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Home School Project
University of Texas at Arlington
Dr. Amber L. Brown
2/19/2010

On my honor, I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment. I acknowledge that misrepresenting another's work as my own is a violation of the UTA Academic Integrity Policy.

I have not submitted the attached work as an assignment for any other course or field activity.

Casey Howell

2/5/10

Signature

Date

Parent Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your support throughout the year! You are appreciated in the academic lives of your children. According to U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2003, "Early childhood is a critical time for children to acquire skills that will be the foundation for later school success" (Denton, West, & Walston, 2003; Snow, Burns, & Griffin). The National Association for the Education of Young Children and the International Reading Association states, "during early childhood, children must learn to read so that, by the end of the primary grades, they can read to learn." Getting children ready to read so they can learn is something we are diligently working on in the 3rd grade. It is important for your child to feel comfortable reading as they continue with school.

We have recently been reading *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White in class. I have been reading the book out loud to your students. We have been using the book and incorporating our learning of different themes in *Charlotte's Web* to our other subject areas. The children have learned to summarize chapters and create their own illustrations. Although these activities are enriching your children; there is nothing that can replace the importance of learning at home with loved ones.

I would love to give you the opportunity to bond with your child through activities at home that can enrich your child's literacy experience. With your involvement, together we can advance your student's interest and literacy skills. These activities are designed to be fun and enjoyable for both you and your child. As a family, you and your child can discuss your favorite characters in the book, write a thank you letter to a local farmer in our area, or create an Acrostic Poem for Wilbur. I hope this is an enriching experience for both you and your child. Thank you for your support in your child's education!

Sources: Zimmerman, S. S., Rodriguez, M. C., Rewey, K. L., & Heidemann, S. L. (2008). Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, Vol. 13*(Issue 4), 452-481.

Ways Parents Can Help

Here are a few activities that you may wish to do with your child at home:

- Discuss the qualities of your favorite character and how you can display some of the same qualities they have.
- Read your child's favorite chapter. Create a book of illustrations for each chapter you read.
- Pick an animal from *Charlotte's Web* to research and then take a trip to the zoo or local farm!
- Pick your favorite character and create your own costume out of things found around the house.

Vocabulary

A few popular vocabulary from *Charlotte's Web*:

*All vocabulary is in the order it appears in *Charlotte's Web*.

Runt – an animal that is small compared to others of its kind

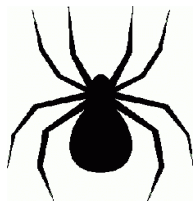
Salutations – greetings indicating respect or affection

Radiant – bright and shining

Humble – modest and not proud

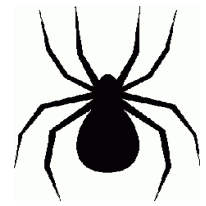
Triumph – a great victory, success, or achievement

Source: Charlottes Web Vocabulary Boosters | Scholastic.com. (n.d.). *Teaching Resources, Children's Book Recommendations, and Student Activities* | Scholastic.com. Retrieved February 16, 2010, from <http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=8167>



Home Learning Activity: 1

What animal are you?



Dear Parents,

It is important that children can analyze characters in the story and their traits. In class we have been discussing the different characters in *Charlotte's Web* and how they contribute to the story as a whole. Your child will choose their favorite character from *Charlotte's Web* and create a hanging mobile with those characters traits.

Activity

1. Ask your child to pick a favorite character from *Charlotte's Web*. Ask them to explain what they like about this character.
2. Together, write these character traits in the following "Character Trait Webs." Cut out the character trait webs when you are finished.
3. Draw and color your favorite character on a sheet of drawing paper and cut them out.
4. Using yarn or string, hang your character trait webs from your favorite character. You have now created your character mobile!

Additional Resources

- *Charlotte's Web* Book Resource
<http://www.pocanticohills.org/charlotte/index.htm>
- *Charlotte's Web*: Movie
<http://www.charlotteswebmovie.com/site/index.php>
- *Charlotte's Web* Character Game
<http://www.quia.com/hm/22969.html>

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:

§ 110.5 English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 3.

