



# THE LITERACY LINE

*Keeping you in touch with ways to promote literacy for lifelong learning.*

*Newsletter of the*

*Emerald Empire Reading Council*  
*www.literacylane.org*

*Nov/Dec 2011*

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## **Available now—eLiteracyLine**

Did you realize you could have this newsletter delivered electronically—right into your email inbox? “What are the advantages?” you ask. For one, if you are receiving it at home, you are always lacking two pages because a 10-page newsletter is the postal limit for one stamp. Electronically, you will receive the complete newsletter.

You will also get photos and other graphics in color, receive active links that you can click and view immediately, and you will be able to save and file pages from the newsletter right on your computer for future reference.

If you would like to switch to this format, email Karen (kantikajian@cvcable.com) with the words “electronic newsletter” and your next issue will arrive in your inbox. If, on the other hand, you enjoy the printed version, we will be happy to continue sending it to you. Please make sure we have a current address (new school if you have changed schools this year or home address if you are not connected with a school). It seems that with every issue we have one to three newsletters returned because the address is not current. If it goes to a school, we have no way of knowing if you are receiving it.

## **About the Inserts**

In this issue we have some suggestions for gifts during the holiday season. One page lists recommended books for various ages. Of course, depending on how a book is used (independent reading or a read-aloud) the book may work for a wider range of ages. The back of this page has suggestions for gifts to inspire writing and creativity. You may want to copy these two pages for parents.

We have a flyer for our January 9th Writing Workshop. If you are a teacher, please post this for others to see. On the back is an article about word categories and one by EERC President Kacey Kintscher about using Web 2.0 tools. She and Cheridy Aduviri presented a very well-received session at our October Literacy Conference and Kacey was willing to share this information with a wider audience. You may access the outline and presentation links here: <http://bit.ly/oWunfi> or go to [www.literacylane.org](http://www.literacylane.org) and click on Oct. 14 Literacy Conference and click on their presentation.

We have included some information about using easy folded books to inspire student writing, revising, and editing. Directions for making an Envelope Book are included here. Directions for other books are available on our website under teacher resources/other. You may also download a page of coupon blanks to use with this book. There are two versions.

Finally, a thought-provoking article about various holiday myths that lists the myths and the facts that refute them. I think that we, as teachers, need to be aware of these misconceptions and how they affect some of the students in our classrooms.

# Events and Opportunities

## Writing Workshop

On January 9, 2012 from 4-6 at the Lane ESD, EERC will offer a free writing workshop presented by Karen Antikajian that will emphasize the reading/writing connection. Karen will demonstrate how to read like a writer in order to notice author craft. She will share strategies and mentor text examples for craft such as beginnings, endings, place, character, language, voice, specificity, tension, and time. These categories are based on the work of Ralph Fletcher in his book *What a Writer Needs*. The use of examples from literature comes from Katie Wood Ray's idea of close study. There will also be strategies advocated by other professionals in the field, such as Jeff Anderson, Lori Jamison Rog, and Nancie Atwell, with a handout of many examples from literature and ways to use them with students—something that can be done right away. No registration is required but would be appreciated in order to guarantee enough handouts. For the registration form go to: [www.literacylane.org](http://www.literacylane.org) and click on "Calendar and Programs. If you are a member, you can email [kantikajian@cvcable.com](mailto:kantikajian@cvcable.com) to register.

## ORA Winter Institute February 10-11, 2012

Don't miss this opportunity to hear from some of the most respected professionals in the field of writing for all grade levels as well as working with adolescents. Katie Wood Ray will lead the K-5 writing strand on Friday while teachers of grades 6-12 will get to hear about working with adolescents with Kylene Beers and Robert Probst. Presenters will work with teachers during planning times.

Saturday will start off with a keynote presentation by Penny Plavala on the Common Core State Standards. This will be followed by two different time periods—each with a choice of four sessions. For a description of the keynote and small breakout sessions, visit [www.oregonread.org](http://www.oregonread.org).

Register early because the venue has changed and it is much smaller. Seating is limited. There is a discount for teams and no charge for admistrators with a team.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**January 9, 2012** - Writing Workshop

**April 28, 2012** - Our Annual B.E.A.R. Faire  
(for information contact Sandy: [sandycoffin@comcast.net](mailto:sandycoffin@comcast.net))

**May, 2012** - Our Annual Whine and Wine  
End-of Year Celebration

There is no charge for any of the events. To get up-to-date information, check the Emerald Empire web page on the ORA website: [www.oregonread.org](http://www.oregonread.org) or the calendar page on our site: [www.literacylane.org](http://www.literacylane.org).

## TAR Groups

Interested in a list of good books even if you don't have time to join a book group? The books chosen by our TAR groups are listed on our website under TAR. Maybe you would like to join vicariously or just comment on the book by emailing the facilitator of the group. Feel free to become an invisible member.

