

THANK YOU for downloading *the Retelling Unit*
that I created **FREE** for you.

In return, I ask that you...

- (1) Have fun!**
- (2) Give me credit for my work if you share.**
- (3) Refer others to my websites www.LikeToRead.com,
www.LikeToWrite.com, and www.Facebook.com/LikeToWrite**

I also ask that if you see any editing or content errors
that you let me know
by emailing me at
khaag@liketowrite.com



**I GIVE PERMISSION TO CLASSROOM TEACHERS TO USE
MY MATERIALS WITH THEIR STUDENTS.
FOR ALL OTHER USES, PLEASE CONTACT ME.**

**Please feel free
to email with questions**

**SINCERELY,
KAREN
HAAG**

The Power of Story: Connecting to Writing Through Retelling

Make a Big Book By Retelling



Karen Haag

Contact me at
www.liketowrite.com
www.liktoread.com

Make a Book by Retelling

Adapted from a presentation by Rick Duvall by Karen Haag

TASK ONE On the first day of genre or novel study, the shared reading takes the whole Literacy Block - 2 hours. I always do all these steps in one day, but you may want to break the lesson into smaller sections.

The teacher chooses a short picture book that will introduce the class to the genre you want to study - fairy tale, historical fiction, etc. Choose a book that has "bad writing." By that, I mean choose a book that can be improved! Don't try to improve on Cynthia Rylant, for example. Use an "easy reader" of some sort.

I. First Reading (Read for overall structure.)

1. As a warm-up to reading, model asking this question: "Look at the title, the illustrations and the author. What do you want to find out when you read this story?" Students may say things like...

- Is this story like other fairy tales I have read?
- I want to know why Little Red Riding Hood is called Red Riding Hood in this story.
- How bad will the wolf be in this version of the story?

Asking them "What do you want to find out when you read?" sets a purpose for reading. It's a form of predicting but this question does not set up children to go way off on tangents while others watch with eyes rolling. Plus, this strategy is one our students should be using implicitly. Every time they turn a page, they should be reading because they want to find out something. Otherwise, why read?

2. Read aloud and enjoy the book all the way through.

Don't stop too many times because you will interrupt the enjoyment of the book. But, you might ask your students at ONE critical point to turn to a partner and tell them what they want to find out. Then ask, "Who heard a good one?" **Students may share what they heard from others - not what they were thinking.**

Asking, "Who heard a good one?" demonstrates that your students should listen to what others have to say. "Who Heard A Good One?"...

- Increases listening skills substantially.
- Models kindness.
- Extroverts share what quiet, reflective students never would share in a whole class.
- It's not as threatening to share other's ideas so more ideas get shared.

II. Second Reading (same day) (Read for details.)

In the second reading, you want to involve students physically in reading the book through movement and sound effects. For example, if taking a close look at setting, ask the children to look at you each time you read "library." And, if you point at them, have the class say "Shhh!" If you want your class to take a closer look at characters, divide the class up and have each part say a sound or move in a specific way every time you refer to the individual characters. The idea is to keep kids actively involved in the rereading.

TASK ONE (CONTINUED)

In *Red Riding Hood*, I ask the students to choose a movement that represents the wolf, Little Red, the grandma and the woods. Usually, they select making a mean looking face for the wolf, pointing to something red for Little Red, holding glasses on their face for grandma, and saying "Woooo" for the woods. Then they listen for those words and make the sound or movement **each time** they hear the word as I read the book aloud the second time.

III. Third Reading (same day) (Read for comprehension.)

For the third reading, student volunteers dramatize the story as you narrate to help your class "see" the story. Together, you and your class create a little play quickly. (You should only need about 15 minutes for this part.) Tell the class to act like they're making a silent movie without props. They will need to imagine visualizing the scenes.