(11) Reading/text structures/literary concepts. The student analyzes the characteristics of various types of texts. The student is expected to:

- (H) analyze characters, including their traits, feelings, relationships, and changes (1-3);

Learning Objective:

The learner will write atleast 5 descriptive qualities they feel are essential to the character they chose from the book to create their mobile.

Essential Questions Parents Can Ask Their Children:

- What trait do you think is the most important one to have out of the ones you listed? Why?
- Do you think you possess some of the qualities of your favorite character? How?

Key Vocabulary:

Mercy – being a kind or forgiving person

Genuine – not fake or pretend

Meekly – quietly or humbly

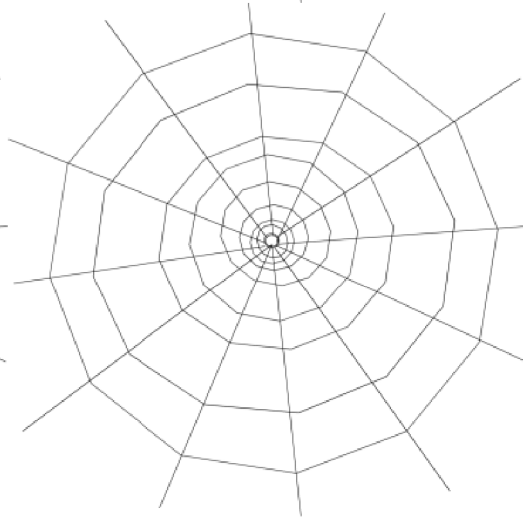
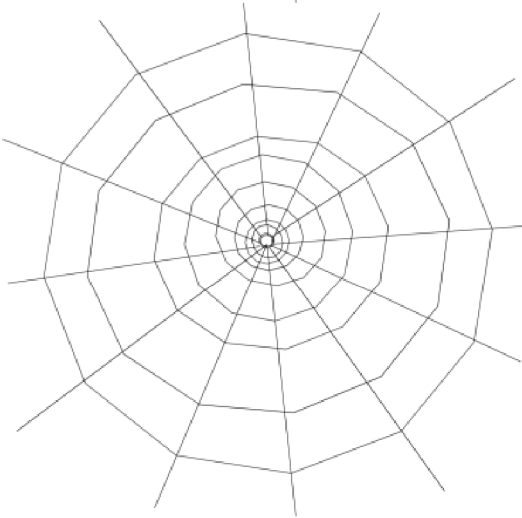
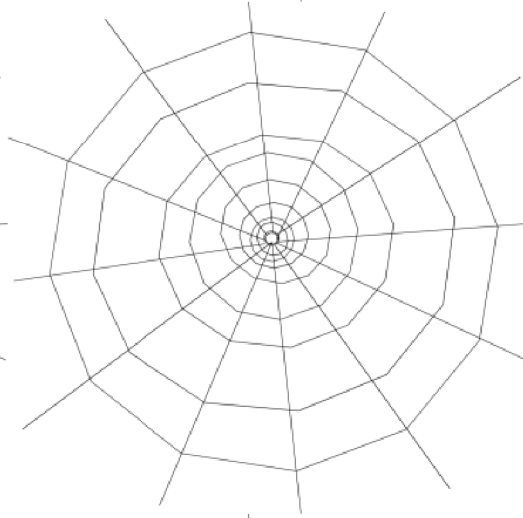
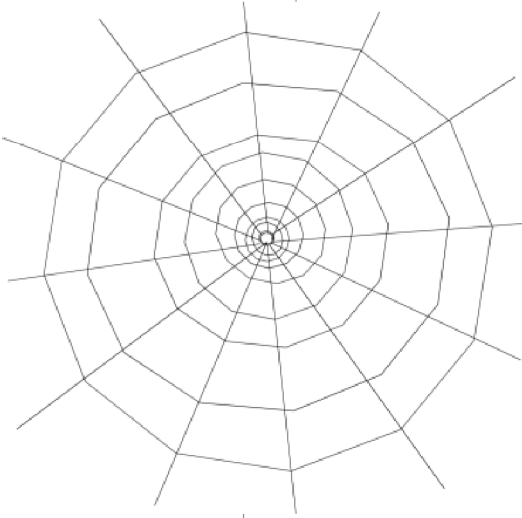
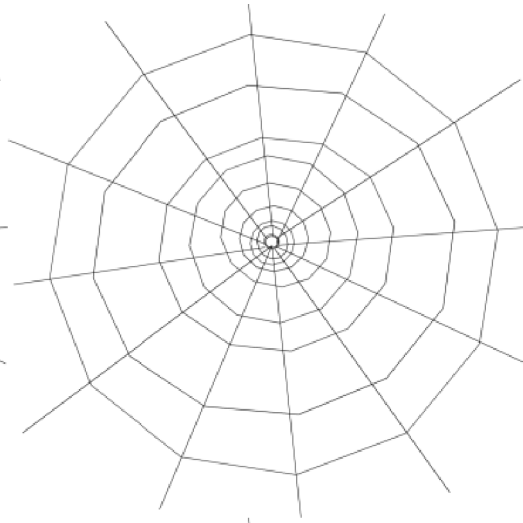
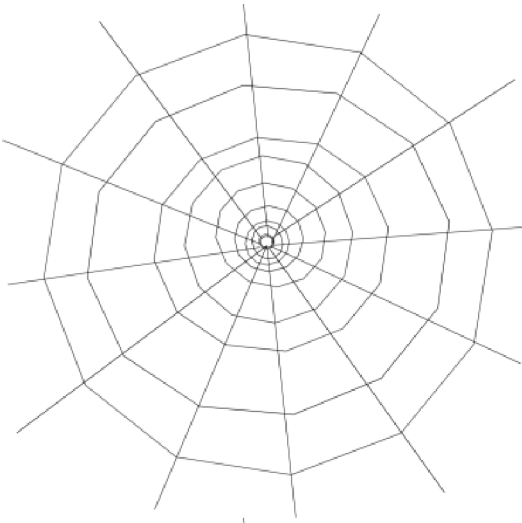
Humble – modest and not proud

