTURE!**



What are your professional development goals for summer?

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