

FIRST GRADE
LANGUAGE ARTS

POWER PIX

USE REVOLUTIONARY
WHOLE BRAIN TEACHING
TO TEACH FIRST GRADERS
CALIFORNIA STATE STANDARDS.

ANOTHER GREAT PRODUCT FROM
WHOLEBRAINTEACHING.COM

CHRIS BIFFLE
JAY VANDERFIN

First Grade Power Pix Language Arts



Chris Biffle
Jay Vanderfin

WholeBrainTeaching.com

Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
FIRST GRADE POWER PIX MATH OVERVIEW	7
FIRST GRADE MATH REFERENCE LIST	11
FIRST GRADE MATH POWER PIX SIGNS	49
COPYRIGHT AND CONTACT INFORMATION	85

All rights reserved, 2009. Copies of this document may be reproduced for use by individual teachers. However, no portion of this document may be sold, or offered for sale, without the written permission of the authors.

Introduction

A significant quantity of modern brain research demonstrates that we learn best by seeing, saying, hearing and doing. When we see information, we employ the visual cortex near the rear of the brain; when we say and hear information, the language centers, Broca's area and Wernicke's area in the brain's left hemisphere are active. When we engage in a physical learning activity we employ the motor cortex, our most reliable memory storage area, located in a band across the top, center of the brain.

Not every learning activity, however, employs all four learning modes. In fact, the most common teaching model, the instructor talking and students listening, is judged by contemporary brain science as the most inefficient way for the brain to acquire new information. Put bluntly, *the longer we talk, the more students we lose*. What we need in education, from kindergarten through college, are teaching materials and pedagogical styles that are designed for whole brain instruction. Since 1999, I and my teaching colleagues have been developing and classroom testing brain friendly learning modules. We want our students to see, say, hear and do ... we want them to experience the joy and power of learning with their whole brains. Power Pix, as you will see, employ all four learning modes, and are designed to solve a very practical problem, how to teach the state standards in Math and math (this edition is designed for the California State Standards but can be used by teachers in any state.)

In 1999, my former student Jay Vanderfin and I began to search for a way to make learning more engaging. I had some success in my college courses using diagrams to teach complex philosophical topics; Jay was seeking an entertaining technique for teaching the California State Standards to his kindergarteners.

In addition to philosophy, I had also taught art history; I was astonished at my students' ability to attach the correct titles and painters to hundreds of paintings. My classes could process and retain huge quantities of visual information but had significant trouble remembering five or ten dates of important historical events. However, when I created a series of memory gestures to accompany the dates, their learning improved dramatically. As I related these experiences to Jay, we both became convinced that the solution to the serious problem of teaching California State Standards had to reside in some combination of visual, auditory, oral and physical learning.

And so we set forth on a remarkable journey.

We were looking for something that we had never seen before, a multi-modal pedagogy that teachers could apply to any educational core concept. As we experimented with solutions and researched methods of learning, we eventually learned to call our approach "a whole brain learning method." We were delighted to see how the visual cortex, auditory cortex, sensory motor cortex, even the amygdala (which processes pleasure and pain) and limbic system (the seat of emotions) were involved in the system we were creating.

Jay and I, and our colleague, Chris Rekstad, a fourth grade teacher at Valley Elementary in Yucaipa, gave countless seminars to Southern California teachers, showing rough drafts of our approach ... and we were astonished at the enthusiastic reception we received. We gave away samples of our materials by the box load, over 10,000 pages, to teachers who were eager to try our strategies.

Over the last five years, we've had a tremendous amount of constructive feedback and have carefully honed and classroom tested the materials you are about to investigate.

FIRST GRADE POWER PIX LANGUAGE ARTS OVERVIEW

This booklet is devoted to 37 Math concepts for First Graders. The concepts are (in alphabetical order):

LANGUAGE ARTS

5 W + H, adjective, apostrophe, author, capital letter, capitalization rule, characters, compound word, contraction, days of the week, exclamation mark, fiction, illustrator, letter “I”, letters, long vowel, months of the year, nonfiction, noun, period, plot, plural noun, possessive noun, prediction, pronoun, question mark, quotation marks, rhyming words, sentence, setting, short vowel, singular noun, syllables, title, verb, vowels, word

Virtually every first grade teacher in the country mentions some or all these concepts. If you put yourself in the shoes of a youngster new to school, many of these terms would be no more familiar than oddities of Shakespearean English are to adult readers. Hamlet says, “Who would *fardels* bear when he could his *quietus* make with a bare *bodkin*?” If Hamlet’s meaning is unclear to you, then imagine a first grader’s confusion when the teacher says, “Always begin your *sentence* with an *capital letter* and finish with a *period*.” Our classroom tested materials, called Power Pix, enormously simplify the task of teaching these, and many other, core concepts.

Power Pix are pictures used to represent and teach California State Standards. Each Power Pix should be printed on a sheet of computer paper. The picture represents the California State Standard; teaching resources for each Power Pix are in the Power Pix Reference List in this manual. Teachers hold up the Power Pix in the front of

their classroom and teach the concept and related memory gesture. After students have repeated the concept and practiced the gesture, the Power Pix is placed on a classroom wall for frequent review.

Typically, students can master over 100 Power Pix in a year! Power Pix are an entertaining, effective way for students to acquire large quantities of core knowledge.

On the following pages are a sample Pix and its reference list information

Sample: Power Pix for author

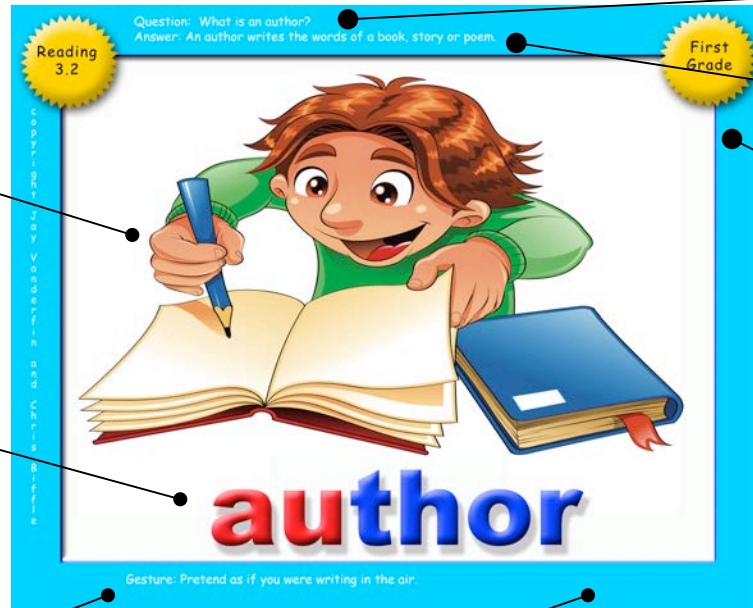
California State
Standard (Reading
3.2)

Picture
representing
standard

Key word in
standard (for ease
of reading by
students, syllables
are color coded)

Gesture for key
word:
(Pretend as if you
are writing in the
air.)

Blue border
identifies language
arts; red border
identifies math.



Prompt question: What is an author?

Answer: An author writes the words
of a book, story or poem.

Grade Level: First Grade

Sample: Power Pix Reference for author

author

Question: What is an author?

Answer: An author writes the words of a book, story or poem.

Gesture: Pretend as if you were writing in the air.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 3.2:* Describe the roles of **authors** and illustrators and their contributions to print materials.

Teaching suggestion: Hold up books and describe the tasks of an author. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this have an author? (Hold books and also “non-author” materials, like chalk, erasers, etc.)
2. Does every book have an author?
3. Is this the author gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Authors write books.
2. A girl or a boy could be an author.
3. Authors write poems.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with author and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for author and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

Power Pix employ all four of the brain's learning modes:

- Visual (visual cortex):** students learn by looking at a picture representing a concept.
- Auditory (Wernicke's area):** students hear the definition of the concept.
- Verbal (Broca's area):** students say the definition of the concept to themselves and their classmates.
- Kinesthetic (motor cortex):** students practice a memory gesture associated with the concept.

In addition, Power Pix can be used to develop critical thinking skills which bring together the frontal cortex (reasoning), the hippocampus (memory formation) and the language centers (Wernicke's area and Broca's area):

- Paraphrasing:** after learning the definition of a concept by rote, students can paraphrase the definition by explaining it to their neighbors.
- Comparison/Contrast:** students can talk and write about similarities and differences among Power Pix.
- Connective Thinking:** students can talk and write about connections between the concepts and their experience outside the classroom.