Materials Needed for Activity

Below is a list of materials that will help you complete this activity at home with your child.

- Drawing paper or printer paper
- Yarn or string (thread can also be used)
- Assorted markers, colored pencils, crayons, or watercolors.
- Scissors
- Attached "Character Trait Web's" sheet

Character Trait Webs





Home Learning Activity: 2

“B.M.E”



Dear Parents,

It is so important for your children to learn how to summarize and pick the main ideas out of stories. We have been working on “B.M.E” or “Beginning, Middle, End” since we started *Charlotte's Web*. In this activity I would like you to read Chapter 8, “Good Progress,” to your child aloud. Afterwards your learner will complete their own “Beginning, Middle, End” diagram and create their own book with an illustration.

Activity

1. Read Chapter 8 “Good Progress” to your learner out loud.
2. Discuss what happened in the chapter with your child. Ask your child what happened at during the beginning, middle, and end of the chapter.
3. After discussing, think back to what you just discussed and write down what happened during the beginning, middle, and end of the chapter using the attached “B.M.E.” Worksheet.
4. Create your own *Charlotte's Web* book out of paper. You will take plain white paper and fold it in half, creating a book. Have the child cut and paste the “B.M.E” worksheet with their responses to the right side of the inside page.
5. Ask your child to illustrate their favorite scene in the chapter on the left side of the page across from their “B.M.E” summary.

