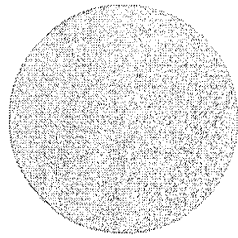
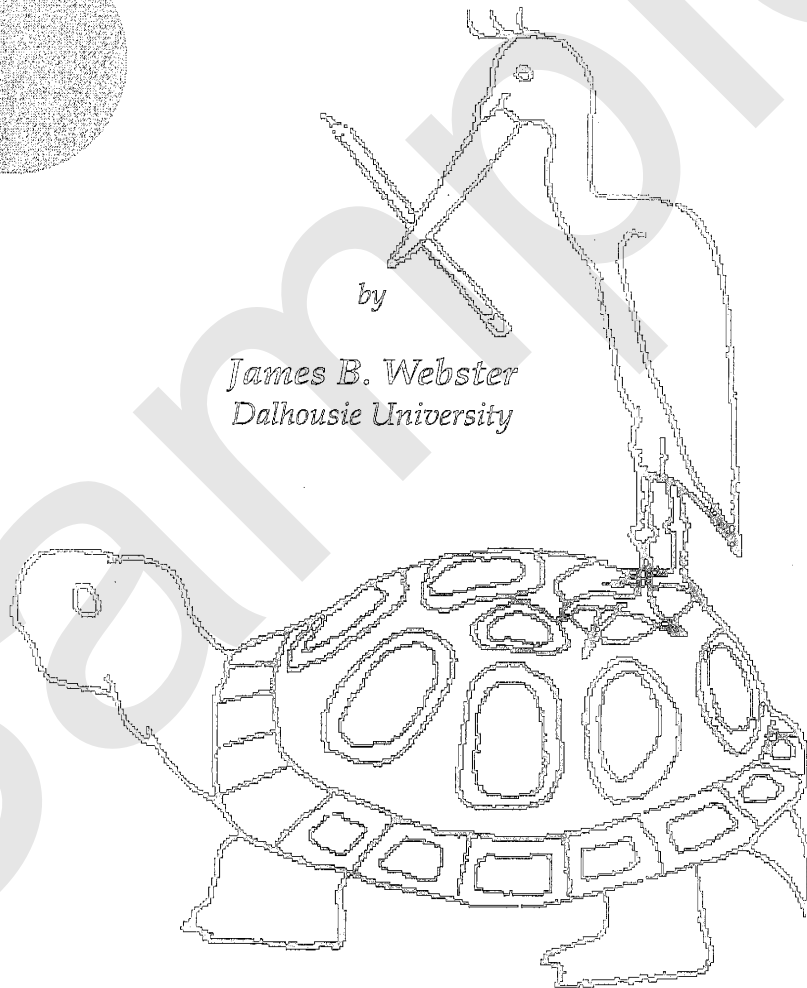


Blended Structure and Style in Composition



by

*James B. Webster
Dalhousie University*



Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning
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Introduction

Almost a half century ago I stepped into my first classroom in a one-room log school in Northern Saskatchewan. I faced fifty-five students in grades one through ten. Thereafter I taught about an equal number of years in the primary (division one), elementary (division two), high school (division three and four) and university systems. During the last decade my main job has been the training of Ph.D.'s. Almost from the first year of teaching I realized that the skills of writing had been woefully neglected. After a couple of years of muddling toward a practical system I visited Mrs. Ingham and read the stories which her grade one students were producing. Even the poorest of her stories were better than what my grade four's were writing. For an example of the work of Mrs. Ingham's students see The Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning.¹ Listening carefully to her explanations, I returned with determination to produce with grade four something to at least equal Mrs. Ingham's grade ones. The result over the next decade was her foundation and my additions and modifications which produced the syllabus, classroom management and teaching method outlined in this book. Every summer since 1979 the writer has had the privilege of working as an assistant to, and under the tutelage of, Mrs. Ingham in seminars with practising teachers. These seminars have been in the Blended Sound-Sight method of learning. They have added new insights. They have promoted new perspectives. The method of writing instruction, described in the following pages was developed in multiple-grade classrooms which are not very different from single grades. The higher the grade, the more diverse is the ability and achievement levels of the class. The teacher of a grade eight class faces student achievement levels which almost span the same range as that one-room school in Northern Saskatchewan.

Students who enter university do not know how to write. One can only imagine the illiteracy of those who are unable to enter college. Almost every Canadian university has organized compulsory courses to teach written communication skills. There are cases where students are prepared to graduate except they have failed to pass the writing course. The method proposed in this volume is utilized in teaching an intensive writing course to first year undergraduates. In unit eight, a grade four and undergraduate essay have been set side by side to demonstrate that structurally they are identical. Good teaching procedures are universal. They apply at multi-levels. Variations occur in pacing. Variations occur in reading levels. Students should enter university, writing as well as they read.