### English Grammar and Pronunciation

- **Fewer vs. Less**

Because *fewer* describes countable things and *less* what can't be counted, you can have **fewer sewers** but **less stress**.

- **Coordinating Conjunctions:**

**BOY SAT** with **BEN** (but, or, yet, so, and, then, both . . . and, either . . . or, neither . . . nor)

- **How to Pronounce QUAY:**

When by a quay,  
Think of the sea.  
And don't say "kay,"  
Say "key."

A quay is  
a wharf.

- **How to Pronounce ASTERISK**

Mary had an aeroplane.  
About the clouds to frisk.  
Now wasn't she a silly thing,  
Her little \*

An asterisk  
is the symbol  
\*

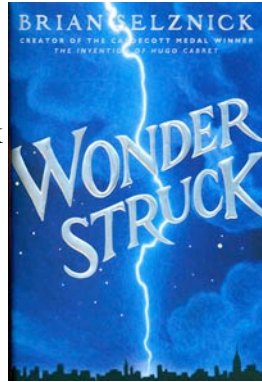
Source: *Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge: A Book of Mnemonic Devices* by Rod L. Evans, Ph. D.

## Book Reviews

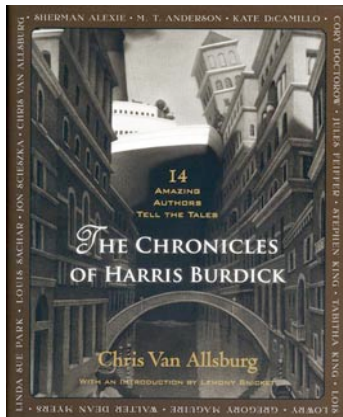
by Karen Antikajian

Two books that have just been released are both quite unusual in their concepts but not surprising considering the two innovative author/illustrators.

The first is another push-the-envelope book by Brian Selznick called *Wonderstruck*. This hefty novel tells two different stories, set fifty years apart, that eventually meld into one. The two stories weave back and forth—Ben’s in words and Rose’s in pictures that are like an old silent movie—until they finally intertwine with both text and pictures. This visionary book will captivate readers of many different ages. Selznick’s previous ground-breaking book, *The Inventions of Hugo Cabret*, was a Caldecott winner. Might this be another?



Many of you know and use Chris Van Allsburg’s *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* to inspire student writing.



Well, it has now been used to inspire fourteen well-known authors such as Louis Lowry, Kate DiCamillo, and Walter Dean Myers to try their hands at creating stories based on the illustrations, captions, and teaser sentences. They were compiled in the new book, *The Chronicles of Harris Burdick*. Van Allsburg chose “Ocar and

Alphonse” for his contribution while Stephen King wrote about “The House on Maple Street” (a favorite of some of my third graders).

I was especially interested in “Uninvited Guests” by Jules Feiffer as this was one I used with my classes to introduce tension and suspense. I asked students to include the sentences from the book somewhere in their stories. I noticed these authors did the same. Some tucked them into the middle of the story while others used them as a conclusion.

If you decide to share this book, you will probably want to introduce *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* first and let students write some of their own stories.

## Using Easy Folded Books to Inspire Writing

If writing is for an audience of one—the teacher—it is thought of as an assignment. Authentic writing is for a wider audience and serves a larger purpose than a grade or fulfilling a requirement. The student writer is much more motivated to write and more willing to revise and edit a piece of writing if it is to be shared with others and especially if it is to be displayed in an intriguing format. There are lots of ways this can be done. Try a few with your students as see how enthusiastic they are to not only write, but to work hard to make their writing the best possible.

One of the easiest books to make is a six-page or “poof” book. It is also the basis for other books such as a Person (or Character) Book or a Magic Book. Directions for all of these books and many more are posted on our website under teacher resources/other.

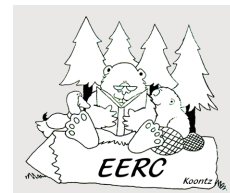
The book that is included in this issue is called the Envelope Book. The clever element of this book is that fact that it has pockets to hold more information: directions, maps, photos, drawings, or even coupons! This makes it a great choice for gift giving during the holiday season. What parent wouldn’t appreciate a book filled with coupons that promise extra chores done with a smile, going to bed without complaining, doing homework without being reminded, and so forth. Besides that, it doesn’t cost a thing!



If you would like a page of coupons like the one above, download them from [www.literacylane.org](http://www.literacylane.org) under teacher resources/other. The page of ten is the size shown above. The page of six has larger coupons.

Besides the book, there are large posters and a video tape available. With “Uninvited Guests,” I let students illustrate a page with a door that could be opened to show what was behind it. For a copy go to [www.literacylane.org](http://www.literacylane.org) and click on teacher resources/writing.