1. Ask the whole class to cast the characters. Make a list of characters on the board. Ask them what characteristics each character has. (Do this orally.) Ask students who think they have those characteristics to volunteer for the part. Select someone. (For example, in *Red Riding Hood*, the characters are the mother, grandmother, Red, the wolf and the woodsman. The wolf would have to be someone who could sneak around and create many facial expressions. Each of the other characters would need to be...)
2. Ask the class to make a list of the settings in the story. For example, in *Red Riding Hood*, the skit will require a cottage, a woods with a path and grandma's house.
3. Ask the students to help you decide which places in the room are suitable settings. As the class decides the settings, ask the characters to take their places in those settings. (The front of the room could be the cottage. The linoleum area by the sink could be grandma's house. The woods could be the desk area. The characters would need to wander through the desks to get to grandma's house. Where would the woodsman be? In the woods to the right of grandma's house, for example.)
4. Selecting a few props is optional. I keep this as simple as possible. If someone makes a suggestion that is easy to put into action, I usually go with it.
5. Set parameters for what is too little acting and what is too much. Too little acting is not staying in character. Tell characters to stay in character even during the time when they are not the focal point of the story. Tell them to think through what the character would be doing at all times. The characters should really ham it up and dramatize the action.
Too much acting is standing on the desks or leaving the room! Too much acting, in this case, is making noises. The teacher is the narrator and the actors are miming the action.
6. (OPTIONAL) To involve more children or to make a change when a student doesn't work out as an actor, change characters every couple of pages: "Quickly, Jake, Helen and Shaquita, take their places and continue!"
7. Read the book as the characters act out the story - no lines to memorize. This short acting out helps all to visualize the story.
8. Applause! and praise☺

TASK ONE (CONTINUED)

IV. Retelling and Shared Writing

1. Bring all the children to the floor in front of the white board.
2. Together, write a retelling of the story on chart paper. (You will need 3-4 sheets.) Use the language of the children, modeling as you go. (For example, say, "How will we begin to retell this story?" "Once upon a time, there lived a little girl and her mother in a woods all alone.")
3. Record the retelling of the whole story as the children tell it. Model that you value what your students say by writing what they say. Write as fast as you can to record their language. You can have some input, but remember - they are going to revise the story so don't make this first draft perfect or they will have nothing to revise!
4. Let the children point out needed changes if important corrections are noticed, but again, don't make too many changes at this point.
5. Let skill teaching occur naturally. At the end, you should go back and fix glaring errors in language.

Chunk the Retelling after the children go home.

1. For the next part of the lesson, you need students to work in pairs on one part of the story. Divide the story using a marker or post numbered sticky notes. If you have 22 children, you will have 11 pairs of children. Therefore, you need to divide the story into 11 parts. Do the math for your class to determine how many chunks of story you need.
2. Assign the partners to the chunks so that tomorrow they know who they are working with and what part they are working on. (See the sample below. Some chunks are very short because some partners... need short. Some chunks are very long because they will be assigned to partners who need a challenge.)

OR

Chunk the story right away. Let your children choose a section to illustrate. Let them write out their choices. Later, spend time carefully pairing children who will work together for about 2-4 weeks as you complete the genre study.

This is actually **Red Riding Hood** as retold by James Marshall. You will be "chunking" the students' retelling - not the real story. Continue dividing the story until you have one chunk for each partnership.

1	A long time ago in a simple cottage beside the deep, dark woods, there lived a pretty child called Red Riding Hood. She was kind and considerate, and everybody loved her.
2	One afternoon Red Riding Hood's mother called to her. "Granny isn't feeling up to snuff today," she said, "so I've baked her favorite custard as a little surprise. Be a good girl and take it to her, will you?" Red Riding Hood was delighted. She loved going to Granny's - - even though it meant crossing the deep, dark woods.
3	When the custard had cooled, Red Riding Hood's mother wrapped it up and put it in a basket. "Now, whatever you do," she said, "go straight to Granny's, do not tarry, do not speak to any strangers." "Yes, Mama," said Red Riding Hood.
4	Before long she was in the deepest part of the woods. "Oooh," she said. "This is scary."

Some of the tasks take as few as 20 minutes to model and accomplish each day throughout the genre study. By holding children to your time limits daily, they accomplish more over time. They learn to get right down to work and eliminate some of the arguing time.

TASK 2: Tack the retelling version of the story where your students can see it! They will need it to see what students before and after them are writing.

Today your students will be working about 20 minutes to write 2 versions each chunk. You need a timer, a lined piece of paper for each child (or daybook) and a pencil for each child. You will need a small chunk of text for you to read and model from. You also need the retelling of the story on the chart paper posted in the room.