The schools are filled with meaningless language exercises such as workbooks and assignments which fill in the blanks, one word answers, multiple choice, underline or circle the correct answer. No wonder high school students can hardly write a correct sentence. Little wonder that so many students at university dread the essay assignment and go searching for classes which require the least writing. Consequently some university courses have succumbed to multiple choice. Lecturers wring their hands and call for a return to the intensive teaching of grammar. Helpful as grammar may be, it does not by itself teach one to write a sentence, a paragraph or a short essay. The system outlined below has been worked out in elementary to university classrooms over forty-eight years. It is yet far from perfect because the writer is still teaching people to write. The method continues to evolve. Each year changes are made, new techniques developed to meet the problems which in previous years had been "let go." Teachers are advised to rid their classes of meaningless exercises which have plagued language arts. Rather we should spend the time in teaching practical methods of writing various styles of compositions such that a future generation of university entrants will know how to take notes and organize, outline, and write an essay, a narrative or descriptive short story and a critique.

Teach language rules and skills as the need arises, that is when you see deficiencies in student's compositions. Phonetic rules, phrasing, punctuation and contextual surmise are taught so that an individual can read. The emphasis is upon the end product, reading. Reading is begun immediately and the rules taught as the need arises. In language the tendency is to teach verb tenses, for example, divorced from the actual process of writing. A student may be able to parse a sentence yet be unable to write one. Language skills must be taught as the need for them is demonstrated. For example, when the teacher sees that students are avoiding

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subordinate clauses in their writing, teach them and thereafter insist they employ them in their compositions. Regardless of how often a student correctly identifies a noun clause and its relationship in the sentence, until he uses it in his own essay, creative story or book report, the teacher cannot be confident that he has internalized his new knowledge and made it functional. Very quickly a teacher will discover that there are problems with verb tenses using "had." That is the time and place to teach their uses. Thereafter insist upon them being used in compositions. As in reading, so in language teach the skills when the need arises for them.

This method of learning teaches eight different structures of writing. These are shown below in the sequence in which they should be taught. There is a cumulative skill development as you move through the ten units. If the teacher decides to skip one unit, certain skills will be lost which will hamper success in the next unit. Whether one teaches primary, elementary, secondary or university one should begin at unit one and proceed through to unit ten. The only difference between teaching primary or secondary is that the level of reading material will change. Furthermore, reading materials employed should always be two or three levels below the grade level of the class. Reading should be easy, in order to allow the students to concentrate upon writing skills. All marking comments are directed toward the specific writing skills which have been taught. As in any other endeavour, writing requires practice. Once this programme is begun it should be pursued every school day without fail. Writing has declined in quality because it has declined in quantity. This is because modern teachers are unwilling to mark piles and piles of scripts. This method demonstrates how teachers can reduce the marking burden. In the units listed below, it should be noted that following one unit on note taking and another on summarizing there are two streams in the syllabus; one moving toward the goal of essay writing, the other to creative writing. By the completion of the course a student has at his command eight distinct structures - or models - from which to choose when deciding upon the approach to any specific writing problem or assignment.

Within the syllabus I recommend that grade one can achieve to the end of unit three. Unit three employs the Ingham model as demonstrated in her text.² Grade two should be able to begin with unit one in September and complete unit five by June. Grade three should complete from unit one to seven and grade four from units one to nine. A grade six or grade eight teacher should also begin with unit one and complete all the units. It must be stressed that teachers of all grades begin with unit one and move through the entire syllabus in sequence since there is an accumulative build up of skills. In the high school, units one to five must be completed in two weeks for each. The high school teacher wishes to get to research reports, creative writing

Written Communication Syllabus				
Grade Level	Creative Writing	Units	Essay Writing	Subjects Transferred
All grades		1. Note making 2. Summaries from notes		
End grade one	3. Story summaries			
End grade two	5. Stories from pictures		4. Summarizing references	science
End grade three	7. Creative writing		6. Research reports	health geography
End grade four	9. Critiques		8. Essays	history

and essays as quickly as possible. She will need to spend at least one month on each of these units. This writer rushes in order to cover the syllabus at first year university. This syllabus goes against current assumptions and suggests the radical idea that one follows the same programme whether one is teaching grade four or first year university. As in reading, writing has a basic unity which stretches from grade one to university. A grade three paragraph must possess a topic sentence in the same way as in a grade twelve essay. A grade one story about a cat must have a good ending - a final clincher - just like a university essay analysing the Cold War.

In classes where one teacher is responsible for content subjects as well as language, once unit four on summarizing a reference has been taught and partially mastered in the English period, further practice of a continuous nature can be achieved by transferring the skill to one of the content subjects. The syllabus suggests transferral to science. In the language period the teacher proceeds to unit five on "Stories from Pictures," in the science period she is assigning topics for students to find a library reference, summarize, make notes and write it up. By the completion of unit eight, students are summarizing references in the science period, doing research reports in health and essays in social studies. In the English period they are beginning the unit on critiques. In theory the class is practising four different writing styles each week. In high school where there is a separate teacher for each subject, this intensity of concentration might be possible with careful coordination. It would not be easy in most situations. The writer's most successful application of the transfer system took place in a school where he was responsible for the English and social studies curricula for the junior high grades. This doubled the writing practice of the students. Transferring provides practice. Transferring demonstrates relevance. Within this method of teaching the multi-subject teacher secures marked advantages over the specialist in a single discipline.

