Poet-Tree Book Project

Introduction

Targeting early primary classes, this 4- 5 lesson unit results in a complete publishable book. The print shop can give you a quote on pricing for an entire class set of books – one for each student, the teacher, and we recommend gifting a copy to the school library for future reference.
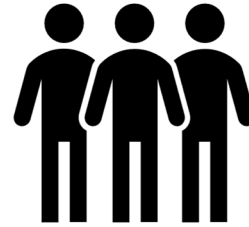
Materials:

11-12 pieces of large, coloured construction paper, glue sticks, scissors, smaller pieces of brightly-coloured construction paper, 11-12 rhyming template pages (link here), and various other art supplies, such as googly eyes, sharpies, feathers, twine, etc.
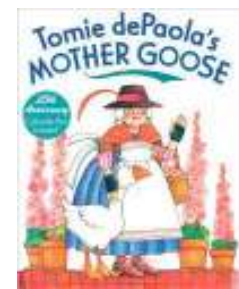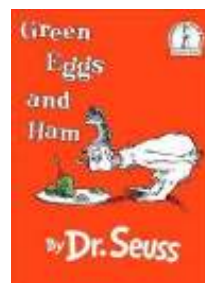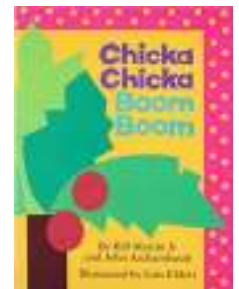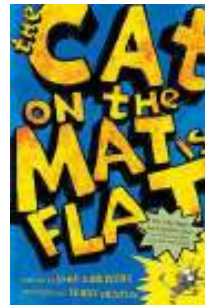
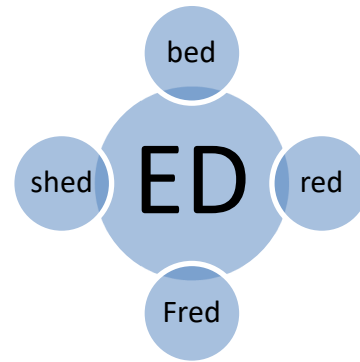| Steps		
1	Divide your class into groups of two. With odd-numbered classes, choose to put students in groups of 3 over having them work alone. The collaboration of multiple students creates opportunities for assessment-as-learning and allows emergent readers/writers the chance for expansion and growth. If you have a split class, you may also choose to put students in multi-age groupings for this project.	
2	Before introducing the subject, read several books containing silly rhyme sounds to your students. This can happen over a period of days leading up to the first lesson, or it can happen on the same day you introduce the lesson. Draw students' attention to the ending sounds of rhyming words, and have them say the sounds that they hear repeated in the rhymes. We recommend the following: *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss, *The Cat On the Mat is Flat* by Andy Griffiths, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin Jr., *"I Can't," Said the Ant* by Polly Cameron, and various Mother Goose rhyming books. **The LRC is developing a kit using the Phonics Fun series and the Sounds Like Reading series which focus on simple phonics-based rhyming sentences.	

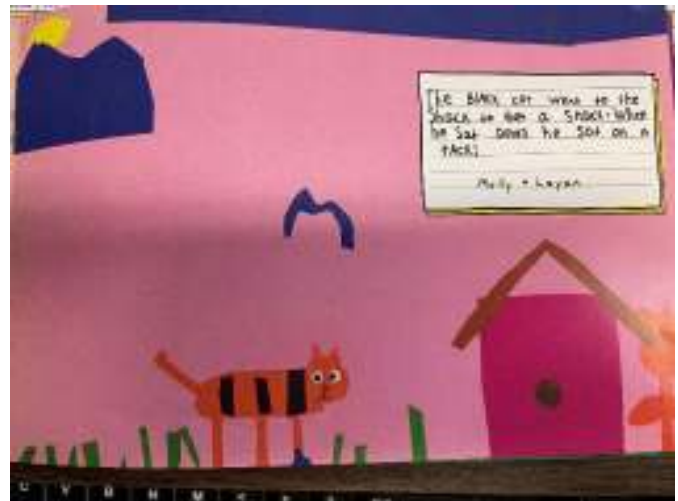|		
3	Give each group of two students a piece of paper with their ending sound written in black sharpie with a circle around it. Ending sounds should be simple, but can be more complex depending on the students' circle of competence. Hint: Give each group of two a **different** rhyming sound so that each page of your class book looks and sounds different. Students will be instructed to brainstorm as many words as they can think of that end in their rhyming sound. They are allowed to use names and made-up words, too!	
4	For the second lesson, give students their rhyming mind maps back so they can begin constructing sentences. Have them come up with a sentence or two containing as many of their rhyming words as possible. If students are fairly competent with writing, have them write several sentences and select one that they think they can illustrate. Silly sentences are perfectly acceptable, but they should be capable of creating an accompanying illustration. Example: "The black cat went to the shack to eat a snack."	
5	Have the students write their chosen sentence on the good copy "Rhyme Page" (attached). Make sure both students write their names at the top of the page. If students are unable to write their sentence themselves, a teacher or educational assistant can help write it out for them. Whenever possible, allow students to do the printing/writing themselves. This paper will be sent to the print shop along with their completed illustration.	