1. Explain what a retelling is - telling the story again in detail!
2. Define the word, "style:" writing in a distinct way with a personal, recognizable voice. Use the dictionary for help.
3. MODEL. Reread your assigned "chunk of story." Then retell it in your own words using more action words and details. You can experiment with different points of view, different tenses, different author styles... You are changing the author's version to make it your own style. (You can write a model on the overhead, too if you think your class needs that step.)

Example: Midnight and Alexandria approached Nations Ford River. The rider looked up and down the bank searching for a shallow and narrow place to cross. She knew Midnight was a trustworthy horse but Alexandria had to make good decisions to give her horse the best chance. She gave Midnight a swift kick to get him moving down the steep bank. "Come on girl! I know you can do it," she said as much to herself as to her horse. Midnight picked his way down the embankment and into the cool water.

4. Tell the students that you are going to set the timer for 5 minutes (or watch the clock). Tell them to reread JUST their assigned chunk and retell it in just 5 minutes. Tell them they might not get finished but to get as far as they can. Each student will be rewriting his chunk on a piece of notebook paper or in his response journal in his style. Some of your students will surprise you with their cleverness at this task.
5. MODEL again. Rewrite your chunk using a different perspective. Experiment. Take a writing risk. You don't have to like it.

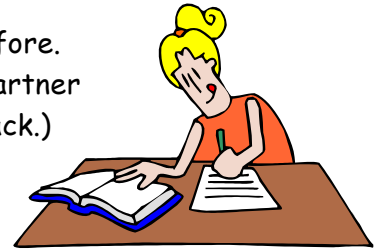
Example: Midnight and Alexandria approached Nations Ford River. The horse looked at the river and neighed uneasily. Alexandria was not going to make him cross that river! He hated water ever since he was a young colt. He wanted to please his owner so he picked his way down the embankment into the cool water. He pulled back but she kicked him so he had no choice but to continue. He walked into the stream, feeling unsteady on the rocks. "Come on girl! I know you can do it," Alexandria said to him. She was wrong. At that moment, he got stuck.

6. Ask the children to turn their papers over. Set the timer for 5 minutes again and ask each child to independently write a different version of the language chunk he/she is assigned.
7. COLLECT the papers!

TASK 3:

Ask 2 students who are partners to model what will happen next for the whole class.

1. Read the chunk ALOUD - the one the pair REWROTE twice the day before.
2. Ask the modeling partners to read their versions to the class. (Each partner has 2 versions to share - one on the front of their paper, one on the back.)
3. Ask each partner to tell his partner what he/she likes about each revision while the class observes. For example, *I like the way you had the horse talking. I like the words, "trustworthy horse." I like the picture you made in my head of Alexandria going out into the stream and the water curling around her legs.*
4. Ask the writer to check (✓) the features of his writing his partner complimented.
5. Reread the chunk again aloud.
6. Then ask the class to suggest more ideas of what might be added to the chunk. The writers should write down the suggestions. (Or, the teacher could.)
7. Then, once the class understands your directions, let the children get together with their partners and follow the modeled routine: compliment each other and check (✓) the complimented features for all rewrites.
8. Finally, put 2 partner groups together to make a group of 4. Ask them to share their writing and their compliments with this new group and get more suggestions and more compliments from the new people.



The students should each have papers with checked words and suggestions for additions at the end of this lesson. COLLECT the papers.

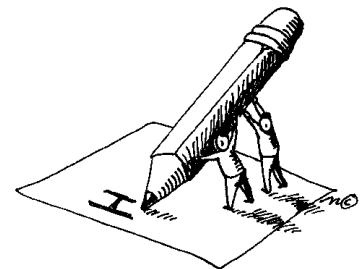
TASK 4:

Hold a discussion with the class. Before they write their final versions, they have to decide at the very least...

1. Who the narrator of the story will be. Whose point of view will the story be told?
 2. What verb tense they will work in.
 3. The mood of the story - are they going to try to be funny, scary, somber?
 4. Who is the audience for the book? Who will they share it with?
-

TASK 5: You need one piece of writing paper for each partnership. The size of paper is determined by the size of the book they will create and whether your students need lines or not.

1. Instruct the partners to write ONE version of their chunk together - using their best ideas. Both individuals must contribute to the writing that will go in the book.
2. They need to take a look at the papers they did the day before, talk through which checked writing they can use, and talk through which suggestions they should use.