This method of learning stresses modelling. Besides the Ingham model in unit three, others are introduced during subsequent units. It is the firm conviction of this writer that students must master the model. Creativity should be within the boundaries of the model. There is a great deal of "hokum" talked about creativity. Just as a child is not being creative when he misspells a word or writes in sentence fragments, so he is not being creative if he fails to include all of the elements which make up a good paragraph. Too often creativity is confused with bad writing. To some readers the method at times may appear mechanical. But a good writer like a good army officer must learn to obey the rules before he can be trusted to make them. Within the boundaries of the model there is ample room for creativity. Creativity relates to what one writes, the model to how one writes.

This book is not a philosophy of written communication. It is a practical "how to" method of teaching writing which has been developed in the classroom. It has inspired confidence and enthusiasm in the majority of teachers who have applied it. It generates excitement such that the majority of students will write on topics of their own choosing above and beyond those assigned in class. As a high school teacher, I recall dreading wet and rainy weekends - and there are many in the lower mainland of British Columbia - because they invariably produced a crop of new, unsolicited compositions Monday morning. I enjoy criticizing written compositions but the flood was occasionally overwhelming. In my university career I have taught at two universities in Nigeria, at Makerere in Uganda, at Chancellor in Malawi and at Dalhousie and U.B.C. in Canada. From all of these come manuscripts of these chapters and potential articles seeking critical comment. This is less a testimony to the value of my critical appraisal than it is to the enthusiasm for writing which this method engenders.

The first edition of this book was published in 1988 and the introduction ended with the paragraph above. Three criticisms of that edition were quite valid. The first was that it focused too heavily upon the primary grades. Senior teachers found difficulty in adapting. The writer was overly cautious because he had not taught grade one since 1945. By the 1980's he had become re-involved in teaching grade one classes to write, very conscious that he must not become a university theorist divorced from the practical jungle of the classroom. So much had been reported about the horrid younger generation, it was stimulating to discover that kids in the 1980's were not really different from those in the 1940's. Furthermore since initial publication a number of master teachers in the Blended Sound-Sight have demonstrated beyond doubt that the method works. Consequently I begin the revision and enlargement of this book free of the hang ups which plagued me earlier. Thus substantial additions in this edition have been written for and targeted at senior teachers.

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Much of the material, however, is highly relevant to primary teachers. It may now be judged whether primary teachers are more successful in adapting than senior teachers tended to be.

The second weakness of the first edition was that it stressed structure at the expense of style. This arose because I developed my structural models when I was teaching in the lower grades. When I discovered that Mrs. Ingham's structural model had solved most of my classroom problems with narrative stories, I reasoned that other models should be developed for library reports, essays and all kinds of other types of compositions. Since the first edition had been targeted at the primary, it naturally followed that structure would feature heavily. It was in fact Shirley George who picked up on the few hints in style in the first edition, asked for amplification and began to introduce them into her grade one compositions. She invented the term "dress-up" for the first semester of the style syllabus. That turned me in quite a new direction. The edition on structure had been published. Teachers could read it. Was I to go over the same ground in Grouard's Seminars, in-services and public lectures? Consequently, since 1988, Shirley has been teaching style to grade one and other master teachers have sent in students' work demonstrating how favourably they have reacted to it. As a result the additions to this volume concentrate upon style.

The third weakness of the first edition involved source materials for units four and six. Finding material for library reports from more than one source proved a tiresome and sometimes fruitless endeavour. The objective in units four and six involved introducing and familiarizing students with the research method. The objective was often frustrated by the inability of teachers to locate three library sources of the proper manageable length, at the current reading level and for the chosen research topic. Let us assume the research topic involved beavers at the grade four level. There are numerous books on beavers but few suitable. Many are rich in pictures with little reading. Others long and complicated at the adult reading level. Finding one appropriate source was possible, securing three very difficult. Providing copies for the whole class added yet another burden.

Marian St. Dennis arrived from Victoria with a plan to remedy this problem. Let us write material, she argued, using adult research books to create grade-level reading of an exciting nature focusing where appropriate on endangered species and the destruction of their habitat. So we decided to tap into the vast store of written material about the family life of chimps, the vocabulary of dolphins and elephants and the songs of whales. That series has been employed in chapters in this edition. It has the added advantage of being free of copyright restrictions. This new series should relieve teachers of the search for appropriate source material and allow them to concentrate upon the research process and the structure of library reports.

Readers of this volume from the senior grades should be aware of the tendency to look at a grade four story and say to themselves, "Obviously, this is not for me." Or when "Napoleon" appears in the title of a chapter, do not assume as a primary teacher that the material and methodology is irrelevant to you. When Shirley George finishes an in-service lecture on "Nip, the Baby Bear" (obviously grade one level), some grade five teachers will say, "I hope you will, this afternoon, address the need of the intermediate teachers." If however she gives exactly the same lecture on the exactly the same skills with exactly the same method using "The Elephant Kingdom" of grade five level, it will be primary teachers who hope she does not forget them later in the in-service. Shirley cannot and I cannot, repeat the same material and methodology with grade one level reading, grade five level and finally grade ten level. Grade fascination and tunnel vision have so plagued us that some are saying "let's have the unmarked classroom." Like phonics, grammar and spelling, the grade must be obliterated. "Forget it!" One may understand why that response is popular, but we must stop trying to solve our problems exclusively through the process of abolition. Ultimately we will approach the American position where there is little left to abolish except the public educational system. There is nothing wrong with grades or grammar except that we abuse them. In the chapters which follow I attempt to skip from one reading level to the other, trusting that by so doing, I do not lose readers who say, "This is not for me."