**To make the book more official, you punch wholes in your book and use string or yarn to thread the pages together.*

**Also, allow your child to add on to their book if you continue to read Charlotte's Web out loud at home.*

Additional Resources

- Video on how to make a story book
<http://video.about.com/childrensbooks/Make-a-Story-Book.htm>
- *Charlotte's Web* Games
<http://www.scholastic.com/charlottesweb/perfectword.htm>

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:

§110.5 English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 3.
(9) Reading/Comprehension. The student uses a variety of strategies to comprehend selections read aloud and selections read independently.

(C) retell or act out the order of important events in a story (1-3)

Learning Objective:

The learner will write what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the chapter, then illustrate their favorite scene in the chapter and tell whether it fell in the beginning, middle, or end.

Essential Questions Parents Can Ask Their Children:

- How would you have changed the events in this chapter?
- Why did you think the section of the story you illustrated was important?

Key Vocabulary:

determined – devoting full strength

objectionable – disapproval or protest

pardon – forgiveness; excuse

gratified – satisfied; to make happy

Materials Needed for Activity

Below is a list of materials that will help you complete this activity at home with your child.

- Copy of *Charlotte's Web*
- Attached “Beginning, Middle, End” Diagram
- Printer paper for book
- Pencil or pen
- Scissors
- Crayons, Markers, Colored Pencils or paints
- Whole punch (optional)
- Yarn or string (optional)

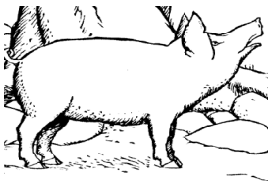
“B.M.E”

Please write what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the chapter you read from *Charlotte's Web*.

Beginning: _____

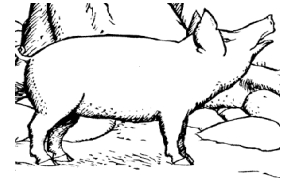
Middle: _____

End: _____



Home Learning Activity: 3

Do you really know Wilbur?



Dear Parents,

In class we have been learning about the different characters in *Charlotte's Web*, but do we really know who Wilbur is? We only know the things *Charlotte's Web* tells us about the characters in the book, but there is so much more to know about the kinds of animals in our book. I would like you to help your child learn more about their favorite animal in *Charlotte's Web*. In this activity your child will pick their favorite animal or the animal they want to know more about and research that animal. They will then "report" back to you!

Activity

1. Ask your learner to pick their favorite animal from *Charlotte's Web* or one the animal they are most interested in learning more about.
2. Together, make a list of 2 to 3 questions on notebook paper your learner would like answered about the animal they chose. For instance, what's the deadliest spider? What poisonous one's live in Texas?
3. You and your learner will then research the animal using the Internet, books found at the public library, or encyclopedias. Record the answers found on a sheet of notebook paper.
4. Using the "Tonight on Animal Planet" worksheet, allow your child to write a report answering the questions they found and share their news with the family!

*Allow your child to dress up like a news reporter! This makes it more fun. You can even give them a fake microphone, spoon, or hairbrush to use as a microphone!

Additional Resources

- Information on Animal Research
<http://www.kidsplanet.org/factsheets/map.html>
- Great Website! Just click on the farm animal you are interested in and learn more!
<http://www.agr.state.nc.us/cyber/kidswrld/general/barnyard/Barnyard.htm>
- Another Farm Animal Website
<http://www.kiddyhouse.com/Farm/>

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:

§ 110.5 English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 3.

(20) Writing/inquiry/research. The student uses writing as a tool for learning and research. The student is expected to:

(A) write or dictate questions for investigating (2-3)

Learning Objective:

The learner will come up with 2 to 3 questions they would like answered about a specific animal in *Charlotte's Web*, research to find the answers, and report it on "Tonight on Animal Planet."

Essential Questions Parents Can Ask Their Children:

- Why did you choose the animal you did to research?
- How did you feel about the way the book portrayed your animal? Do you think the book was accurate?

Key Vocabulary:

shamelessly – feeling no guilt or pain

promptly – at once; soon or quickly

examined – check out or look over carefully

Materials Needed for Activity

Below is a list of materials that will help you complete this activity at home with your child.