Finally, Power Pix are ideally suited for collaborative learning. Looking at Pix placed on the wall, students review what they have learned in teams of two. One student asks the question represented by the picture, "What is an author?"; the other student gives the answer, "An author writes the words of a book, story or poem." When the

first student has finished reviewing all the Pix, the students switch roles. The questioner becomes the answerer; the answerer becomes the questioner.

Four Steps for Teaching Power Pix

We believe the best way to teach Power Pix is to use a graduated program like the following:

Step One: Show your students the picture and teach them the concept (for example, author) and the gesture from the Power Pix Reference List (writing in the air with an imaginary pencil). Put the Power Pix on the wall; review the concept and gesture frequently for at least a week.

Step Two: When your class has mastered the concept and gesture, use the Power Pix Reference List to teach them the question (What is an author?) and the answer (An author writes the words of a book, story or poem). For additional learning aids, see the Teaching Suggestion for each Power Pix in the Power Pix Reference List.

Step Three: After several weeks of reviewing the concept, gesture, question and answer, you're ready to assess your students' understanding.

The Power Pix Reference List contains two simple assessment games designed for each Power Pix, *Yes/No Way!* and *Cutie*.

Yes/No Way!

This game provides a rapid evaluation of your students' understanding without using a pencil and paper test! Simply ask your class questions about a Power Pix that can be answered Yes, or No Way! The Power Pix Reference List contains at least three *Yes/No Way!* questions for each Pix.

Here are the *Yes/No Way!* questions for the **author** Power Pix above.

1. Does this have an author? (Hold up books and also “non-author” materials, like chalk, erasers, etc.)
2. Does every book have an author?
3. Is this the author gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Ask your class these and other questions about the Power Pix. Tell your students to answer the questions in chorus, either *Yes!*, or *No Way!*. Students should be encouraged to pump their fist vigorously when saying *Yes!*, or shake one finger in emphatic negation (as if exclaiming “No! No! No!”) when saying “No Way!” As students respond in chorus, you can quickly determine how many in your class understood the Power Pix concept.

Cutie

Yes/No Way! is a rapid measure of all your students' understanding of a Power Pix. *Cutie* evaluates the understanding of individual students.

Cutie is a quick test, abbreviated QT and thus pronounced “Cutie.”

When you say “Cutie!,” your students respond “Cutie!” and close their eyes. Next, you make statements about the Power Pix concept that are either true or false. When the statement is true, students, still with their eyes closed, raise their hands. When the statement is false, they keep their hands down. *Cutie* is a remarkably powerful assessment of individual understanding which, like *Yes/No Way!*, does not require a pencil/paper test. You can tell simply by looking at the show of hands how many of your students understood the Power Pix lesson. The Power Pix Reference List contains at least three *Cutie* statements for each Pix.

Here are the *Cutie* statements for the **author** Power Pix above.

1. Authors write books.
2. A girl or a boy could be an author.
3. Authors write poems.

Step Four: When your students have mastered the concept, the gesture, question, answer, and successfully passed the assessments, have them play *Compare/Contrast* and then engage in the *Review* activities described below.

Compare/Contrast

Describing similarities and differences between core concepts is an important, higher order thinking activity that should be practiced at every level of instruction. After the Power Pix concept is understood, students should talk to each other about the similarities and differences they see between one concept and others they have learned. When students explain comparisons to each other, they should lace their fingers together; when they describe differences they should bump their closed fists together. These visual cues reinforce, and make entertaining, comparing (fingers laced together) and contrasting (fists bumping each other.)

For a sample demonstration of this comparison and contrast activity, see a video of Jay Vanderfin and his fourth graders in the videos section of WholeBrainTeaching.com

Review

Students should be encouraged to frequently rehearse the questions, answers and gestures for the Power Pix they have learned. This review can take a variety of formats:

- One student makes a Power Pix gesture; his/her partner states the appropriate Power Pix Question and Answer.
- One student asks a Power Pix Question; his/her partner states the Power Pix Answer.
- The teacher makes a Power Pix gesture and students give the Answer and/or the Question.
- The teacher states a Power Pix Question and/or Answer and the students make the appropriate Power Pix gesture.
- During a timed trial (typically one minute) students work individually or in teams to state as many Power Pix Questions and/or Answers and/or Gestures as possible.

Note that in a procedure like steps we have outlined, your students move from relatively simpler tasks, linking a word, picture and gesture to more intellectually complex tasks, inventing their own comparisons and contrasts that create new associations in information they've learned. If

you follow our suggestions, lower order thinking skills involving the speech, motor and visual centers of the brain lay the foundation for higher order thinking skills involving memory and the prefrontal cortex. You'll find students amaze themselves, and you, at the amount of information they are able to retain and organize. What are Power Pix? Whole brain learning at its most efficient!

Additional Suggestions

Because Power Pix are the foundation of what students need to know in elementary school, they should be incorporated into as many parts of the curriculum as possible. As you will see, Power Pix can be used in very brief lessons (often no more than one minute) to not only teach core concepts but also to reinforce other important areas of instruction.

As you teach each Power Pix, place it on the wall. Whenever you wish, use this wall for a convenient and rapid review of any or all the material you have covered.

- Point at various Pix and ask, "What is this?" Students chorus in complete sentences, "That is a" (author, period, uppercase letter, etc.)
- Point at various Pix and say, "Name this Pix and make the gesture!"

- Point at various Pix and say, “Name it! What is the question?! What is the gesture?! What is the answer?!”
- Tell your students, “Turn to your neighbor, take turns pointing to the Pix and, as quickly as you can, say the question each picture represents.”
- Make the gesture for a Pix, for example, writing in the air. Your students mirror your gesture and then say in chorus what the gesture represents, “That is an author!”
- As part of “quiet time” stand in front of the Pix wall, point at each Pix, silently make the gesture. Your students silently mirror your gestures.

If you are wondering why your students should be spending so much time, in so many ways, involved with Power Pix, the answer is simple. Power Pix are nothing but visual representations of core knowledge. Millions of dollars of grants and countless hours of research have been spent in identifying the fundamental components of a students’ k-6 education. The more familiar your students are with Power Pix and their interconnections with the major areas of your curriculum, the more successful they will be in your class and in the rest of their school experience.

First Grade Language Arts Reference List

(alphabetical order)

5 W + H

Question: What are the 5 W + H?

Answer: The 5W + H are: who, what , where, when, why and how.

Gesture: Using both hands to count, hold up one finger for each of the 5W + H until six fingers are held up.

California State First Grade Standard: *Listening and Speaking 2.2:* Retell stories using basic story grammar and relating the sequence of story events by answering **who, what, when, where, why, and how.**

Teaching suggestion: The 5 W + H provide important reading, writing and critical thinking guides. Ask questions that use each of the 5W + H, “Who am I?” “What am I doing?” “Where am I?” “When do we go to recess?” “Why are we here?” “How should you answer questions?” Students respond with complete sentences, “Who you are is Mr. Vanderfin.” “What you are doing is teaching us.” And so forth.

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say short sentences that are questions. If the question is a who, what, where, when, why or how question, silently raise your hand.”

1. *Who* is the principal?
2. Is your name Jose?
3. Will the bell ring loud?
4. *What* are you doing after school?

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with 5 W + H and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for 5 W + H and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

adjective

Question: What is an adjective?

Answer: An adjective is a word that describes a noun.

Gesture: Pet an imaginary dog and say, “fluffy dog.” (Emphasize the adjective, “fluffy.”)

California State First Grade Standard: *Writing, 1.2:* Use **descriptive words** when writing.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write adjective/noun pairs on the board, pretty house, cold water, blue car, etc. Explain to your class the concept of adjectives. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this an adjective? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Is horse an adjective? (Substitute words that are, and are not, adjectives.)
3. Is this the adjective gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say some sentences. When I say an adjective, please silently raise your hand.”

1. The big, hairy dog is good.
2. A little, smiling girl stood on the corner.
3. I went to the store.
4. I went to the bright, shiny, new store.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with adjectives and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for adjective and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

apostrophe

Question: What is an apostrophe?

Answer: An apostrophe is a small mark used in contractions and possessive nouns.

Gesture: Use one finger to draw a comma in the air and make a squeaking sound (however, you wish!).

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.13:* Read compound words and contractions.

(Understanding of **apostrophes** is implied, but not stated.)

Teaching suggestion: (teach apostrophes after **contractions** and **possessive nouns**.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write examples of the correct (and incorrect) use of apostrophes on the board. Incorrect use should be obvious: ca’t, d’og, etc. Explain the concept of apostrophes to your class.

Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this the correct way to use an apostrophe? (Point at various examples on the board.)
2. Are apostrophes only used in possessive nouns?
3. Is this the apostrophe gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to spell some words. When I spell a word that has an apostrophe, please silently raise your hand.” (Make the squeaking sound whenever you spell a word with an apostrophe.)

1. cannot
2. can’t
3. boys
4. boy’s

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with apostrophe and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for apostrophe and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

author

Question: What is an author?

Answer: An author writes the words of a book, story or poem.

Gesture: Pretend as if you were writing in the air.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 3.2:* Describe the roles of **authors** and illustrators and their contributions to print materials.

Teaching suggestion: Hold up books and describe the tasks of an author. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this have an author? (Hold books and also “non-author” materials, like chalk, erasers, etc.)
2. Does every book have an author?
3. Is this the author gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Authors write books.
2. A girl or a boy could be an author.
3. Authors write poems.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with author and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for author and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

capital letter

Question: What is a capital letter?

Answer: A capital letter is an uppercase letter of the alphabet.

Gesture: Put one hand on top of the other. Lift the top hand quickly to show that a capital letter is a “big” letter.

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.3:* Capitalize the first word of a sentence, names of people and the pronoun I.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write uppercase and lowercase letters on the board. Explain to your students when capital letters are used (first word of a sentence, names of people, the pronoun I, etc.) Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this a capital letter? (Point at various letters on the board.)
2. Is a capital letter an uppercase letter?
3. Is this the capital letter gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. All capital letters are in the alphabet.
2. Some capital letters are numbers
3. A capital letter is a small letter, not a big letter.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with capital letter and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for capital letter and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

capitalization rule

Question: What is the capitalization rule?

Answer: The capitalization rule is: capitalize the first word of a sentence, days of the week, months of the year, a person's name ... and I deserve a capital letter!

Gesture: Using one finger to point at the fingers of the other hand, count off the five kinds of words that are capitalized, the first word of a sentence (1), days of the week (2), months (3), people's names (4), "I" (5). At the end, with the word "deserve", jerk your thumb toward your chest, "And I *deserve* a capital letter!"

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Language Conventions, 1.7:* Capitalize the first word of a sentence, names of people, and the pronoun I.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write examples of the correct (and incorrect) use of capital letters on the board. Explain to your students the concept of capitalized words. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this the correct way to use a capital letter? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Should we always capitalize the days of the week? (Substitute other types of words that should, and should not, be capitalized.)
3. Is this the capitalized word gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. John is a capitalized word.
2. The word "she" is a capitalized word.
3. Wednesday starts with a capital letter.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with capitalized words and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for capitalized words and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

characters

Question: What are characters?

Answer: Characters are people, animals, or even things in a story.

Gesture: Using two fingers on each hand, walk your fingers through the air, as if they were characters running around in a story.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading Comprehension 3.1:* Identify elements of plot, setting and character(s) in a story.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach **plot**, characters and **setting** together.) Tell your students a simple story, like *The Three Little Pigs*. Explain the difference between plot, setting and character in the story. Ask your students to retell each other a story they have read as a group. After their discussion, ask students to describe the characters. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does every story have characters?
2. Could a character in a story be an animal?
3. Is this the character gesture? (make various gestures.)
4. Could a character in a story be a little girl?
5. Could a character in a story be a talking orange?

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Characters are people, animals, or even things in a story.
2. All characters in stories must be people.
3. Every story has characters.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with characters and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for characters and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

compound word

Question: What is a compound word?

Answer: A compound word is one word made of two words.

Gesture: Hold up two fingers on one hand (symbolizing two words). With the other hand, squeeze the fingers together (showing that the two words become one word in a compound word).

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1:13:* Read **compound words** and contractions.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write examples of words on the board that are, and are not, compound. Explain the concept of compound words. Play *Yes/No Way!* with statements like the following:

1. Is this a compound word? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Is grasshopper a compound word? (Substitute other words that are, and are not, compound words.)
3. Is this the compound word gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*, I’m going to say some words. If the word is compound, please raise your hand.”

1. doggy
2. pigtail
3. did not
4. newspaper
5. silly

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with compound word and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for compound word and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

contraction

Question: What is a contraction?

Answer: A contraction is a word with a missing letter marked by an apostrophe.

Gesture: Hold your two hands wide apart and then bring them together to show “contracting.” Next make the squeaking, comma gesture for apostrophe (see above).

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1. 13:* Read compound words and **contractions**.

Teaching suggestion: (teach contractions and **possessive nouns** before **apostrophes**.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write words and their contractions on the board: cannot, can’t, do not, don’t, is not, isn’t, etc. Explain to your class the concept of contractions. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this word a contraction? (Point at various words on the board.)

2. Is “won’t” a contraction? (Substitute words that are, and are not, contractions.)

3. Is this the contraction gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. “Cannot” is a contraction.

2. “Wouldn’t” is a contraction.

3. “Should not” is a contraction.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with contraction and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for contraction and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

days of the week

Question: What are the days of the week?

Answer: The days of the week are Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Gesture: As the days are counted, hold up a finger for each day, until you have counted five fingers on one hand and two fingers on the other hand.

California State First Grade Standard: *Core Concept*, but not identified as part of California State Standards for first grade.

Teaching suggestion: After students can recite the days of the week correctly, and while they are involved in individual or group activities, write the days of the week and other words on the board. Teach your students to recognize the written form of the days of the week. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this word a day of the week? (Point at various words on the board.)

2. Is Wednesday a day of the week? (Substitute various words that are, and are not, days of the week.)

3. Is this the days of the week gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Wednesday is a day of the week.

2. January is a day of the week.

3. Lunchtime is a day of the week.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with days of the week and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for days of the week and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

exclamation mark

Question: What is an exclamation mark?

Answer: An exclamation mark goes at the end of a sentence to show excitement.

Gesture: Raise your fist over your head and then bring it down excitedly as if you were saying, “Yes!”

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.5:* Use a period, exclamation point, or question mark at the end of sentences.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach **period**, exclamation mark and **question mark** together.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write short sentences on the board using a variety of end marks: period, exclamation mark, question mark. Explain to your class the difference between the end marks.

Demonstrate how end mark punctuation changes the meaning of the sentence. For example, use your voice to accent each of the following differently: I like dogs. I like dogs! I like dogs? Spend additional time explaining exclamation marks. Place *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this sentence end with an exclamation mark? (Point at various sentences.)
2. Is an exclamation mark the same as a question mark?
3. Is this the exclamation mark gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Exclamation marks go at the end of sentences.
2. Sentences that are exclamations, should end with exclamation marks.
3. An exclamation mark is different than a question mark.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with exclamation mark and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for exclamation mark and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

fiction

Question: What is fiction?

Answer: Fiction is when a story is made up, not real

Gesture: Point to both your eyes at the same time and then a third one in the middle of your forehead.

California State First Grade Standard: *Core Concept*, but not identified as part of California State Standards for first grade.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach **nonfiction** and fiction together.) Tell your class a short story about what your happiest memory. Explain that the story is nonfiction, because everything you described actually happened. Then tell your class the same story, but introduce fictional elements, for example, you flew to the moon and played checkers with a dinosaur. Explain the difference between nonfiction and fiction. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Our school has a playground, is that fiction? (Introduce other fictional and nonfictional statements.)
2. Is ____ (insert a story the class has read) nonfiction? (Substitute other stories.)
3. Is this the fiction gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a sentence that is fiction, please raise your hand.”

1. Our floor is soft as a pillow.
2. Cars have four wheels.
3. Our principal came to school riding a giant dog.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with fiction and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for fiction and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

illustrator

Question: What is an illustrator?

Answer: An illustrator draws the pictures in a book, story or poem.

Gesture: Use both hands and make a frame, as if you were a photographer or a painter.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 3.2:* Describe the roles of authors and **illustrators** and their contributions to print materials.

Teaching suggestion: Hold up sample pages from books with illustrations and describe the tasks of an illustrator. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this have an illustrator? (Hold illustrated books and also “non-illustrator” materials, like chalk, erasers, etc.)
2. Does every book have an illustrator?
3. Is this the illustrator gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Illustrators write books.
2. A girl or a boy could be an illustrator.
3. Illustrators make pictures in books.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with illustrator and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for illustrator and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

letter “I”

Question: What is the letter “I” by itself?

Answer: The letter “I” by itself must be capitalized.

Gesture: Draw a capital I in the air.