¹ A. G. Ingham, *The Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning*, fourth edition, Regina, 1980, pp. 140-141.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 138-140.

Chapter 5 Summarizing Narrative Stories

The note making employed in units one and two was designed primarily for descriptive stories and leads easily into science, social studies and health. The Ingham chart is useful for narrative stories, where the paragraphs are not always clear because there is considerable conversation. When a teacher collects stories to use for this unit she should keep in mind that the story must have a who, a where, a what and a plot. For materials you require about twenty stories. The ones which you teach in class - in the brainstorming sessions - might well come from the reader. Those in the file should be ideally about four pages in length and made

into little booklets with bristol board covers. Samples of stories from grade one to five in this category will be found in a file box at the Blended Sound-Sight Seminar. One of the stories from that series, "Ear Muffs for All" is a grade one story but would be useful for the purpose of written communication for grades one to four. As in unit one, a teacher should have stories of reading levels below, at and above her grade level. In addition to the reader stories for teaching sessions and the ten stories in the file, there should be short stories for teaching sessions in the classroom library which are suitable for summarizing by the Ingham chart. The New Practice Readers, so ideal for units one and two, are not suitable for unit three which require stories with a well-defined plot.

Story Sequence Chart

- I. Who is in the story?
Where does she live?
Where does he go?
- II. What does he look like?
What does he say or do?
- III. Problem or surprise



sequence

solve the problem
Clincher reflecting title.

The story sequence or Ingham chart of the Blended Sound-Sight Method of Learning, should be made large enough to be seen everywhere in the classroom. It should remain on the classroom wall for the entire month of the unit. It is the first of the five models which are employed within this syllabus. All of the models, and the timing

of their introduction, are shown in appendix B. This writer made two changes in the Ingham model to adapt it to the higher grades. The first was the addition of roman numerals to indicate the paragraphs. Grade ones are not taught paragraphs. Secondly, while Ingham's students wrote excellent sentences to close their stories, as a novice teacher I had difficulty in getting equally good results. Consequently I made the rule and included it on the story sequence chart that the clincher sentence should repeat the key words of, or reflect, the title. The Ingham chart should be prominently displayed throughout unit three as a model for student guidance in summarizing narrative stories.

Teaching Procedure

In grades two and up this unit should open in early November. In Anna Ingham's personal classroom the chart was introduced in late November and some grade ones were writing story summaries by December. That is a goal to which grade one teachers should aim. Ingham recommends that summaries should begin at least by February. The twelve steps to good story writing noted earlier, are crucial in bringing grade ones and other primary grades to that level of competence. Open the unit in grades two and up by teaching a reader story in the reading period. Read the story. Illustrate the story. Choral read it as a group and in parts with a narrator. For purposes of illustration of the teaching procedure in written communication, we will use the story of "Ear Muffs For All" as reproduced.

When "Ear Muffs For All" has been well taught in the reading or literature period the teacher brainstorms to get a chalkboard outline (now in the written communication time-slot) following the Ingham or story sequence chart. Personally I have always preferred to use nouns as key words but nine years ago in teaching this method to a student with English as a second language, I discovered that he remembered best when verbs were his keys. Since that time I have used both in university and then asked students which they preferred. Half do not seem to care but the others split evenly between nouns and verbs. Consequently your chalkboard

Ear Muffs For All



Mother Bear and Father Bear had fun in the snow. Little Bear and White Rabbit had fun, too.
 "Put on your mittens, Mother Bear," said Father Bear.
 "Then we can make some bears out of snow."
 "We can make some rabbits too," said Little Bear.
 "I am cold now," said Mother Bear. "My nose and ears are cold. Let's go home and build a fire."
 "My nose and ears are cold, too," said Little Bear. "One, two, three. It is too cold for me!"
 "We can go to Ben Bear's store," said Father Bear. "Then we can get some ear muffs."
 "Here we are," said Father Bear. "Now we can get some ear muffs. What colours do you want?"

"I like the blue ear muffs," said Mother Bear.
 Father Bear wanted green ear muffs.
 Little Bear wanted red ear muffs.
 Little Bear said. "One, two, three, four. I like this big store."
 Ben Bear looked at White Rabbit's big ears. "I do not think I have ear muffs for rabbits," he said. "But I will look around again."
 This time Ben Bear saw just what he wanted. "Come here, White Rabbit," he said.
 Then he put something on White Rabbit's two big ears.
 White Rabbit laughed and laughed. "Now I have some ear muffs, too!" he said.