Newsletter of the  
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Note: If your newsletter is mailed to you, you may not receive all of the inserts. Some are available for download at: [www.literacylane.org](http://www.literacylane.org) or subscribe to the electronic newsletter by emailing Karen.

← Check your membership expiration date.

Do you need to renew your EERC/ORA membership? Check the expiration date on the label above. If you do need to renew (or join) please visit our web site <http://www.literacylane.org> for a membership application.



**- READ ALOUD TO CHILDREN EVERY DAY -**



*Coming  
Events*

### ***Writing Workshop:***

*Read Like a Writer, Use Mentor Text Examples,  
and Imitate Author Craft to Improve Writing  
January 9, 2012 from 4:00-6:00  
Lane ESD  
Karen Antikajian, Presenter  
(see more information inside)*

***February 10-11, 2012***

### ***ORA Winter Institute***

***Crowne Plaza Hotel, Portland***

***Katie Wood Ray, Kylee Beers, and Robert Probst***

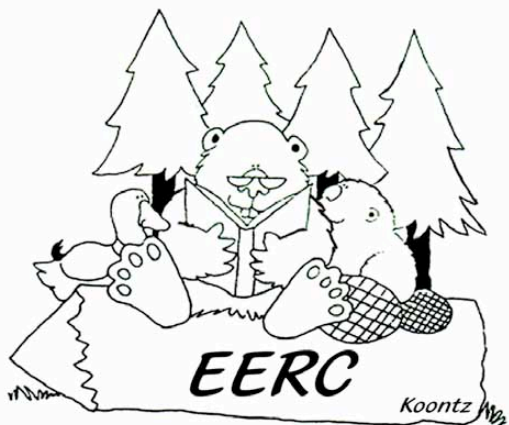
***Along with Expert Presenters from the Northwest***

*(see more information inside)*

**“Piglet was so excited at the idea of being Useful that he forgot to be frightened any more.”**

**—A. A. Milne**

# PLEASE POST



*Promoting Literacy in Lane County*  
*Check us out at:*  
[www.LiteracyLane.org](http://www.LiteracyLane.org)

## **About the Program:**

Professional writers and educators recommend using published authors to help you teach students to notice author craft and use some of the same techniques to hook the reader, build tension, develop characters, write satisfying endings, and use specific details. Students should learn to ask questions about the writing, such as: What is the relationship between the beginning and the ending? What kind of language is the author using? Does it show bias? Do we learn anything about the characters or topic from the language used? What other techniques does the author use? Are they some that I could try out in

**Recommended Audience:** Teachers of K-12 who want to learn more about how to teach and inspire writing—not just assess it.

**Date and Time:** January 9, 2012

from 4:00 - 6:00 pm

(Social at 4:00 Program begins at 4:30)

**Location:** Lane ESD 1200 N Hwy 99, Eugene.

Questions? 541-998-6584

**Registration:** Preferred but not required (to have enough handouts)

Email: [kantikajian@cvcable.com](mailto:kantikajian@cvcable.com) to get your name on the list.

## THE EMERALD EMPIRE READING COUNCIL'S *January Program*

**A WRITING WORKSHOP:  
READ LIKE A WRITER,  
USE MENTOR TEXT EXAMPLES,  
AND IMITATE AUTHOR CRAFT  
TO IMPROVE WRITING**



## Our Nymble Language?

How familiar are you with the many “nym” categories of words? Have you ever wondered where they originated? Somebody once remarked that a synonym is a word you use when you can’t spell the word you really want. Someone else once observed that a great many poems seem to have been written by a prolific Irish genius named Ann O’Nymous (anonymous). These two words (and many others) have the common element *onym*, a Greek root meaning “word” or “name.” Here are a few of the NYMS:

**Acronym:** words made up of the initials of other words. Examples: SCUBA from self-contained underwater breathing apparatus, radar from radio detecting and ranging, and NATO from North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

**Apronym:** a name especially suited to the profession of its owner such as Dan Druff for a barber, James Bugg for an exterminator, and Sally Ride, the astronaut (all real names).

**Autonym:** a word that describes itself. noun is a noun, word is a word, polysyllabic is polysyllabic.

**Bacronym:** the reverse of creating an acronym (back + acronym); taking a word which already exists and creating a phrase (sometimes humorous) using the letters of the word as initials. Examples: Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anybody (BANANA), Zone Improvement Plan (ZIP codes that will zip our mail), America’s Roast Beef, Yes Sir! (ARBY’S)

**Charactonym:** the name of a literary character that is especially suited to his or her personality such as Scrooge the tightfisted miser; Jaggars, the rough-edged lawyer, and Marcus Welby (make us well be).

**Eponym:** a name from which another name or word is derived as sandwich from the Earl of Sandwich, mickey mouse (meaning shoddy or trivial because Mickey Mouse watches kept breaking down), or using a trademarked name for the generic product such a Kleenex for facial tissue.