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Language Conventions, 1.7:* Capitalize the first word of a sentence, names of people, and the pronoun I.

Teaching suggestion: While your students are involved in individual or group activities, write examples of sentences on the board with capital “I” and lower case “i”, both standing for the personal pronoun “I”. Explain the correct and incorrect way to use “I.” Play *Yes/No Way* with questions like the following:

1. Is this the correct way to use an “I?” (Point at various examples on the board.)
2. Do we always capitalize the letter “I” when it stands by itself?
3. Is this the letter “I” gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say some sentences. When you hear an “I” that should be capitalized, please raise your hand.

1. When I go home I will eat lunch.
2. You are my friend.
3. If I want to have fun, I play hopscotch.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with the letter “I” and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for the letter “I” and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

letters

Question: What are letters?

Answer: Letters can be joined together to make words.

Gesture: Wiggle one finger to represent a letter.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.3:* Identify letters, numbers and sentences.

Teaching suggestion: While your students are involved in individual or group activities, write examples of letters and numbers on the board. Explain the difference between letters and numbers. Letters are used in words; numbers are used in counting. Play *Yes/No Way* with questions like the following:

1. Is this a letter? (Point at various examples on the board.)
2. Is a letter the same as a number?
3. Is this the letters gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say some letters and numbers. When you hear a letter, please raise your hand.

1. R
2. 4
3. a

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with letters and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for letters and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

long vowel

Question: What is a long vowel?

Answer: A long vowel is a vowel that says its name.

Gesture: Put the tips of your fingers on both hands together, then pull them apart showing “long.”

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.5:* Distinguish **long-** and **short-vowel** sounds in orally stated single-syllable words.

Teaching suggestion: (teach **short vowel** and long vowel together.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write simple short vowel and long vowel words on the board. Explain the difference between short vowel sounds and long vowel sounds. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this word _____ have a long vowel? (Point at and pronounce various words on the board)
2. Does a long vowel say its name?
3. Is this the long vowel gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say some words. When a word has a long vowel, silently raise your hand.” (Emphasize the vowel sounds in the following.)

1. bat
2. eat
3. cat
4. I
5. hit

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with long vowel and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for long vowel and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

months of the year

Question: What are the months of the year?

Answer: The months of the year are: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December.

Gesture: Hold up fingers on each hand as the months of the year are counted. For the last two months, close one hand and hold up two fingers on the other hand.

California State First Grade Standard: *Core Concept*, but not identified as part of California State Standards for first grade.

Teaching suggestion: After students can recite the months in order, ask questions like “What is the month *after* January?” Students respond, “The month after January is February!” When this skill is mastered, ask much harder questions like, “What is the month *before* August?” Students respond, “The month before August is July!”

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say some words. When I say a month, please silently raise your hand.”

1. December
2. Monday
3. fourteen
4. August

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with months of the year and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for months of the year and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

nonfiction

Question: What is a nonfiction?

Answer: Nonfiction is when a story is real, not made up.

Gesture: Point to both your eyes at the same time.

California State First Grade Standard: *Core Concept*, but not identified as part of California State Standards for first grade.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach nonfiction and **fiction** together.) Tell your class a short story about what you did yesterday. Explain that the story is nonfiction, because everything you described actually happened. Then tell your class the same story, but introduce fictional elements, for example, you gave a dragon a ride to

work. Explain the difference between nonfiction and fiction. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. If I say a fire is hot, is that fiction? (Introduce other fictional and nonfictional statements.)
2. Is ____ (insert a story the class has read) nonfiction? (Substitute other stories.)
3. Is this the nonfiction gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a sentence that is nonfiction, please raise your hand.”

1. You are sitting in a room.
2. A tiger is sitting next to you.
3. The name of this school is (insert name).

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with nonfiction and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for nonfiction and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

noun

Question: What is a noun?

Answer: A noun is a person, place, or thing.

Gesture: Point to yourself, the room, and then knock your knuckles on a table top.

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Conventions, 1.2:* Identify and correctly use singular and plural **nouns**.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach noun and **verb** together, but teach nouns first.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write pairs of words on the board. One word is a noun and the other is a verb: book, read, hamburger, eat, girl, run, etc. Explain the difference between nouns and verbs. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this word a noun? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Is “book” a noun? (Substitute various verbs and nouns.)
3. Is this the noun gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a noun, please raise your hand.”

1. Juan eats.
2. Tasha sleeps.
3. This is a dog.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with noun and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for noun and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

period

Question: What is a period?

Answer: A period marks the end of most sentences.

Gesture: Poke the air in front of your face with your forefinger, as if putting a period at the end of a sentence.

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.5:* Use a period, exclamation point, or question mark at the end of sentences.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach period, exclamation mark and question mark together.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write short sentences on the board using a variety of end marks: period, exclamation mark, question mark. Explain to your class the difference between the end marks. Demonstrate how end mark punctuation changes the meaning of the sentence. For example, use your voice to accent each of the following differently: I like dogs. I like dogs! I like dogs? Spend additional time explaining periods. Place *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this sentence end with a period? (Point at various sentences.)
2. Is a period the same as a question mark?
3. Is this the period gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Periods go at the end of sentences.
2. Sentences that are questions, should end with periods.
3. A period is the same as an exclamation mark.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with period and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for period and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

plot

Question: What is a plot?

Answer: A plot is the actions taken by characters in a story to solve a problem.

Gesture: Scratch your head to show that characters are trying to solve a problem.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading Comprehension 3.1:* Identify elements of **plot**, setting and character(s) in a story.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach plot, **characters** and **setting** together.) Tell your students a simple story, like The Three Little Pigs. Explain the difference between plot, setting and character in the story. Ask your students to retell each other a story they have read as a group. After their discussion, ask students to describe the plot, i.e. the problem in the story and the actions the characters took to solve the problem. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does every plot have characters?
2. Is the plot where the story takes place?
3. Is this the plot gesture? (Make various gestures.)
4. Is the plot the actions taken by characters in a story to solve a problem?

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. A plot always has only one character.
2. Every plot has a problem that the characters are trying to solve.
3. Every story has a plot.
4. A plot is always stated on the first page of a story.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with plot and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for plot and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

plural noun

Question: What is a plural noun?

Answer: A plural noun ends in “s” and represents more than one person, place or thing.

Gesture: With one finger, make an “s” in the air and then wiggle your fingers (showing that a plural noun represents more than one person, place or thing.)

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Conventions, 1.2:* Identify and correctly use singular and plural nouns.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write words on the board, some of which are plural nouns. Explain the concept of plural nouns, indicating that all plural nouns end in “s,” but some add additional letters, for example: church, churches, wife, wives, fly, flies, etc. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this word a plural noun? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Is cat a plural noun? (Substitute other words that are, and are not, plural nouns.)
3. Is this the plural noun gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a word that is a plural noun, please raise your hand.”

1. happy
2. boy
3. boys
4. candies

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with plural noun and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for plural noun and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

possessive noun

Question: What is a possessive noun?

Answer: A possessive noun uses an apostrophe, ends in “s” and shows ownership.

Gesture: With one finger, make an “s” in the air and then grab one hand with the other, showing “ownership.”

California State First Grade Standard: *Core Concept*, but not identified as part of California State Standards for first grade.

Teaching suggestion: While your students are involved in individual or group projects, write a list of words on the board, like “boys, boy’s, boys’, snow, helps, dog’s, dogs’, dogs.” Explain the concept of possessive noun. Play Yes/No Way! with questions like the following:

1. Is this a possessive noun? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Does every possessive noun have an apostrophe?
3. Is this the possessive noun gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to spell a word out loud. Silently raise your hand if the word is a possessive noun.” Then spell words that are and are not possessive nouns.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with possessive noun and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for possessive noun and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

prediction

Question: What is a prediction?

Answer: A prediction is a guess about the future.

Gesture: Scratch your head (a guess) and then point straight in front of you (the future).

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading Comprehension 2.5:* Confirm **predictions** about what will happen next in a text by identifying key words (i.e., signpost words).

Teaching suggestion: Explain to your students the concept of prediction. Contrast predictions with statements about the past and with facts. Ask questions like the following, “What happened to you yesterday?” “What happened to you today?” “What do you think will happen to you tomorrow?” “What do you predict will happen to you tomorrow.” Point out that the last two questions are the same. Play Yes/No Way! with questions like the following:

1. Is it a prediction to say yesterday was cloudy? (Substitute other statements that are, and are not, predictions.)
2. Is it prediction to say that tomorrow will be cloudy?