Outline Using Nouns

Ear Muffs For All

by

Our Class

- I. three bears, rabbit
 1. forest
 2. snow bears

- II. ear muffs
 1. Ben Bear
 2. Rabbit

- III. stockings
 1. laughed
 2. muffs for all

Outline Using Verbs

Ear Muffs For All

by

Our Class

- I. three bears, rabbit
 1. lived
 2. went out

- II. should buy
 1. bought
 2. would fit

- III. brought
 1. pulled
 2. laughed
 3. muffs for all

outline could be either - or a mixture - of the two shown. The teacher may wish to brainstorm all of the suitable reader stories with the class which might mean ten stories over ten days with a shrinking number of students in each lesson. Students will be filtering through the groups or stages from teacher dependence to independent individual story summarizing, employing the story sequence chart.

At the mid-point in the unit the group might be in the following stages: 1) lowest five. If the teacher has been outlining for two months in the first two units, no student should be merely copying the chalkboard outline. But students in this group may not be finishing their summaries. 2) middle ten. They should be independently outlining and summarizing stories from the file. These stories are especially selected and possess most of the elements of the model, a who and when, what, problem and plot. 3) top ten. This group should be outlining and summarizing library stories. This is a more difficult assignment because such stories may not conform completely to the chart format and are normally longer than those in the file. When the top group either begins to run out of suitable library stories, has re-copied their best summaries on design pages for the magnum opus or is showing a flagging interest, it is time to end the unit and move on the next. The other reason to end the unit would be that the month is over. That is the poorest reason. The top group is the "engine" which should determine the teaching pace and timing. By the end of the unit the teacher should hope to have every student working independently either in the file or library.

Reminders and Public Speaking

Don't forget the reminder signs! There are three new writing rules to teach during this unit and a reminder sign for each because these new rules will be applied henceforth in all written work. The three new signs are illustrated. The first reads "a paragraph equals or has more than three sentences." By following the Ingham chart it is possible that one paragraph might have less than three sentences. In such circumstances instruct students to make up the required details. The second new skill is that in a summary, the final clincher - the last sentence - should reflect the title of the story. The rule reads "the final clincher reflects the title." The word "reflect" is chosen consciously. The top students may experiment with synonyms and other ways of expressing the title. For the lower ten "reflect" may be translated as "repeat." When creating chalkboard outlines the teacher must always obey this rule. In the example above, the title "Ear Muffs For All" is repeated in the final detail in both chalkboard outlines. The original story ended with the rabbit exclaiming "Now I have some ear muffs, too." The outlines suggest that the ending

Reminder Signs Unit Three	
IP ≥ 3S	
Title ←	Final Clincher
one vss per paragraph	

of the summary should contain "Muffs for all" as in "Now there were ear muffs for all." The third reminder sign is interpreted as "there should be one very short sentence of five words or less in every paragraph." Short sentences add variety. Individuals quickly develop a sentence rhythm. By grade four the rhythm is entrenched in which sentences tend to be of similar length, either uniformly medium or uniformly lengthy. The rhythm induces drowsiness. The subordinated clause exercise in unit two was designed to produce one long sentence per paragraph. This rule should produce a short one. Short sentences are often more difficult to write than long ones. In marking, the teacher is generally looking for obedience to all the rules laid down in the reminder series. In this unit the teacher specifically is watching for these new rules. The signs not only remind the students. They remind the teacher.

Remember too, that during marking the teacher may observe mistakes which require teaching reinforced with a new sign. Some of the irregularities which may be discovered include the handling of numbers. "Ninety nine and below are written out while 100 and above may be left in numbers." A second problem is the repetition of major words in a sentence. The rule is "any repetition of a major word in a sentence indicates awkwardness or mis-construction." A third common error is the lack of agreement of a pronoun with its preceding noun. Errors are particularly common with

Teach at the Point of Need
-99 letters: 100 = numbers
no word repeat
Pronoun Relationship flock...it: class...it government...it: herd...it

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collective nouns as in "The herd wandered into sight. They spread out near our property." The writer is thinking of a large number of animals and "they" comes very very naturally. But it is wrong. The rule reads "a pronoun agrees in case with its preceding noun." Teaching of these techniques is quick and easy. The problem is retention. A reminder sign will help. But the signs will not remind unless the teacher reinforces the skills at least once each writing day.

By the end of unit three or early in unit four it will be opportune to introduce advanced skills in public speaking which for convenience we shall call stage two. The public speaking programme should have been operating in stage one for about six weeks by this time and most students should have had one opportunity to speak while a few will have had a number of practices. For those competent to advance, the time has come to initiate new techniques. In this as in writing, the top five form the engine and not all students will develop at the same rate. It would be surprising if the most competent writers were also the best speakers. It is not likely. But while the top group works on the new techniques the remainder of the class will continue at stage one. Henceforth the class criticism of a speaker will have to include whether he or she is prepared to move to stage two. Rather than the teacher, the class decides who is ready for advanced public speaking.

In the early phase, speakers stood still at the podium while in the new stage they are taught to move around. Have the speaker make a large cue card from which the notes can be seen from a distance of one metre. The card is on the podium or music stand. The speaker stands at the podium while he gives the title of his story and his name, then walks about a metre to the right and looking diagonally across his audience speaks the first paragraph. Walking back to the podium for the second paragraph, a metre to the left for the third paragraph and back to the podium for the final clincher. The sequence is walk and check notes at the same time, then speak. Walk and check, speak. Refrain from speaking while walking. The objective is movement which enhances, but does not interfere with delivery.