**Heteronym:** a word with the same spelling as another word but with a different pronunciation and meaning. (Words where one needs accent marks are not true

heteronyms.) Examples are bass, bow, does, primer, row, wind, and wound.

**Metonym:** a word which designates something by the name of something else. For example, *the Crown* referring to monarchy, *the White House* to mean the U. S. Executive Branch, and *a man of the cloth* instead of priest or minister.

**Pseudonym:** an assumed name, especially by an author. Examples are *Mark Twain* (Samuel Clemens), *Dr. Seuss* (Ted Geisel), and *Lewis Carroll* (the Reverend Charles Ludwidge Dodgson).

**Retronym:** an adjective-noun pairing caused by a change in the meaning of the base noun, usually as a result of technological advance. Watch became pocket watch when wristwatches were introduced, pen became fountain pen after the invention of the ball-point pen, and milk became whole milk when skim milk was developed. This also coined a new word, protonym, which means “old term.” (watch/pen/milk)

More NYMS next time.

Sources: *Crazy English: The Ultimate Joy Ride Through Our Language* by Richard Lederer and [http://www.fun-with-words.com/nym\\_words.html](http://www.fun-with-words.com/nym_words.html).

## Reflections on Presenting Technology and Writing at the 12th Annual EERC Literacy Conference

By Kacey Kintscher, EERC President

Cheridy Aduviri and I have been blogging about technology for about a year and thought it would be fun to share some technology ideas for writing during the EERC Conference. I’m really glad we were able to have the opportunity! Our enthusiastic audience was eager to learn about everything from blogging to online dictionaries. We have left the outline of the talk and the Prezi presentation on our blog for you to check out: *Bring Writing Alive with Web 2.0 Tools* (<http://when-tech-met-ed.blogspot.com/2011/10/bringing-writing-alive-with-web-20.html?m=1>). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact either Cheridy or me through our blog *when-tech-met-ed* (<http://when-tech-met-ed.blogspot.com>). We’d like to offer a special thanks to those who were able to attend. We’d love to hear how your tech adventure has begun.

## BOOK TITLES FOR HOLIDAY GIFTING – 2011

Compiled by Nanci Strickland, EERC Secretary

### Picture Books for Everyone

*Mirror, Mirror* – Marilyn Singer. Dutton, 2010. Just as there are two sides to every story, there are two ways to read these poems.

*Blackout* – John Rocco. Hyperion, 2011. A blackout in the city means no electronic devices. What's a family to do? Find out what happens, and what it changes for them.

*Once Upon a Royal Superbaby* – Kevin O'Malley. Walker, 2010. A motorcycle-dude king, a shopping queen, and the baby is . . . depends upon who is telling the story!

*Mouse and Lion* – Rand Burkett and Nancy Ekholm Burkett. Scholastic, 2011. A beautiful retelling of the Lion and the Mouse fable, with an African Mouse as the hero!

*Jack and the Beanstalk* – Nina Crews. Henry Holt, 2011. An updated version with photo-collage illustrations in an urban setting.

*The House that Mouse Built* – Maggie Rudy and Pam Abrams. (Portland author) Downtown Books, 2011. A modern take-off from The House that Jack Built, with fascinating pictures of a miniature world created from everyday objects. Great for all ages.

### Books for Sharing – Gr. K -2

*Fox and Hen Together* – Beatrice Rodriguez. Enchanted Lion Books, 2011. A continuation of the story, *The Chicken Thief*, this wordless picture book will entertain children who like exaggerated action and excitement, with an unexpected ending.

*The Gingerbread Boy* – retold and illustrated by Paul Galdone. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011. A reissue of a timeless classic.

*Do You Know Which Ones Will Grow?* – Susan Shea and Tom Slaughter. Blue Apple/Scholastic, 2011. A lift-the-flap rhyming book that will engage clever children with its interactive style.

*I Broke My Trunk* (an Elephant and Piggie book) – Mo Willems. Hyperion, 2011. Piggie, in her typical exuberant style, wants to know how Elephant, ever dramatic, broke his trunk. Here is the hilarious result.

*Press Here* – Hervé Tullet. Chronicle, 2011. Kids love this book with directions "press here", "tap three times", and more to make a simple premise a ton of fun. No fancy gadgets, but imaginations take flight.

### Books for Primary Students – Gr. 1-3

*Beautiful Oops* – Barney Saltzberg. Workman, 2010. A simple, yet very creative book that finds beauty in everyday mistakes. The message, art, and interactive style will appeal to all ages.

*Tell the Truth, B.B. Wolf* – Judy Sierra. Knopf, 2010. A local librarian invites Wolf to tell the story of how he met the three little pigs.

*King Hugo's Huge Ego* – Chris Van Dusen. Candlewick, 2011. Hugo is a tiny king with a huge ego, and he runs into trouble as his head grows with his ego. A laugh-out-loud story with a great happy ending!