3. Is this the prediction gesture? (Make various gestures.)

4. Is it a prediction to say that two plus two is four?

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say some sentences. When my sentence is a prediction, silently raise your hand.”

1. Today I ate breakfast.

2. Yesterday I ate breakfast.

3. I predict that tomorrow I will eat breakfast.

4. I guess tomorrow I’ll eat breakfast.

5. I think the Dodgers will win the World Series.

6. I think the Dodgers won’t win the World Series.

7. The Dodgers are a baseball team.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with prediction and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for prediction and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

pronoun

Question: What is a pronoun?

Answer: A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun.

Gesture: Make a fist with one hand and then bump it away with the open palm of the other hand (symbolizing one word, a noun, replaced by another word, a pronoun.)

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.3:* Identify and correctly use contractions (e.g., isn’t, aren’t, can’t, won’t) and singular possessive **pronouns** (e.g., my/mine, his/her, hers, your/s) in writing and speaking.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write pronoun/noun pairs on the board, for example, he David, it car, she Sarah, etc. Explain the difference between nouns and pronouns. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this word a pronoun? (Point at various words on the board.)

2. She is happy: is “she” a pronoun? (Substitute various sentences containing nouns and pronouns.)

3. Is this the pronoun gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play Cutie. I’m going to say some sentences. When you hear a pronoun, silently raise your hand.” Say each sentence slowly.

1. Ramona is good.
2. She is good.
3. He runs fast.
4. Alejandro runs fast.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with pronoun and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for pronoun and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

question mark

Question: What is a question mark?

Answer: A question mark is placed at the end of a sentence to show it is a question:.

Gesture: Hold your hands palms up, as if you are saying “what?”

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.5:* Use a period, exclamation point, or **question mark** at the end of sentences.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach **period**, **exclamation mark** and question mark together.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write short sentences on the board using a variety of end marks: period, exclamation mark, question mark. Explain to your class the difference between the end marks.

Demonstrate how end mark punctuation changes the meaning of the sentence. For example, use your voice to accent each of the following differently: I like dogs. I like dogs! I like dogs? Spend additional time explaining question marks. Place *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this sentence end with a question mark? (Point at various sentences.)
2. Is a question mark the same as a period?
3. Is this the question mark gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Question marks go at the end of sentences.

2. Sentences that are questions, should end with question marks.

3. A question mark is the same as an exclamation mark.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with question mark and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for question mark and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

rhyming words

Question: What are rhyming words?

Answer: Rhyming words are two words that sound the same.

Gesture: Hold up three fingers on each hand. Wiggle the first finger on each hand. These are the letters that change in the rhyme on the Power Pix: cop and pop.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.6:* Create and state a series of **rhyming words**, including consonant blends.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write pairs of words on the board, some of which do, and do not, rhyme: sing, thing, ball, bat, ball, small, etc. Explain the concept of rhyming words. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Do these two words rhyme? (Point at various pairs of words.)
2. Do “sing” and “thing” rhyme? (Substitute other pairs of words that do, and do not, rhyme.)
3. Is this the rhyming words gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. “Hat” and “cat” are rhyming words.
2. “Dog” and “frog” are rhyming words.
3. “Hat” and “alphabet” are rhyming words.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with rhyming words and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for rhyming words and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

sentence

Question: What is a sentence?

Answer: A sentence is a complete message. Every sentence *must* start with a capital letter and *must* end with an end mark.

Gesture: Hold your hand up to your ear as if listening to a phone. Pound your fist into your palm when you say “must.” (We prefer to define a sentence as a “complete message” rather than a “complete idea.” Ask your students to imagine someone calls them in the middle of the night and says, “is phone” and hangs up. This is not a complete message. We call this the midnight phone call test and use it to help students understand the difference between sentences (complete messages) and fragments (incomplete messages). Sentences pass the midnight phone call test; they make sense. Fragments don’t pass the midnight phone call test; they don’t make sense (at midnight or any other time).

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.3:* Identify letters, words, and **sentences**.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write sentences and phrases (fragments) on the board, for example: I like apples, liking apples, Juan goes home, goes home, etc. Explain the concept of the midnight phone call test to your class. Ask students to hold imaginary phones to their ears. Speak sentences (complete messages) and fragments to them. Ask them to loudly say “huh?” when they hear a fragment. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this a sentence? (Point at various sentences and phrases on the board.)
2. Is a sentence a complete message?
3. Is this the sentence gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I speak words that are a sentence, please raise your hand.”

1. I like you.
2. Running along the beach.
3. Lentisha runs along the beach.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with sentence and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for sentence and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

setting

Question: What is a setting?

Answer: A setting is where a story takes place.

Gesture: Sweep your arms out in the air, indicating that the classroom could be the setting for a story.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading Comprehension 3.1:* Identify elements of plot, **setting** and character(s) in a story.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach **plot**, **characters** and setting together.) Tell your students a simple story, like *The Three Little Pigs*. Explain the difference between plot, setting and character in the story. Ask your students to retell each other a story they have read as a group. After their discussion, ask students to describe the setting. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does every story have a setting?
2. Could the setting in a story be a city?
3. Is this the setting gesture? (Make various gestures.)
4. Could the setting in a story be a farm?
5. Could the setting in a story be a character?

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. A setting is where a story takes place.
2. Every story has a setting.
3. A setting could be an imaginary place.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with setting and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for setting and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

short vowel

Question: What is a short vowel?

Answer: A short vowel is a vowel that *does not* say its name.

Gesture: Wag your finger in the air, to show “does not.”

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.5:* Distinguish long-vowel and **short-vowel** sounds in orally stated single-syllable words.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach short vowel and **long vowel** together.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write simple short vowel and long vowel words on the board. Explain the difference between short vowel sounds and long vowel sounds. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this word _____ have a short vowel? (Point at and pronounce various words on the board.)
2. Does a short vowel say its name?
3. Is this the short vowel gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “Now we’re going to play *Cutie*. I’m going to say some words. When a word has a short vowel, silently raise your hand.” (Emphasize the vowel sounds in the following.)

1. dog
2. ate
3. cat
4. go
5. it

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with short vowel and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for short vowel and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

singular noun

Question: What is a singular noun?

Answer: A singular noun represents only one person, one place or one thing.

Gesture: Hold up one finger each time you say “one” in the answer.

California State First Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English Conventions, 1.2:* Identify and correctly use **singular** and plural nouns.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach singular noun and **plural noun** together.) While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write on the board pairs of singular and plural nouns like tree, trees, cat, cats, wife, wives, etc. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this word a singular noun? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Does a singular noun represent more than one person, one place or one thing?
3. Is this the singular noun gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a singular noun, please silently raise your hand.”

1. Ball
2. houses
3. house

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with singular noun and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for singular noun and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

syllables

Question: What are syllables?

Answer: Syllables are parts of words. *Table* has two syllables; *cat* has one syllable.

Gesture: Clap out the syllables for *table* and *cat*.

California State First Grade Standard: Reading 1.9: Segment single-syllable words into their components (e.g., cat = /c/a/t/; splat = /s/p/l/a/t/; rich = /r/i/ch/).

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write on the board simple one and two syllable words: cat, dog, happy, over, etc. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Does this word have two syllables? (Say and point at various words on the board.)
2. Does table have one syllable? (Say other one and two syllable words; clap the syllables as you say them.)
3. Is this the syllables gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a word with one syllable, please silently raise your hand.”

1. Ball

2. houses

3. happy

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with syllables and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for syllables and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

title

Question: What is a title?

Answer: A title is the name of a book, story or poem.

Gesture: Pretend like you're holding a book in one hand; use the forefinger of your other hand to tap on the book's title.

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.2:* Identify the **title** and author of a reading selection.

Teaching suggestion: Hold up books, open them, close them, point at various parts. Explain the concept of titles. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this the book's title? (Point at various parts of various books.)
2. Is the title of a book, the name of the book?
3. Is this the title gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. All books have titles.
2. The title of a book goes at the end of the book.
3. A title is the name of a book, story or poem.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with title and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for title and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

verb

Question: What is a verb?

Answer: A verb is an action word or a state of being.

Gesture: Use both arms and pump them as if you are running.

California State Second Grade Standard: *Written and Oral English language conventions 1.3:* Identify and correctly use various parts of speech, including nouns and **verbs**, in writing and speaking.