You might also suggest numerous styles of introduction such as "honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen, my story today is called 'Ear Muffs For All,'" or "teacher, fellow students," or "the principal, honoured guests, teachers and fellow students." You are preparing students for a period when you might invite other classes to hear your best speakers perform. Also promote "parents, visitors and fellow students" or "mothers, fathers, ladies and gentlemen" for a potential parents' night.

Chairman's Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow students, it is my pleasure to introduce Gordon Haig. Gordon is a grade four student at Parkdale Elementary school. He has a very fascinating story to tell you. Gordon Haig...

Chairman's Cue Card

- I. salutation
 1. pleasure to introduce
 2. grade four, Parkdale
 3. fascinating story

If the introduction is said at the podium, the first paragraph to the left, the second back at the podium and the third to the left, the clincher will come back at the podium. You might also begin to train chairmen to introduce the speaker. They may need small cue cards.

Unit three ends the written communication syllabus for the first grade. Anna Ingham's grade ones summarized about thirty stories between January and June. That single fact emphasizes the need - which many recognize only in theory - for continuous practice. Practice is the prerequisite to the success of any achievement in sports or acting, in music or in writing. Just as students should read every school day so should they write. Examples of grade one story summaries and creative writing may be found in the Blended Sound-Sight text. The samples were selected across the range of ability in Ingham's classroom. All of the mistakes are included. No story was edited.

Teachers should analyze these compositions in detail. Every one exhibits a variety of sentence types, simple, compound and complex. What better manipulation of subordinate clauses and verb tenses could be expected than, "Deep in thought I sat down wondering what I could do that would be exciting." (p. 144) The use of

very short sentences to create dramatic impact is beyond the average junior high student. Note particularly "Betsy jumped," "It was Easter," "Away ran the animals" (p. 140) and their multiple use in, "What is it? Don't you know? It's a cake." (p. 145) There is a remarkable range of vocabulary as in "the squirrel cried" and "the little mouse chattered," the chipmunk "wailed" and the beaver "groaned." (p. 140) The clinchers on page 145 are excellent: "I landed at home," "I wonder where they learned all this" and "No! I think he'll run away." These compositions set a goal - a beacon of excellence - for the grade one teacher, indeed for all teachers.

All teachers of written communication from grades two to university should ponder over what six - and seven - year olds can achieve in writing style - if they have been taught - rather than being busied filling in the blanks with "saw" or "seen," picking out other writer's topic sentences and subordinate clauses or identifying similes, metaphors and alliteration. The implication of these compositions for teachers of grade two and up are clear to all but the most obtuse. The further up the grade ladder you teach - or think you do - the more nasty and unpalatable the implications become.

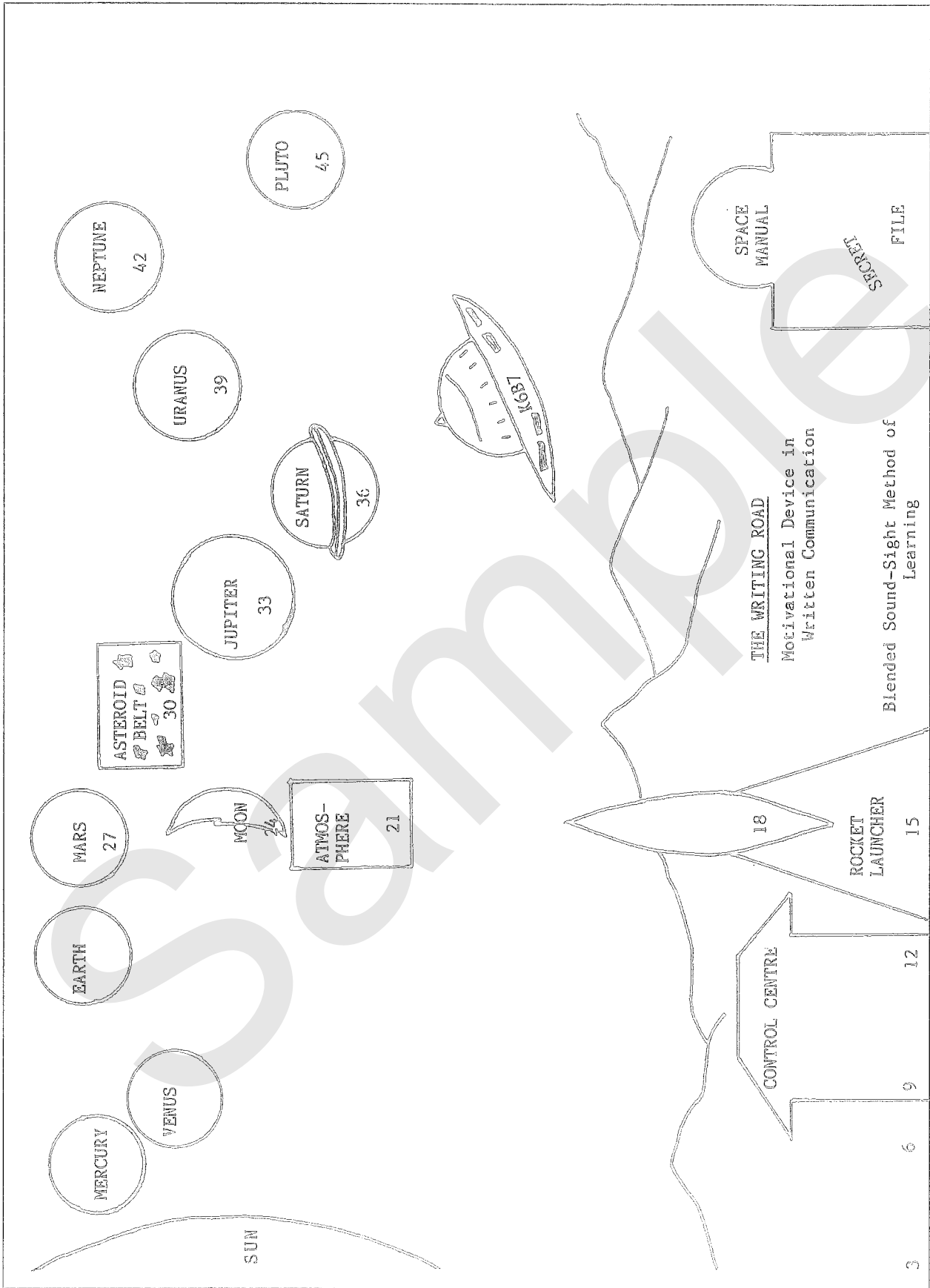
The Space Motivational Writing Progress Chart