| 6 | For the third/fourth lesson (this will depend on student age and the length of each lesson), students will begin sketching their illustration. Since the illustration is going to be cut out of construction paper and glued onto a larger piece of construction paper, the goal for the sketch is simply for the teacher to see the design idea before students begin cutting.

This will be your opportunity to check for student understanding of the project and flag any issues that may arise. | |
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| 7 | Once students have designed their image, show them the large 11 X 17 inch coloured construction paper. Explain to them that they will be cutting out their images from other pieces of construction paper and gluing them onto their paper.

**Hint: remind students that the layout of each picture needs to be in landscape so that the entire picture can be printed. They should also make their images as BIG as possible because the images will be shrunk during the printing process. | |
| 8 | If possible, show them images (like this one, opposite) made by cutting and pasting colourful construction paper.
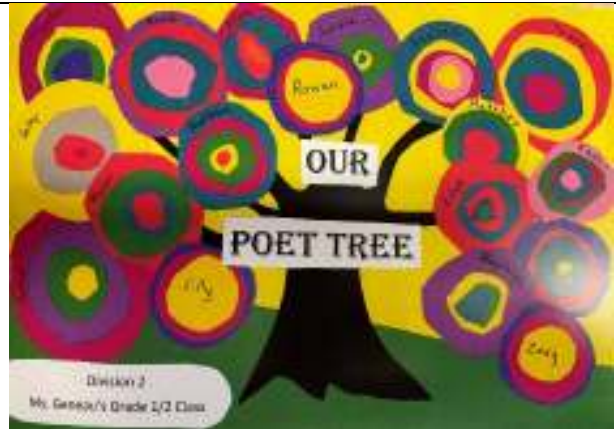
For youngers students (K/1) it is best if you save 'bling' (googly eyes, sequins, feathers) until the very end of the project. Students this age often get distracted by the sparkles and forget that their image is intended to illustrate their sentence.

Encourage students to make a 'background' for their image before pasting in the figures. | |

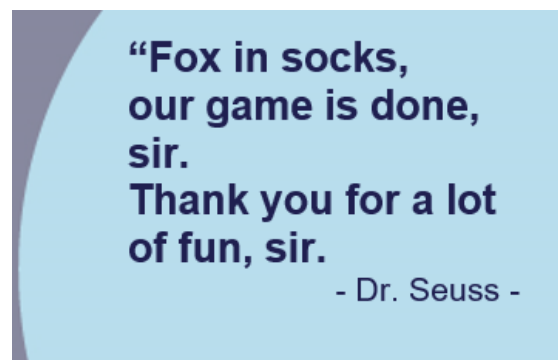|		
9	While students are creating their images, begin making the front page of your "Poet-Tree" booklet by cutting out the skeleton of a tree in brown or black construction paper and pasting it on a colourful 11 X 17 piece of construction paper. Cut out, or have students cut out, many different sizes of circles in various colours. This is a great way to use scrap paper that cannot be recycled!	
10	As their final contribution to the 'Tree', students will select three or four differently-sized circles and past them on top of each other. They will write their name on the circle in a fine-tipped black sharpie. You may decide to create your own circle at the center of the tree with your name, division, school, and grade. Keep in mind that the writing will be shrunk down to ¼ size, so the printing should be large, sharp, and clear.	
11	If you want to include a Table of Contents and a back page, these will need to be printed and sent to the print shop along with your original artwork. The print shop creates books in multiples of 4 pages, so make sure the entire content of your book is 8, 12, or 16 pages in total, including the front cover and back page.	"Fox in socks, our game is done, sir. Thank you for a lot of fun, sir. - Dr. Seuss -

💡 Tip…

*Some easy ending sounds for brainstorming include: up, ug, at, ack, ed, ay, ee, um, op, ing, og, id, an, ar, ouse, ow, and ip.

*Spread out the assignment over a period of days to give time for thinking and 'noticing' rhyming sounds. It can be a fun game to notice ending sounds that rhyme while reading stories and engaging in play. It also helps to reinforce the learning. Most importantly, have fun!