Teaching suggestion: (Teach **noun** and verb together, but teach nouns first.) The concept of “state of being” is probably too complex for first graders but is included as part of the definition of a verb for use at higher grades. While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write pairs of words on the board. One word is a noun and the other is a verb: book, read, hamburger, eat, girl, run, etc. Explain the difference between nouns and verbs. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this word a verb? (Point at various words on the board.)
2. Is “run” a verb? (Substitute various verbs and nouns.)
3. Is this the verb gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a verb, please silently raise your hand.” Say each sentence slowly.

1. Juan eats.
2. Tasha sleeps.
3. I ran to the park.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with verb and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for verb and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

vowels

Question: What are vowels?

Answer: Vowels are a-e-i-o-u and sometimes y. Every word and syllable needs a vowel.

Gesture: Make a fist; then raise one finger at a time as you name the vowels. On the other hand, wiggle a finger as you say “and sometimes y.”

California State First Grade Standard: *Reading 1.5:* Distinguish long- and short-**vowel** sounds in orally stated single-syllable words (e.g., bit/bite).

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, vowels and consonants on the board. Explain the difference between vowels and consonants. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this letter a vowel? (Point at various letters on the board.)
2. Is “k” a vowel? (Substitute various letters.)
3. Is this the vowel gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Say, “We’re going to play *Cutie*. When I say a vowel, please silently raise your hand.” Say each sentence slowly.

1. A
2. R
3. O

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with vowels and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for vowels and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

word

Question: What is a word?

Answer: A word is a group of letters that make sense.

Gesture: Hold the fingers of one hand wide apart (these are “letters”). Then snap your fingers together indicating the letters have been joined together to make a word.

California State First Grade Standard: Reading 1.3: Identify letters, **words**, and sentences.

Teaching suggestion: While your class is involved in individual or group activities, write two and three letter words on the board; mix them up with nonsense words like “rr”, “xvy” etc. Explain the concept of words. Play *Yes/No Way!* with questions like the following:

1. Is this a word? (Point at various words and nonsense words on the board.)
2. Is “cat” a word? (Substitute other words and nonsense words.)
3. Is this the word gesture? (Make various gestures.)

Quick Test: Play *Cutie* with statements like the following:

1. Words are made of letters.
2. Letters are made of words.
3. Zilpnah is a word.

Critical Thinking: Play *Compare/Contrast* with word and other Power Pix.

Review: Ask your students to review with each other the question, answer and gestures for word and other Power Pix.

(For more information on all the above, see the introduction to this manual.)

If you'd like more information about Power Pix, or would like to schedule a Power Pix demonstration at your school, contact Chris Biffle at:

Cbiffle@AOL.com

First Grade Power Pix Language Arts

Listening
& Speaking
2.2

Question: What are the 5W + H?

Answer: The 5W + H are: who, what, where, when, why and how.

First
Grade

copyright Jay Vanderfin and Chris Biffle



5W + H

Gesture: Using both hands to count, hold up one finger for each of the 5W + H until six fingers are held up.

Writing
1.2

Question: What is an adjective?

Answer: An adjective is a word that describes a noun.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



adjective

Gesture: Pet an imaginary dog and say, "fluffy dog." (Emphasize the adjective, "fluffy.")

Reading
1.3

Question: What is an apostrophe?

Answer: An apostrophe is a small mark used in contractions and possessive nouns.

First
Grade

copyright Jay Vanderfin and Chris Biffle

I'm = I am

Juan's boat

apost**tr**ophe

Gesture: Use one finger to draw a comma in the air and make a squeaking sound (however, you wish!).

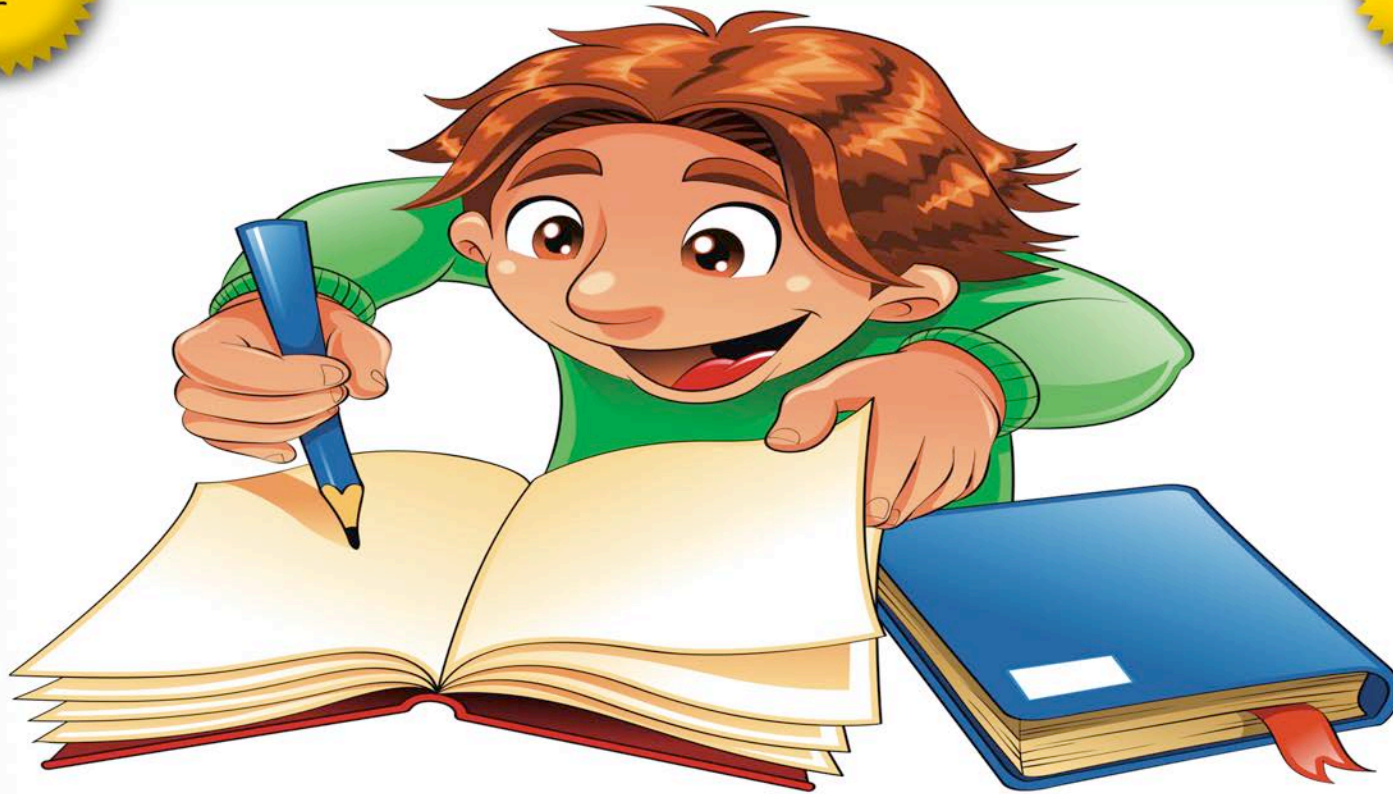
Reading
3.2

Question: What is an author?

Answer: An author writes the words of a book, story or poem.

First
Grade

copyright Jay Vanderfin and Chris Biffle



author

Gesture: Pretend as if you were writing in the air.

Language
Conventions
1.3

Question: What is a capital letter?

Answer: A capital letter is an uppercase letter of the alphabet.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris Biffle
& Jay Vanderfin



capital letter

Gesture: Put one hand on top of the other.

Lift the top hand quickly to show that a capital letter is a "big" letter.