In the Blended Sound-Sight reading programme it is recommended that teachers employ a motivational device - a library progress chart - supporting the library sharing period. Each child moves a figurine along a reading level, later up magic stairs and finally into an airplane making one move after each book read, later after every five and finally after every ten. The library progress chart serves two basic purposes, the first to show at a glance how each child in the class is progressing and the second to serve as a motivational device. Since each student is desirous of making a new move the chart motivates further reading. Once the child has reached the end of the progress chart he or she no longer requires artificial stimulation. The joy of reading takes over. Reading becomes its own motivation. The progress chart is no longer necessary.

The writing programme of the Blended Sound-Sight employs the theme of space travel in a similar manner, for exactly the same reasons and in the expectation of similar results. In the writing road the student enters a control centre, then the rocket launcher to blast off, passes through the atmosphere to the moon, then hops to Mars, through the asteroid belt to Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune, Uranus, Pluto or back to earth. It is a tour of the solar system. The student travels our galaxy. He moves his figurine after three acceptable pieces of writing. The teacher must determine what standard of writing qualifies. In unit three, for example, when the student has written three narrative story summaries the figurine might be moved. The round trip tour of the solar system would require forty-eight compositions in sixteen moves. In grade four and higher, the space writing progress chart would accommodate six pieces of writing and therefore two moves in each unit of this syllabus. In grades two and three it is strongly recommended that the teacher utilize a wall chart the size of a bulletin board and following the accompanying illustration. The figurine might be an individual in a space suit. Each child might choose a space name, initials plus any combination of numbers. For example, Karen Borosky might be K6B7. This would be printed on the space suit of her figurine. The space travel theme is the writing progress chart which motivates as well as indicates each child's progress.

In grades four to eight a more elaborate device is recommended with the planets cut from cardboard, painted roughly according to how they appear - Mars red, Neptune and Uranus green - made in relative sizes and hung from the ceiling of the classroom. It is also recommended that the figurine changes as the student progresses. It begins as a person in a space suit which moves into the control centre and rocket launcher, both located on the wall of the classroom. At the rocket launcher the space person gets into a rocket and cone. At number fifteen he blasts off through the atmosphere. The cone is cut away. The space figure thereafter is attached to his rocket by a string. After it passes the moon, Mars and the asteroids, the space figure abandons his rocket and changes to a space ship in which the remainder of this voyage is made. The solar system enhances the classroom if the planets are hung diagonally from corner to corner.

In grades four to eight the space writing road is enhanced by a file called the "Space Manual." When a student has completed the three acceptable pieces of writing, she drops out of the regular class for a period or more. The student goes to the "Space Manual" and removes the file related to the next move. Let us assume that she is on the moon, no. 24. Her next move is to Mars, no. 27 (see the illustration). Going to the manual, she removes the file on Mars. Within it she will find material on Mars and exercises called "Flight Preparations" which she



completes in her space book (exercise book) bearing her space name. While the material in the file teaches, it is primarily designed for fun. There is for example, a secret code in which the student receives from, and sends messages to, the control centre on earth. Teacher assistance is not required. The "Space Manual" is complete.