### Books for Middle Readers – Gr. 2-5

*Bad Kitty Meets the Baby* – Nick Bruel. Roaring Brook, 2011. This hilarious new book in the *Bad Kitty* series will have everyone laughing!

*Animal Rescue Team: Show Time* – Sue Stauffacher. Knopf, 2011. The squirrels at Mt. Mercy College are getting too friendly – they're frightening the students, making the nuns jumpy, and they're messy. Time to call the Animal Rescue Team. (4<sup>th</sup> book in the series)

*Lunch Lady and the Bake Sale Bandits* – Jarrett J. Krosoczka. Knopf, 2010. From the Lunch Lady series, another mystery to solve!

### A Few Choices for Older Readers – Gr. 4+

*A Boy and His Bot* – Daniel H. Wilson. Bloomsbury Books, 2011. A field trip gets interesting when Code Lightfall stumbles into a world of robots, with only one way out. Great science fiction.

*Eight Keys* – Susan Lafleur. Wendy Lamb Books, 2011. Elise and her best friend, Franklin, are having a tough beginning to middle school. A story about friendship, relationships, and growing up.

*Charlie Joe Jackson's Guide to Not Reading* – Tommy Greenwald. Roaring Brook, 2011. Charlie Joe Jackson is a very reluctant reader, and he goes to great lengths to never read a book from cover to cover.

# GIFTS for the YOUNG WRITER and ILLUSTRATOR



## Books to Inspire Writing and Illustrating

### Picture Books:

*An Egg is Quiet, A Seed is Sleepy, A Butterfly is Patient* by Dianna Aston and Sylvia Long (good examples for reports)  
*Beyond the Great Mountains* by Ed Young (a wonderful example of a step book - an easy folded book for publishing)  
*Dear Mrs. LaRue* and *Detective LaRue* Written and Illustrated by Mark Teague (letters from dog to owner)  
*From Pictures to Words: A Book About Making a Book* Written and Illustrated by Janet Stevens (the writing process)  
*Help Me! Mr. Mut* by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummell (dogs write to Mr. Mut for advice and he replies)  
*Hooray for Diffendooper Day!* by Dr. Seuss, Jack Prelutsky and Lane Smith (finished after his death, it has Dr. Seuss' drafts)  
*Knuffle Bunny, Knuffle Bunny Too and Knuffle Bunny Free* by Mo Willems (using photos or magazine pictures for backgrounds)  
*Letters From a Desperate Dog* Written and Illustrated by Eileen Christelow (dog sends email messages to an advice columnist)  
*Ms. McCaw Learns to Draw* by Kaethe Zemach (Dudley who struggles in school becomes the teacher when it's time to draw)  
*Patches: Lost and Found* by Steven Kroll and Illustrated by Barry Gott (story shows how writing can begin with pictures)  
*The Plot Chickens* by Mary Ann and Herm Auch (Henrietta chicken decides to write a book - includes the writing process and rules for writing)  
*The Quiet Book and The Loud Book* by Deborah Underwood, Illustrated by Renata Liwska (examples of simple list books)  
*Thea's Tree* by Alison Jackson and illustrated by Janet Pedersen (a girl writes letters to various people about her science project—a giant beanstalk)  
*What Do Authors Do?* and *What Do Illustrators Do?* Written and Illustrated by Eileen Christelow (the writing/illustrating process)  
*Written Anything Good Lately?* by Susan Allen and Jane Lindaman (ideas for lots of different kinds of writing)

### Journals:

*Amelia's Journal* (and others) and *Max's Logbook* Written and Illustrated by Marissa Moss (examples of text and graphics)

### Chapter Books:

*Dear Max* by D. J. Lucas (A.K.A. Sally Grindley) and Illustrated by Tony Ross (10-year-old Max corresponds with author D. J. Lucas) short  
*Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (any in the series) by Jeff Kinney (journal writing and illustrating - an especially good example for boys)



# Envelope Book

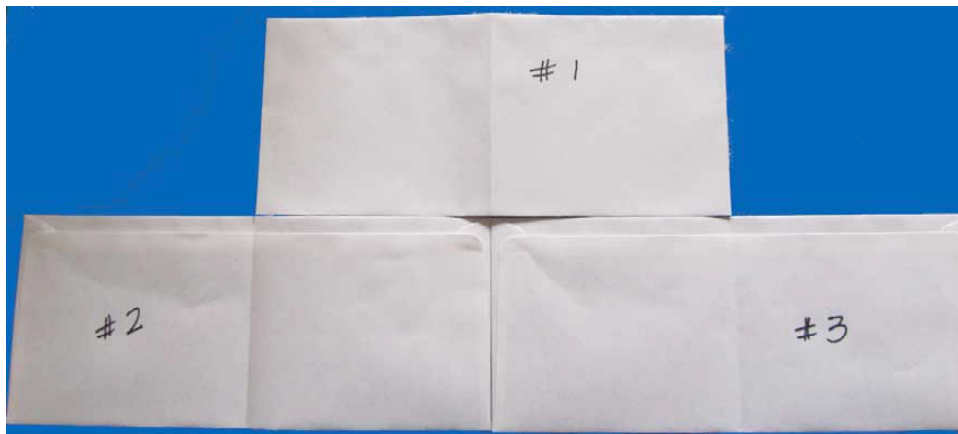
Adapted from: <http://stamphenge.wordpress.com/minibooks/envelope-book-3>