- Notebook paper
- Pencil
- Research sources: Internet, library, or encyclopedias
- "Tonight on Animal Planet" worksheet

"Tonight on Animal Planet"

For this activity, you will write down the information you found about the animal you chose to research from *Charlotte's Web*. You will then report your news to your family as if you are the host of Animal Planet's Nightly News on T.V. To help you, I have included some lines we often hear on the news. This is just a guide. You can come up with your own lines if you would like!

"Tonight on Animal Planet's Nightly News we will answer some questions we have had about

write down the animal you chose [spider, pig, rat, etc.]

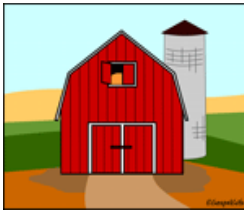
"We have recently discovered

"

"Did you know that

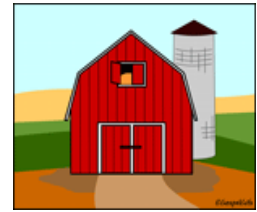
"

"That's it for tonight's Animal Planet Nightly News. Join us tomorrow night to learn more!"



Home Learning Activity: 4

Let's Thank Our Farmers!



Dear Parents,

Writing is a very important to the growth of your child's literacy development. We have discussed letter writing in our class. Since the setting of *Charlotte's Web* is on a farm, this is a great activity to help the learner become familiar with what farmers do. In this assignment, you and your learner will find a local farmer in your area or around the DFW metroplex and write a thank you letter to them.

Activity

1. On notebook paper, ask your learner to make a list of things farmers do and the kinds of services they provide us.
2. Using the attached sheet, have your learner write a thank you letter to a local farmer of their choosing. Using the list they made, thank the farmer for their services and tell them some of your favorite things they provide to our community.

*Note: Make sure to be specific when thanking them for their services. This makes the letter more personal!

*See below for a website that lists some of your local farmers. If there is not an address for them, you can write them an email instead.

Additional Resources

- Dallas Farmers Market
<http://www.dallasfarmersmarket.org/Market/farmers.html>
- Fun kids website about Dairy Farmers
http://www.southwestdairyfarmers.com/kids_corner.sstg

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:

§ 110.5 English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 3. (14) Writing/Purposes. The student writes for a variety of audiences and purposes and in various forms. The student is expected to:

(D) write in different forms for different purposes such as lists to record, letters to invite or thank, and stories or poems to entertain (1-3)

Learning Objective:

The child will write a letter/email to a local farmer thanking them for at least 3 services they provide to our community.

Essential Questions Parents Can Ask Their Children:

- How can we help support the local farmers in our area besides thanking them?
- What ways can we be environmentally responsible to make their job easier as a farmer?

Key Vocabulary:

grazed – fed in meadow or pasture

glistened – glitter; be shiny, as in wet

smudge – smear; sometimes talking about dirt

murmured – grumble or mutter; sometimes cannot tell what they are saying

Materials Needed for Activity

Below is a list of materials that will help you complete this activity at home with your child.

- Notebook paper
- Pencil
- Attached sheet to help write your letter
- Internet to access the local farmer list (under additional resources) or your own list of local farmers in your area
- Stamp to mail letter/Envelope



Home Learning Activity: 5

Let's Get Descriptive



Dear Parents,

It is important that your children learn to increase their knowledge of language daily. Vocabulary is a something we focus on in the classroom daily. The children are constantly learning new words. In this activity you and your learner will be doing an Acrostic Poem describing Wilbur. This is a great activity to get your learner thinking outside of their everyday vocabulary and to get creative with how they can describe something.

Activity

1. Read Chapter 2, "Wilbur," to your learner out loud.
2. Using the attached sheet, "Wilbur," explain to the student that they will fill in the Acrostic Poem by thinking of a word that describes Wilbur starting with the letter given. For instance, "W-orried"
3. *Optional:* If your learner needs help, offer them a dictionary to look up a simple word they already know to see the synonyms given for that word.