The "Space Manual" is strictly top secret. While working at it, the student must not communicate with anyone, even the teacher. The student must not tell anyone about what is in the file. Secrecy is a component of the motivation. As a good psychologist, the teacher knows that if you want something widely discussed present it as a secret. Even when there have been leaks all over the place, the teacher should maintain the official atmosphere of secrecy. The technique is well known. In international relations although super power secrets appear universally known, they continue to pretend absolute secrecy and keep emphasizing national security. The teacher merely behaves like a modern great power. The practical advantage to the teacher of the official secrets act is that at least in class the student moves in and out of the file without talking to others or the teacher. When the student has completed the file on Mars, the final page of the file instructs her to move her figuring to that planet. The space file ensures that the students learn about a planet before they land on it. The student moves her rocket to Mars, places her space book in "the secret drop" and rejoins the regular class. The "secret drop" is the designated location where the student leaves her space book for marking. The secret "Space Manual" containing all of the files, instructions for making the hanging planets, patterns for figurines, control centre and rocket launcher, the space decoder and flight preparations are available at the Blended Sound-Sight seminars.

In writing as in reading, students enjoy what they can do successfully. Achieving success in either depends upon mastering skills. The reminder series reinforces skills. Public speaking develops oral skills in tandem with written ones. The space writing progress chart motivates students to practice so as to achieve a near and clear goal, a new move in space. The "Space Manual" acts as an enrichment activity. It might be unveiled in November, a month not exactly noted for its excitement, Halloween being over and Christmas yet far off. The space travel device should assist students to reach a level where the creative joy of writing becomes their main motivation. Students, indeed all people, want to write. The problem is they can't. Make sure your students can. Children become very excited about reading. It opens a universe for them. They can become much more excited about writing because it touches that creative spark which lies - often dormant - in every individual. Once the teacher ignites that spark, he or she will be amazed at the explosion of energy which it releases in a classroom.

Model Narrative Story: The Fox and the Crow

One morning a plain black crow sat on a branch holding in his beak a delicious piece of cheese. Along came a fox, who had smelled the delicious cheese. The fox came and stood under the tree, and bowed politely to the crow. "Good morning, my friend," said the fox. "My, how well you are looking today!" The crow was very pleased at this, but of course could not reply because of the cheese he held in his mouth.

"Your eyes are the most beautiful I have seen," the fox went on, "And, as for your feathers - how black and glossy they are!" The crow was even more pleased, but still said nothing. He just sat on his branch and swelled with pride. But the fox went on.

"I have been told," he continued, "how beautifully you sing, and I should like so much to hear you! Your voice could not possibly be so lovely as your feathers, but if it were - why, you would be the most wonderful bird of the whole forest. Do sing just a few notes for me, won't you?" This was too much for the crow. He opened his beak wide, cawed loudly, and dropped the cheese right into the mouth of the waiting fox.

"Thank you so much!" said the fox, gobbling up the cheese. "Your song was very ugly, but your cheese was delicious. Another time, perhaps you won't be so ready to believe all the good things you hear about yourself." And, with a wave of his tail, he trotted off gaily into the woods.

The Crafty and the Credulous

by

Dawn Morris(Grade Four)

Chalkboard Work

collective class effort

Story Sequence Chart

- I Who is in the story?
Where do they live?
Where do they go?

A cunning fox came upon an old ugly crow. They met while the crow sat on a tree in the forest. The fox made himself comfortable below the tree to plan his strategy. Clearly, he wanted to dupe the unsuspecting crow. So began the story of the crafty fox and the credulous crow.

- I Topic: fox, crow
1. tree, forest
2. comfortable, strategy
3. dupe
clinch: crafty, credulous

- II What do they look like?
What do they say or do?

The childish crow was proud because he held a huge chunk of cheddar cheese in his mouth. The roguish fox slyly praised the bird's beauty. "Your eyes are like stars. Your feathers are more beautiful than the peacock's," he swooned. He was flattering the bird shamelessly while old crow swelled with pride.

- II Topic: proud, cheese
1. praised birds beauty
2. eyes, stars
3. feathers - peacock
clinch: flattered, swelled, pride
Synonyms: crafty sly, cunning, wily, roguish, mischievous

- III Problem or surprise
sequence
solve the problem
clinch reflects title

The crow was gullible. The mischievous fox wanted the cheese. The wily fox told the crow that he had a melodious voice. The crow fell for it. He opened his mouth and cawed loud, long and lustily. The cheese dropped into the mouth of the fox. The crafty fox called to the credulous crow, "There's a price to pay for great naivete."

- III Topic: was gullible
1. wanted cheese
2. melodious voice
3. cawed, loud, lustily
4. cheese dropped
clinch: crafty, credulous
Synonyms: credulous simple, gullible, duped, unsuspecting, childish

The Good King's Feast

A good and great king once sent letters to all parts of his kingdom to say that on his birthday he was going to give a feast and a purse full of money to all the poorest persons who would come. So from all parts came poor folk who wanted to share in the king's good gifts; they came from east, and west, and north, and south. One poor blind man was going slowly along the road, feeling his way - tap! tap! tap! - with his stick; but, of course, as he could not see, he could not go fast, and he feared that he would not reach the palace in time.

At last he fell against a lame man, who could only creep a step or two at a time, and who also was trying to get to the palace to share in the good king's gifts. So the blind man said to the lame one, "If you will climb on to my back, you can tell me which way to walk, because you can see, and I can walk fast, so that we may both be in time after all." And so they did. And the king was so much pleased when he heard how they had come, that he gave each of them twice as much as he gave to any one else.