## Materials:

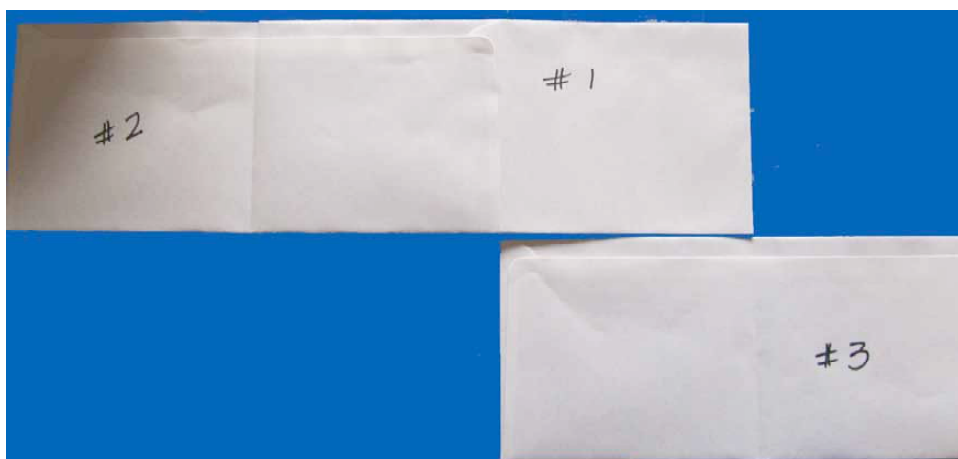
- 3 envelopes all the same size with the same kind of flaps (or more in groups of 3 for longer books)
- glue

## Directions:

1. Lick the flaps but put the inside the envelopes – or glue them down. Fold the envelopes in half making sure the edges match.
2. Arrange them with Envelope 1 showing a mountain fold. Below arrange the other two envelopes with valley folds. See picture:



3. Put glue all over the front of Envelope 1. Attach the right hand side of Envelope 2 to the left hand side of Envelope 1.



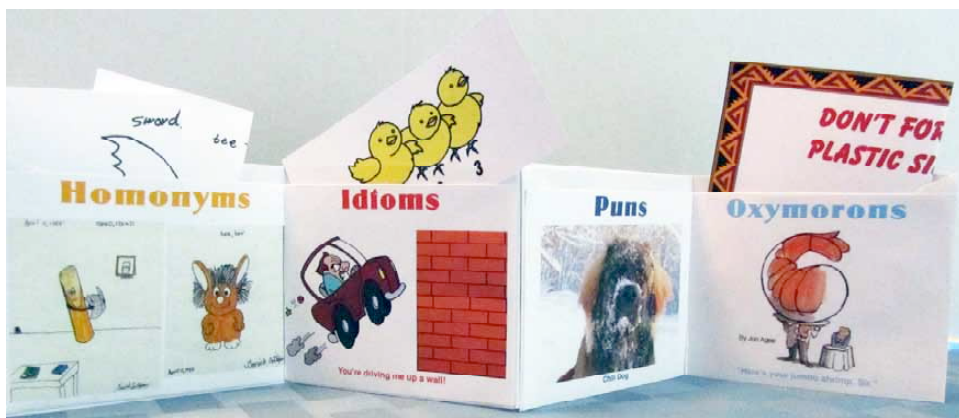
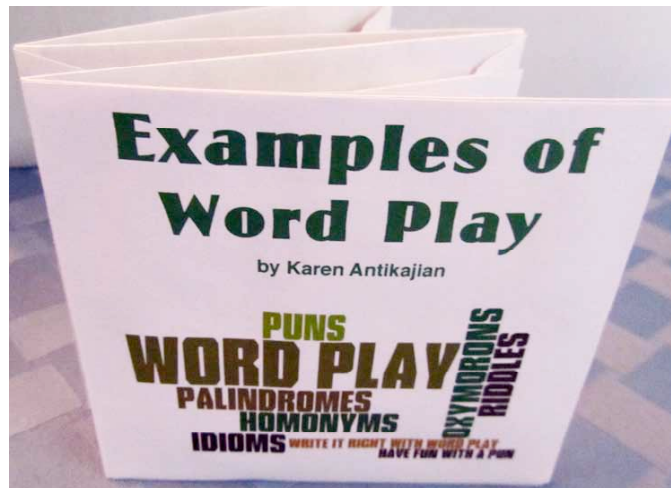
- Attach the left hand side of Envelope 3 to the right hand side of Envelope 1.