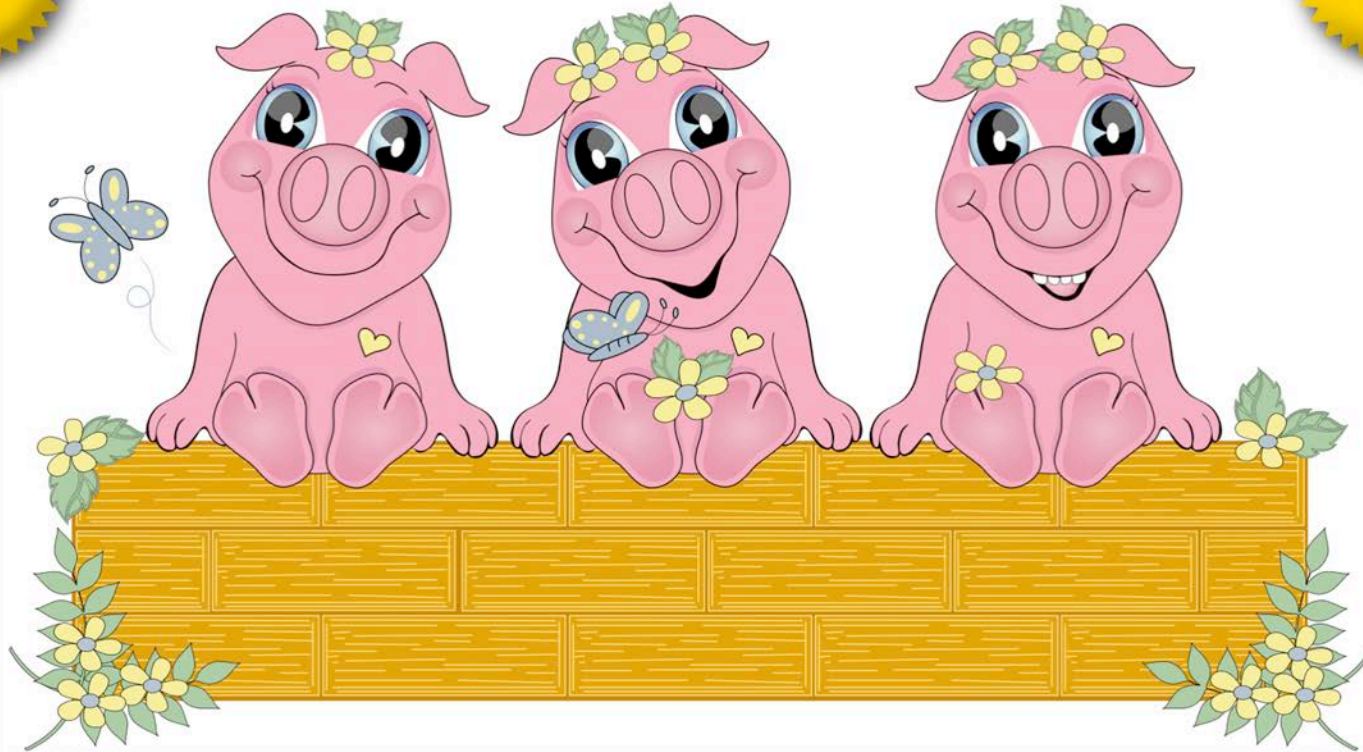
Reading
Comprehension
3.1

Question: What are characters?

Answer: Characters are people, animals, or even things in a story.

First
Grade

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin



characters

Gesture: Using two fingers on each hand, walk your fingers through the air, as if they were characters running around in a story.

Reading
1.13

Question: What is a compound word?

Answer: A compound word is one word made of two words.

First
Grade

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin



compound word

Gesture: Hold up two fingers on one hand (symbolizing two words). With the other hand, squeeze the fingers together (showing that the two words become one word in a compound word).

Reading
1.13

Question: What is a contraction?

Answer: A contraction is a word with a missing letter marked by an apostrophe.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
&
Jay
Vanderfin

I am = I'm

do not = don't

contraction

Gesture: Hold your two hands wide apart and then bring them together to show "contracting." Next make the squeaking, comma gesture that you use for "apostrophe."

Core
Concept

Question: What are the days of the week?

Answer: The days of the week are Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

days of the week

Gesture: As the days are counted, hold up a finger for each day, until you have counted five fingers on one hand and two fingers on the other hand.

Language
Conventions
1.5

Question: What is an exclamation mark?

Answer: An exclamation mark goes at the end of a sentence to show excitement.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



exclamation mark

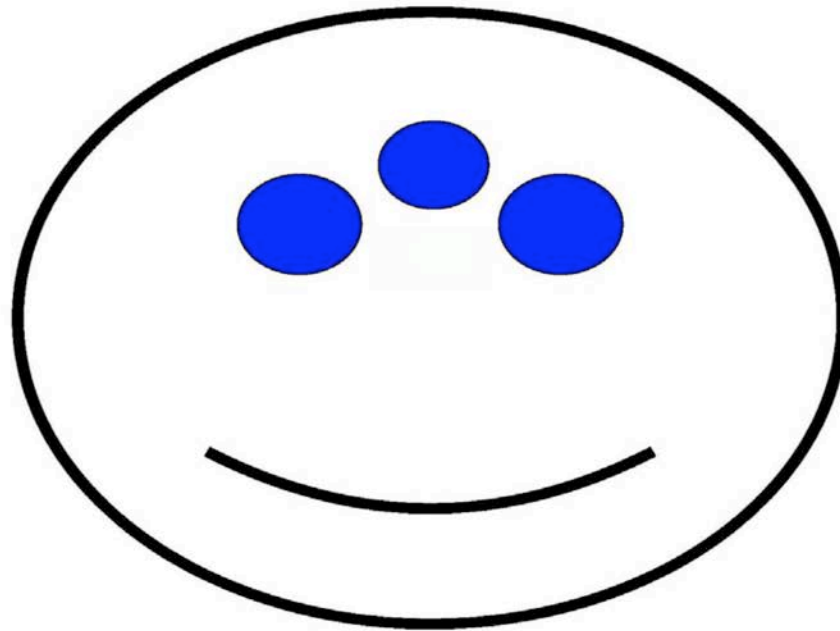
Gesture: Raise your fist over your head and then bring it down excitedly as if you were saying, "Yes!"

Core
Concept

Question: What is fiction?
Answer: Fiction is when a story is made up, not real.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
&
Jay
Vanderfin



fiction

Gesture: Point to both of your eyes and then a third one in the middle of your forehead.

Reading
3.2

Question: What is an illustrator?

Answer: An illustrator draws the pictures in a book, story or poem.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin



illustrator

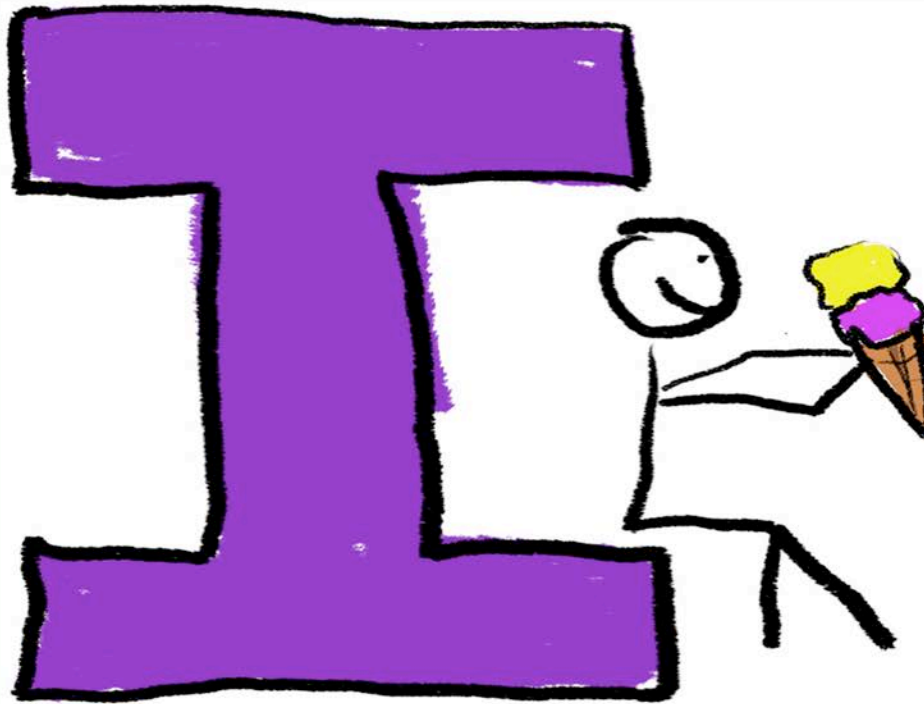
Gesture: Use both hands and make a frame, as if you were a photographer or a painter.

Language
Conventions
1.7

Question: What is the letter "I" by itself?
Answer: The letter "I" by itself must be capitalized.

First
Grade

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin



I

Gesture: Draw a capital I in the air.

Reading
1.3

Question: What are letters?
Answer: Letters can be joined together to make words.

First
Grade

copyright Jay Vanderfin and Chris Biffle

B a P z c
d Z u O p F w
R t M v e S

letters

Gesture: Wiggle one finger to represent a letter.

Reading
1.5

Question: What is a long vowel?

Answer: A long vowel is a vowel that says its name.

First
Grade

feet



long vowel

Gesture: Put the tips of your fingers on both hands together, then pull them apart showing "long."

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin

Core
Concept

First
Grade

Question: What are the months of the year?

