

# INTRODUCTION

Our classrooms have an increasingly diverse population. Children come to us with many different learning styles, personalities, experiences, and abilities. Workbook pages and worksheets are not multi-leveled. All students working on the exact same pages and expecting the same outcomes is not differentiated work. Students need opportunities to apply and utilize skills and information at their own levels. When giving assignments to students, our goal is for them to be able to show acquisition and understanding of what is being taught; and all students can reach this goal in very different ways. Time Magazine had an article whose headline read: "Schools that Stretch: We searched America for educational pioneers. They have one thing in common: **Great Expectations.**"

We need to have the expectation that all students will be able to grasp the curriculum, although not in the same way, and not at the same level. When students feel that we have the expectation they can succeed, they DO succeed. If students feel we do not have the expectation that they can succeed, often the attitude is "why bother?" Our aura and belief of great expectations leads students to feeling motivated and ultimately successful.

Students need to be active participants in their learning. The more choices students make themselves, the more motivated and independent they become. Choice empowers students to learn and express ideas and knowledge through their strengths. Students become responsible for making decisions about their own learning.

This book gives you specific ideas to use when giving assignments to your students. These assignments are NOT a lot of work for the teacher. Instead of planning three to four different assignments for the different levels in your classrooms, you are planning one assignment that can be completed by all in a variety of different ways. We can shift the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the students by providing assignments like the ones shown in this book.

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## ***MAGAZINE PICTURES TO SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW***

One of my third grade workbook pages was about making words plural. There were twelve sentences on the page. The directions were to circle each word that was plural, next to find the rule at the top of the page that matched how the word was made plural, and then to write the number of the corresponding rule next to each circled word. PHEW! By the time I had finished giving directions some of my students had already completed the page, some still did not understand what to do, and some could not read the sentences without help. So, instead of using that workbook page, I used magazine pictures.

Magazine pictures are fabulous resources to use when giving an assignment in any area of your reading and writing curriculum. On Monday, have students choose some magazine pictures, one to three, to keep at their desks to use for the week. Another option is to have students choose a new picture for each given assignment. Students can bring in pictures from home. Using the chosen picture(s), students then apply and utilize the skill(s) that has been assigned.

The most important thing to remember is that students need to be in charge of what they wish to use for the week. Other ideas, instead of magazine pictures, include: post cards, greeting cards, photographs, posters, calendars, book jackets, and student-drawn pictures.

### **Goals:**

- Students will be able to correctly apply the rules for making words plural.
- Students will know how and when to use the articles "a" and "an".

### Directions:

1. List all the items you see or those you think of when looking at your picture.
2. Put "a" or "an" before each word (see below).
3. Take your words and make them plural.
4. Categorize the words into groups with the same plural rule.



a kayak  
a canoe  
a boat  
a person  
an oar  
a life preserver  
a jacket  
a bottle of water  
a sandwich  
a tree  
a leaf  
a cliff  
an eagle  
a waterfall  
a hill  
a wolf  
a branch



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Add "s"	Add "es"	Whole Word Changes	Change "f" to "v" and add "es"	Change "y" to "i" and add "es"
canoes	sandwiches	people	leaves	
boats	branches		wolves	
oars				
life preservers				
jackets				
bottles of water				
cliffs				
eagles				
waterfalls				
hills				
trees				

(Table found at red tab: REPRODUCIBLES)



# USE YOUR NAME TO SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

What can be more personalized and motivating than using your own name or a name of your choice for completing assignments? Students can use a friend's name, the name of a family member, a teacher's name, or a character's name from a book they are listening to or reading.

## Goal:

Students will be able to write as many words as they can using the letters in their names or a chosen name.

## Directions:

1. Write your name on a piece of one inch graph paper, putting one letter in each square.

P	a	t	r	i	c	i	a
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2. Cut out the letters.
3. Move the letters around to make as many words as your can. Write down the words you make.

Pat	rat	cat	at	it	rap	trip	part
pit	tarp	tar	par	car	cart	Tricia	art

## Extensions:

Complete the same activity adding your middle name and/or last name. Categorize your list. For example: rhyming words, vowel sounds, blends. Use your words in sentences.

This assignment is a great center assignment that can be used all year. Each week students choose a different name to use, such as: a character's name, a friend's name, a pet's name, the name of someone they look up to, an athlete, etc. This gives students practice with spelling, phonics, and word work at their own levels.

Struggling older students and early readers are often working with one-syllable words and basic phoneme patterns while students who need challenges are adding prefixes and suffixes to their words.