- Accordion fold the envelopes. You can add covers of card stock or colored paper if desired. There will be four pockets that can hold added information.



### Example of Finished Book



# TEN MYTHS ABOUT "THE FIRST THANKSGIVING"

Adapted by Alexa Parker from *Deconstructing the Myths of "The First Thanksgiving"*

by Judy Dow (Abenaki) and Beverly Slapin

<http://oyate.org> (select "resources/Thanksgiving")

What is it about the story of "The First Thanksgiving" that makes it essential to be taught in virtually every grade from preschool through high school? What is it about the story that is so seductive? Why has it become an annual elementary school tradition to hold Thanksgiving pageants, with young children dressing up in paper-bag costumes and feather-duster headdresses and marching around the schoolyard? Why is it seen as necessary for fake "pilgrims" and fake "Indians" (portrayed by real children, many of whom are Indian) to sit down every year to a fake feast, acting out fake scenarios and reciting fake dialogue about friendship? And why do teachers all over the country continue (for the most part, unknowingly) to perpetuate this myth year after year after year?

We offer these myths and facts to assist students, parents and teachers in thinking critically about this holiday, and deconstructing what we have been taught about the history of this continent and the world.

## **Myth #1: "The First Thanksgiving" occurred in 1621.**

Fact: No one knows when the "first" thanksgiving occurred. People have been giving thanks for as long as people have existed. Indigenous nations all over the world have celebrations of the harvest that come from very old traditions; for Native peoples, thanksgiving comes not once a year, but every day, for all the gifts of life. To refer to the harvest feast of 1621 as "The First Thanksgiving" disappears Indian peoples in the eyes of non-Native children.

## **Myth #2: The people who came across the ocean on the Mayflower were called Pilgrims.**

Fact: The Plimoth settlers did not refer to themselves as "Pilgrims." Pilgrims are people who travel for religious reasons, such as Muslims who make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Most of those who arrived here from England were religious dissidents who had broken away from the Church of England. They called themselves "Saints"; others called them "Separatists." Some of the settlers were "Puritans," dissidents but not separatists who wanted to "purify" the Church. It wasn't until around the time of the American Revolution that the name "Pilgrims" came to be associated with the Plimoth settlers, and the "Pilgrims" became the symbol of American morality and Christian faith, fortitude, and family.

## **Myth #3: The colonists came seeking freedom of religion in a new land.**

Fact: The colonists were not just innocent refugees from religious persecution. By 1620, hundreds of Native people had already been to England and back, most as captives; so the Plimoth colonists knew full well that the land they were settling on was inhabited. Nevertheless, their belief system taught them that any land that was "unimproved" was "wild" and theirs for the taking; that the people who lived there were roving heathens with no right to the land. Both the Separatists and Puritans were rigid fundamentalists who came here fully intending to take the land away from its Native inhabitants and establish a new nation, their "Holy Kingdom." The Plimoth colonists were never concerned with "freedom of religion" for anyone but themselves.

## **Myth #4: When the "Pilgrims" landed, they first stepped foot on "Plymouth Rock."**

Fact: When the colonists landed, they sought out a sandy inlet in which to beach the little shallop that carried them from the Mayflower to the mainland. This shallop would have been smashed to smithereens had they docked at a rock, especially a Rock. Although the Plimoth settlers built their homes just up the hill from the Rock, William Bradford in *Mourt's Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth*, does not even mention the Rock; writing only that they "unshipped our shallop and drew her on land." The actual "rock" is a slab of Dedham granodiorite placed there by a receding glacier some 20,000 years ago. It was first referred to in a town surveying record in 1715, almost 100 years after the landing. Since then, the Rock has been moved, cracked in two, pasted together, carved up, chipped apart by tourists, cracked again, and now rests as a memorial to something that never happened.

## **Myth #5: The Pilgrims found corn.**

Fact: Just a few days after landing, a party of about 16 settlers led by Captain Myles Standish followed a Nauset trail and came upon an iron kettle and a cache of Indian corn buried in the sand. They made off with the corn and returned a few days later with reinforcements. This larger group "found" a larger store of corn, about ten bushels, and took it.

They also "found" several graves, and, according to Mourt's Relation, "brought sundry of the prettiest things away" from a child's grave and then covered up the corpse. They also "found" two Indian dwellings and "some of the best things we took away with us." There is no record that restitution was ever made for the stolen corn, and the Wampanoag did not soon forget the colonists' ransacking of Indian graves.