3. They have to decide who does what. Here is what some other students have done:
 - Take turns writing.
 - Write at the same time by putting the paper in an accessible place to both.
 - Divide up who writes what part. Divide up the work.

If time, let them check their version with another pair for any further suggestions. Make sure they know this is a draft!

Writing one version together may take several days. Set a time limit. If the partnership does not get the task done, someone will end up writing some other time or homework time. It must get done somehow. COLLECT the papers!

TASK 6: Today your students will be working about 20 minutes to create 2 sketches each. You need a timer, a blank piece of paper for each child and a pencil for each child. You will need a small chunk of text for you to read and model from. You also need the retelling of the story on the chart paper posted in the room.

1. Explain what a sketch is - a picture done quickly in pencil, not very detailed and not complete!
2. MODEL. Read a chunk from the book you are reading aloud or any book of your choice. Draw a sketch on the white board to show the students how to sketch what it says in the chunk. (See page 6 for a short piece I wrote that you could use for this purpose.)
3. Tell the students that you are going to set the timer for 5 minutes (or watch the clock). Tell them to reread JUST their assigned chunk and draw a quick sketch of it - whatever comes to mind - in just 5 minutes. Stick figures are fine! No pouting allowed!
4. MODEL. Reread the same chunk from the book you are reading aloud or any book of your choice. Draw a second sketch on the white board to show the students how to sketch a different interpretation. For example, if you drew a big house with Red and mother in the windows and the trees behind the house the first time, this time you could draw Red and her mother standing in the foreground with the house behind them.
5. Ask the children to turn their papers over. Set the timer for 5 minutes again and ask each child to independently draw a different visualization of the same language chunk he/she is assigned.
6. Collect the papers!

TASK 7:

Ask 2 students who are partners to model what will happen next for the whole class.

1. Read the pairs' chunk ALOUD - the one they drew the day before.
2. Ask the modeling partners to show their illustrations to the class. (Each partner has 2 pictures to share - one on the front of their paper, one on the back.)
3. Ask each partner to tell his partner what he/she likes about each illustration as the class watches. For example, *I like the way you drew the branches of the tree. I love the fact*

that you drew a cool apron on Little Red. I find it interesting that you decided to draw a hole in the tree with a squirrel peeking out.

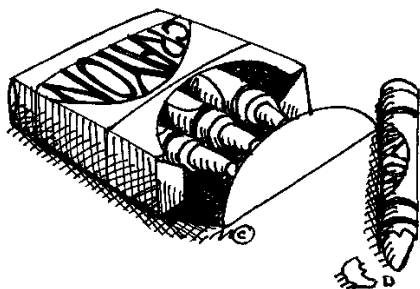
4. Ask the illustrator to draw a checkmark on top of the features of his drawing his partner complimented.
5. Reread the chunk again aloud.
6. Then ask the class to suggest more ideas of what might be in the picture. The illustrators should write down the suggestions. (Or, the teacher could.)
7. Then, once the class understands your directions, let the children get together with their partners and follow the modeled routine: compliment each other and draw checkmarks over the complimented features for all pictures.
8. Finally, put 2 partner groups together to make a group of 4. Ask them to share their pictures and their compliments and get suggestions from the new people.

The students should each have papers with checkmarks and suggestions for additions at the end of this lesson.

COLLECT the papers!

TASK 8: You need one piece of white construction paper for each partnership. The size of paper is determined by the size of the book they will create. I like 14x18" construction paper because when finished, it is a beautiful Big Book which can be added to my classroom library.

1. Instruct the partners to draw ONE picture together to illustrate their chunk ONLY - using their best ideas. Both individuals must contribute to the picture that will go in the book.
2. They need to take a look at the papers they did the day before, talk through which check marked features they can use, and talk through which suggestions they should use. They need to look at the chunk they are illustrating and make sure it matches.
3. They have to decide who does what. Here is what some other students have done:



- Take turns drawing.
- Draw at the same time by putting the paper in an accessible place to both.
- Divide up who draws what based on who feels comfortable drawing. Some people can draw people. Some can't. Divide up the jobs.
- One person draws and the other colors in.

Drawing and coloring one picture together may take several days. Set a time limit. If the partnership does not get the task done, someone will end up drawing during recess time or homework time. It must get done somehow.

COLLECT the papers!