Answer: The months of the year are: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December.

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



months of the year

Gesture: Hold up fingers on each hand as the months of the year are counted.
For the last two months, close one hand and hold up two fingers on the other hand.

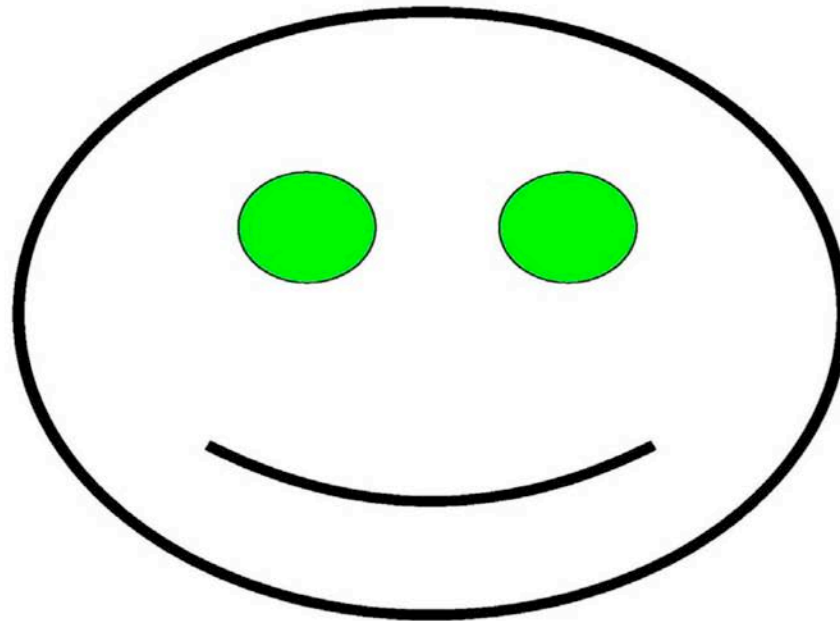
Core
Concept

Question: What is nonfiction?

Answer: Nonfiction is when a story is real, not made up.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
&
Jay
Vanderfin



nonfiction

Gesture: Point to both of your eyes at the same time.

Language
Conventions
1.2

Question: What is a noun?
Answer: A noun is a person, place, or thing.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



noun

Gesture: Point to yourself, the room, and then knock your knuckles on a table top.

Reading
Comprehension
3.1

Question: What is a plot?

Answer: A plot is the actions taken by characters in a story to solve a problem.

First
Grade

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin



plot

Gesture: Scratch your head to show that characters are trying to solve a problem.

Language
Conventions
1.2

Question: What is a plural noun?

Answer: A plural noun ends in "s" and represents more than one person, place or thing.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



plural noun

Gesture: With one finger, make an "s" in the air and then wiggle your fingers (showing that a plural noun represents more than one person, place or thing.)

Core
Concept

Question: What is a possessive noun?

Answer: A possessive noun uses an apostrophe, ends in "s" and shows ownership.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



boy's
boat



possessive noun

Gesture: With one finger, make an "s" in the air and then grab one hand with the other, showing "ownership."

Reading
Comprehension
2.5

Question: What is a prediction?
Answer: A prediction is a guess about the future.

First
Grade



prediction

Gesture: Put your hand on your chin (a guess) and then point straight in front of you (the future).

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin

Language
Conventions
1.3

Question: What is a pronoun?

Answer: A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun.

First
Grade

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin



Gesture: Make a fist with one hand and then bump it away with the open palm of the other hand (symbolizing one word, a noun, replaced by another word, a pronoun.)

Language
Conventions
1.5

Question: What is a question mark?

Answer: A question mark is placed at the end of a sentence to show it is a question.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
&
Jay
Vanderfin



question mark

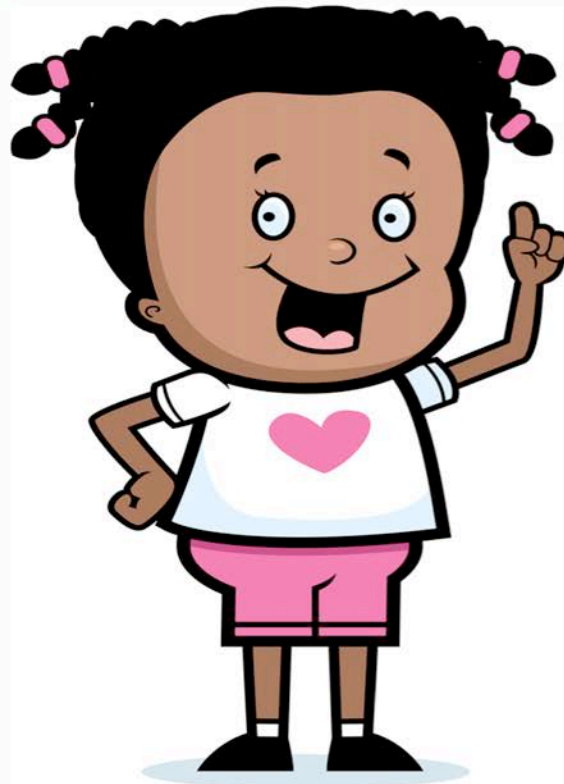
Gesture: Hold your hands palms up, as if you are saying "what?"

Core
Concept

Question: What are quotation marks?

Answer: Quotation marks show someone is talking.

First
Grade



“Hi!”

quotation marks

Gesture: Use two fingers to put quotation marks on both sides of your mouth.

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin

Reading
1.5

Question: What are rhyming words?

Answer: Rhyming words are two words that sound the same.

First
Grade



pop
hop



rhyming words

Gesture: Hold up three fingers on each hand. Wiggle the first finger on each hand. (These are the letters that change in the rhyme on the Power Pix: pop and hop.)

Reading
1.3

Question: What is a sentence?

Answer: A sentence is a complete message. Every sentence must start with a capital letter and end with an end mark.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



sentence

Gesture: Hold your hand up to your ear as if listening to a phone. Pound your fist into your palm when you say "must."

Reading
3.1

Question: What is a setting?

Answer: A setting is where a story takes place.

First
Grade

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin



setting

Gesture: Sweep your arms out in the air,
indicating that the classroom could be the setting for a story.

Reading
1.5

Question: What is a short vowel?

Answer: A short vowel is a vowel that **DOES NOT** say its name.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin

cap



short vowel

Gesture: Wag your finger in the air, to show "does not."

Language
Conventions
1.2

Question: What is a singular noun?

Answer: A singular noun represents only one person, one place or one thing.

First
Grade

dog



singular noun

Gesture: Hold up one finger each time you say "one" in the answer.

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin

Reading
1.9

Question: What are syllables?

Answer: Syllables are parts of words. **Table** has two syllables; **cat** has one syllable.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
&
Jay
Vanderfin

cat



table

syllables

Gesture: Clap out the syllables for **table** and **cat**.

Reading
1.2

Question: What is a title?
Answer: A title is the name of a book, story or poem.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



title

Gesture: Pretend like you're holding a book in one hand;
use the forefinger of your other hand to tap on the book's title.

Language
Conventions
1.3

Question: What is a verb?
Answer: A verb is an action word or a state of being.

First
Grade

copyright
Chris
Biffle
& Jay
Vanderfin



verb

Gesture: Use both arms and pump them as if you are running.

Reading
1.5

Question: What are vowels?

Answer: Vowels are a-e-i-o-u and **sometimes y**. Every word and syllable needs a vowel.

Reading
1.5

copyright
Chris
Biffle
&
Jay
Vanderfin

a, e, i, o, u
y

vowels

Gesture: Make a fist; then raise one finger at a time as you name the vowels.
On the other hand, wiggle a finger as you say "and sometimes y."

Reading
1.3

Question: What is a word?

Answer: A word is a group of letters that make sense.

Reading
1.3

copyright Chris Biffle & Jay Vanderfin

w o r d

word

Gesture: Hold the fingers of one hand wide apart (these are "letters").
Then snap your fingers together indicating the letters have been joined together to make a word.

Copyright and Contact Information

First Grade Power Pix is the sole property of its authors, Chris Biffle and Jay Vanderfin. Individual copies of this document may be reproduced by teachers for classroom use. However, no portion of this document may be reproduced, sold or offered for sale without the written permission of the authors.

For more information, contact:

Chris Biffle

Co-Founder, Whole Brain Teaching

CBiffle@AOL.com

More great education products including thousands of pages of free downloads, videos, and forum discussions are available at

WholeBrainTeaching.com