**Myth #6: Samoset appeared out of nowhere, and along with Squanto became friends with the Pilgrims. Squanto helped the Pilgrims survive and joined them at "The First Thanksgiving."**

Fact: Samoset, an eastern Abenaki chief, was the first to contact the Plimoth colonists. He was investigating the settlement to gather information and report to Massasoit, the head sachem in the Wampanoag territory. In his hand, Samoset carried two arrows: one blunt and one pointed. The question to the settlers was: are you friend or foe? Samoset brought Tisquantum (Squanto), one of the few survivors of the original Wampanoag village of Pawtuxet, to meet the English and keep an eye on them. Tisquantum had been taken captive by English captains several years earlier, and both he and Samoset spoke English.

Tisquantum agreed to live among the colonists and serve as a translator. Massasoit also sent Hobbamock and his family to live near the colony to keep an eye on the settlement and also to watch Tisquantum, whom Massasoit did not trust. The Wampanoag oral tradition says that Massasoit ordered Tisquantum killed after he tried to stir up the English against the Wampanoag. Massasoit himself lost face after his years of dealing with the English only led to warfare and land grabs. Tisquantum is viewed by Wampanoag people as a traitor, for his scheming against other Native people for his own gain. Massasoit is viewed as a wise and generous leader whose affection for the English may have led him to be too tolerant of their ways.

**Myth #7: The Pilgrims invited the Indians to celebrate the First Thanksgiving.**

Fact: According to oral accounts from the Wampanoag people, when the Native people nearby first heard the gunshots of the hunting colonists, they thought that the colonists were preparing for war and that Massasoit needed to be informed. When Massasoit showed up with 90 men and no women or children, it can be assumed that he was being cautious. When he saw there was a party going on, his men then went out and brought back five deer and lots of turkeys.

In addition, both the Wampanoag and the English settlers were long familiar with harvest celebrations. Long before the Europeans set foot on these shores, Native peoples gave thanks every day for all the gifts of life, and held thanksgiving celebrations and giveaways at certain times of the year. The Europeans also had days of thanksgiving, marked by religious services. So the coming together of two peoples to share food and company was not entirely a foreign thing for either. But the visit that by all accounts lasted three days was most likely one of a series of political meetings to discuss and secure a military alliance. Neither side totally trusted the other: The Europeans considered the Wampanoag soulless heathens and instruments of the devil, and the Wampanoag had seen the Europeans steal their seed corn and rob their graves. In any event, neither the Wampanoag nor the Europeans referred to this feast/meeting as "Thanksgiving."

**Myth #8: The Pilgrims provided the food for their Indian friends.**

Fact: It is known that when Massasoit showed up with 90 men and saw there was a party going on, they then went out and brought back five deer and lots of turkeys. Though the details of this event have become clouded in secular mythology, judging by the inability of the settlers to provide for themselves at this time and Edward Winslow's letter of 1622, it is most likely that Massasoit and his people provided most of the food for this "historic" meal.

**Myth #9: The Pilgrims and Indians feasted on turkey, potatoes, berries, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, and popcorn.**

Fact: Both written and oral evidence show that what was actually consumed at the harvest festival in 1621 included venison (since Massasoit and his people brought five deer), wild fowl, and quite possibly nasaump-dried corn pounded and boiled into a thick porridge, and pompion-cooked, mashed pumpkin. Among the other food that would have been available, fresh fruits such as plums, grapes, berries and melons would have been out of season. It would have been too cold to dig for clams or fish, for eels or small fish. There were no boats to fish for lobsters in rough water that was about 60 fathoms deep. There was not enough of the barley crop to make a batch of beer, nor was there a wheat crop. Potatoes and sweet potatoes didn't get from the south up to New England until the 18th century, nor did sweet corn. Cranberries would have been too tart to eat without sugar to sweeten them, and that's probably why they wouldn't have had pumpkin pie, either. Since the corn of the time could not be successfully popped, there was no popcorn. (12)

**Myth #10: The Pilgrims and Indians became great friends.**

Fact: A mere generation later, the balance of power had shifted so enormously and the theft of land by the European settlers had become so egregious that the Wampanoag were forced into battle. In 1637, English soldiers massacred some 700 Pequot men, women and children at Mystic Fort, burning many of them alive in their homes and shooting those who fled. The colony of Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay Colony observed a day of thanksgiving commemorating the massacre. By 1675, there were some 50,000 colonists in the place they had named "New England." That year, Metacom, a son of Massasoit, one of the first whose generosity had saved the lives of the starving settlers, led a rebellion against them. By the end of the conflict known as "King Philip's War," most of the Indian peoples of the Northeast region had been either completely wiped out, sold into slavery, or had fled for safety into Canada. Shortly after Metacom's death, Plimoth Colony declared a day of thanksgiving for the English victory over the Indians.

For a list of Books about Thanksgiving, check our website: [www.literacylane.org/teacher\\_resources.html](http://www.literacylane.org/teacher_resources.html) under **other**.