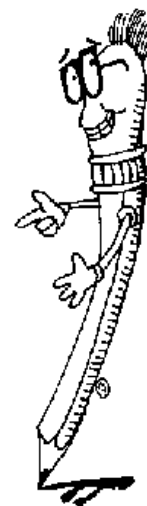
TASK 9: Excellent comprehension activity! Make sure the retelling posters are still in a place where people can read them. Number the chunks. Put the completed pictures on the whiteboard ledge or tape them with **SMALL** pieces of tape to the white board - out of order!

1. Take time to admire the beauty of the illustrations.
 2. Ask your students to reread the chunks and match the pictures. Ask them to move the pictures so that they are in sequence on the ledge. Some pictures will be easy to match up. But, some pictures will be hard for a variety of reasons which you need to point out:
 - Some of the pictures will look so similar that you will have to challenge your students to reread **VERY** carefully to find the details that help them find the matching picture. Push them to articulate their reasons for matching a picture to a chunk. This may turn into a debate-like atmosphere with students justifying their choices. Keep it fun!
 - Some of the pictures will not match the chunk because the partnership didn't read carefully enough. In that case, you may need to direct some pairs to add details that are missing or even - I hope not, but it happened to me - redo their picture. Redoing the picture was a great lesson though in the need for reading carefully and observing details of text.
 - Some pictures will not be complete. Post these also. (Nothing like deadline-day with the task not done to serve as a natural consequence.) Assign a time for that partnership to finish. We have to have everybody finish his or her page or the book will be missing a very important part of the story!
-

TASK 10:

1. Put the pictures on the ledge again - out of order.
2. Let each pair **READ** their new version of their chunk to the class **IN ORDER**. Ask the class to match the pictures to the text to see where revisions of the text or the picture need to be made.
3. Send students to revise the picture to match the text or the text to match the picture. This is a rough draft so they can cross out and make it messy.

COLLECT the papers! Type them - one chunk per page. I use 11 x 14" paper and save each chunk on the computer. They don't write much so it doesn't take long. Skip lines for revising.



TASK 11:

1. Ask the students to bring their chairs to the white board. They will probably be there awhile!
2. Tape (or use magnets) the chunks in order on the board.
3. Read through the chunks to find where revisions are needed. Obvious revision usually tends to include time words, transitions, verb tense and obvious flaws in the telling of the story.
4. Tell the children that **editing** is fixing grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. They may fix *GLARING* editing errors but only if they keep their focus on **REVISION**. That is to look at the story again. Editing will come later.
 - Look at every word: Is it the one we want?
 - Look at each verb: Is it a good action verb? Is it in the right tense?
 - Look at each page: Does the ending of one page flow into the beginning of the next page? Does the information overlap? Are there lapses in the story?
 - Look at each character: Are their actions consistent?
 - Look at the setting: For example, Does Grandma's house look the same all the way through?
 - Look at the beginning: Does it hook the reader?
 - Look at the ending: Is it satisfying?
5. Write the revisions in pencil right on the typed page. Sometimes the revisions are simple. Sometimes you have to write reminders for revisions on the page and send students to their seats to do some more revising.

TASK 12-13: Partners work on revising their chunks (or pictures) to get the best possible writing keeping the suggestions of the class in mind.

Teacher Homework: Type the second revision to get a cleaner copy for students to look at for the final revision session.

TASK 14: A final revision session needs to occur before putting the pictures and text together in a Big Book for the class library. This takes at least 1 and maybe 2 hours. Sit in a circle and check over the manuscript once again. Anything need changing?

TASK 15: You can spend time editing the book or have student specialists do the final editing. Put the book together. Share and enjoy! ☺ Quiz (assess) the students on what they learned about revision.

Retelling Project Rubric

Name _____

- 1- below average
- 2- average
- 3- above average
- 4- outstanding

	Student	Teacher
Evidence of drafting Draft 1 in daybook Draft 2 in daybook Draft 3 with partner	Circle one: 1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4	1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4
Evidence of revising Revision on written draft Revision on typed draft	1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4	1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4
Evidence of editing Edited typed draft	1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4	1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4
Evidence of learning (See below.)	1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4	1 ---- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4

Please write what you learned from the retelling project:

- 1- _____

- 2- _____

- 3- _____

- 4- _____

Use the back of the paper to write more if you need to.