*source: Charlotte's Web. (n.d.). *abcteach -- 5000+ free printable pages and worksheets*. Retrieved February 15, 2010, from http://www.abcteach.com/directory/basics/reading/charlottes_web/#7122

4. Once the student is finished, they can color the Wilbur at the top of their page.

*Note: For an extended activity, the child can make their own paper mache piggy bank. Please see the website below for directions and supplies.

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/handicrafts/activity/34341.html?detoured=1>

Additional Resources

- Charlotte's Web Family Education Site <http://school.familyeducation.com/literature/childrens-book/34670.html>
- Charlotte's Web Publishers Website <http://www.harpercollinschildrens.com/harperchildrens/kids/gamesandcontests/features/charlottesweb/default.aspx>

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:

§ 110.5 English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 3 (18) Writing/grammar/usage. The student applies standard grammar and usage to communicate clearly and effectively in writing. The student is expected to:

- (D) use adjectives (comparative and superlative forms) and adverbs appropriately to make writing vivid or precise (4-8);

Learning Objective:

The learner will write 5 descriptive words to describe Wilbur to form their Acrostic Poem.

Essential Questions Parents Can Ask Their Children:

- Why do you think it is important for us to know more words to describe things?
- In what other ways can we use the dictionary?

Key Vocabulary:

common – average or ordinary

destiny – course or event that will happen in the future

disgusted – strong dislike; irritated or out of patience

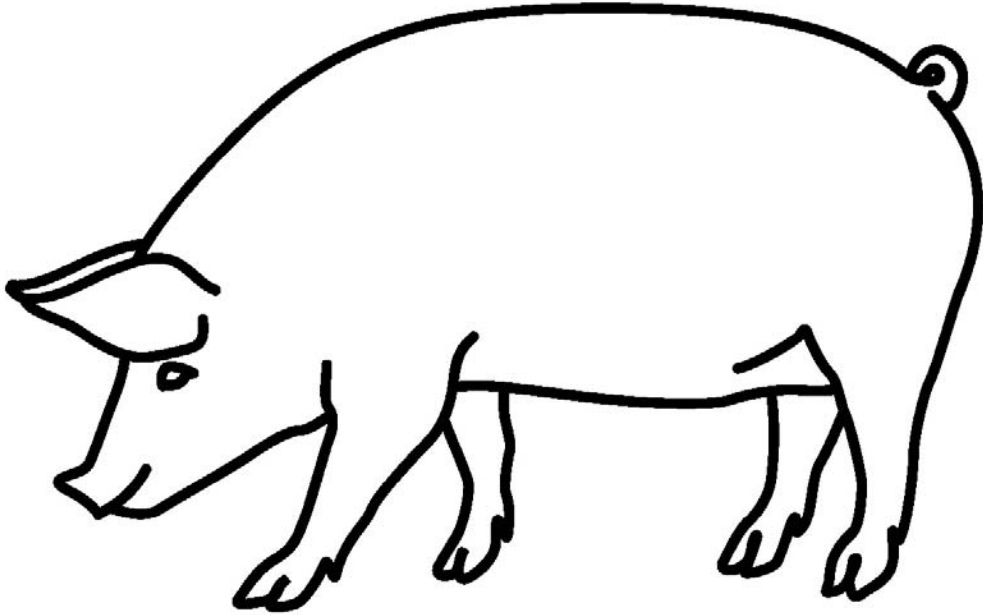
handsome – pleasing in appearance; good looking

Materials Needed for Activity

Below is a list of materials that will help you complete this activity at home with your child.

- Copy of *Charlotte's Web*
- Wilbur Acrostic Worksheet
- Pencil or Pen
- Crayons, Markers, or Colored Pencils
- Dictionary (optional)

WILBUR



Write an acrostic poem about Wilbur. Begin each line with a word that starts with the letter on that line. Use words that describe Wilbur.

W _____

I _____

L _____

B _____

U _____

R _____