

For all Primary Levels

Great LESSONS and Ideas



- Presenting a selection of practical, user-friendly ideas for the primary classroom.
- Includes teachers' notes, lesson plans and photocopy master pages for all subject areas.

By
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Introduction

“40 Great Lessons and Ideas” is a smorgasbord of practical user-friendly ideas for teachers. They were selected from over 100 ideas that have been developed or acquired over 23 years experience in the classroom.

The ideas have been categorised into a number of areas ranging from general classroom ideas, drama, literacy, maths and whole school ideas. There is a mix of black line master pages and general teaching and extension ideas which can be implemented in the classroom or throughout the school.

The main point I would like to make is that all of these ideas work – they have been tried and tested and provide for many satisfying and valuable learning experiences for children and teachers.

I’ve enjoyed writing a number of educational books for teachers over the past decade but this has been the most enjoyable by far. It’s the sort of book I look for when the ‘reps’ cover the staffroom table in educational resources.

I hope you enjoy using it as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Paul Larkin

SAMPLE

It's Not a Chair

The enjoyable aspect of this activity is the fact that it includes or attracts those shy children who never want to participate in drama.

Instructions:

Use one of the students' chairs and hold it up for all to see and say:

"This is not a chair!"

This, of course, invites many comments. Once you have their attention again, repeat the statement followed by:

"See if you can guess what it is!"

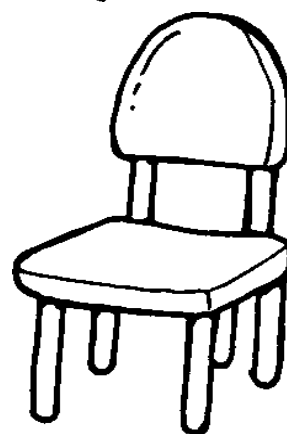
Then bend over the chair, undo the petrol cap, push the primer, adjust the lever, pull the cord and start mowing.

By this stage every hand is up and there's always a few excited kids yelling: "It's a mower!"

Then say:

"Who can turn this chair into something else?"

You should have no trouble in attracting children to participate. The only problem is trying to finish the activity in the allotted time!



Tables Poems

Most teachers will agree that one of the best ways to learn tables is still by rote. There are many resources for singing and chanting tables.

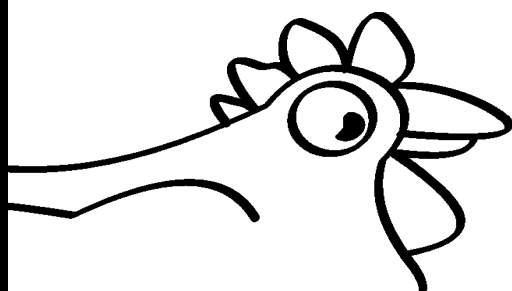
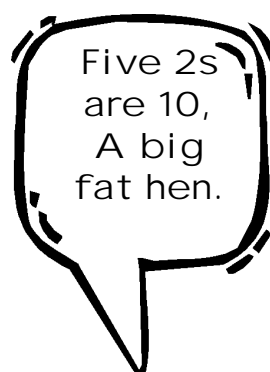
Instructions:

The two poems provided are for learning the **2 x** tables and **10 x** tables and also require an additional skill-sequencing. The children have to cut out the 10 sections of each poem and arrange them in the correct order. They then paste it onto their page (or pages, if using a standard exercise book).

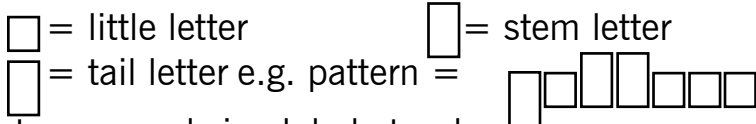
The poems have a great rhyming beat and do not take long at all to learn as a class. They also go down well at school assemblies and presentations too. Each poem can also be recited by ten children saying one verse each.

A challenge for older students might be to write a similarly-paced poem for the other tables.

Photocopy the rhymes on the next two pages for the students.



Spelling Activities

1. **Rainbow words:** Choose five words and trace over each word with three different colours.
2. **Spellamadoodle:** Write your list in the shape of one of the words.
3. **Backwards Words:** Choose five words and write the words backwards.
4. **Letter Patterns:**  = little letter = stem letter
= tail letter e.g. pattern =
5. **Alphabet Order:** Put your words in alphabet order.
6. **Antonyms:** Choose five words and then, for each word, write a word with the *opposite* meaning.
7. **Synonyms:** Choose five words and then, for each word, write a word with a *similar* meaning.
8. **Homonymns:** Choose five words and write a word that sounds the same but is spelt differently.
9. **Word Find:** Put your list words into a word find.
10. **Definitions:** Choose five words and write the meaning of each word.
11. **Short Story:** Use as many of your list words as possible in a short story.
12. **Grammar:** Sort your list into nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.
13. **Poem:** See how many words you can put into a poem.
14. **Questions:** Write down five questions where the answers are in your list.
15. **Plurals:** Choose 10 words and write the plural of the word.
16. **Smaller Words:** Choose five words and find smaller words inside those words.
17. **Word Chain:** See how many interesting words you can find. **E.g. H E L P**

See how many interlocking words you can find. **E.g. H E L P**

AS T I M E

- 18. Fonts:** Choose five words and write in different fonts.

e.g. *LOVE* **Peace**

- 19. Syllables:** Choose five words and break them into their syllables.

E.g. per / for / mance

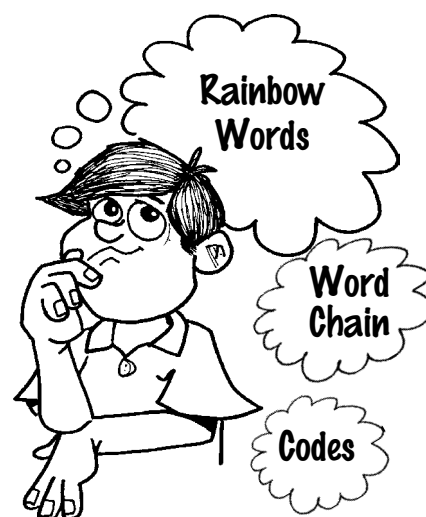
- 20. Codes:** Choose five words and work out their numerical value.

First work out a code:

E.g. A = 1, B = 2, ... Z = 26.

Then see what each word is worth:

E.g. DOG: $D = 4, O = 15, G = 7$
 $4 + 15 + 7 = 26$

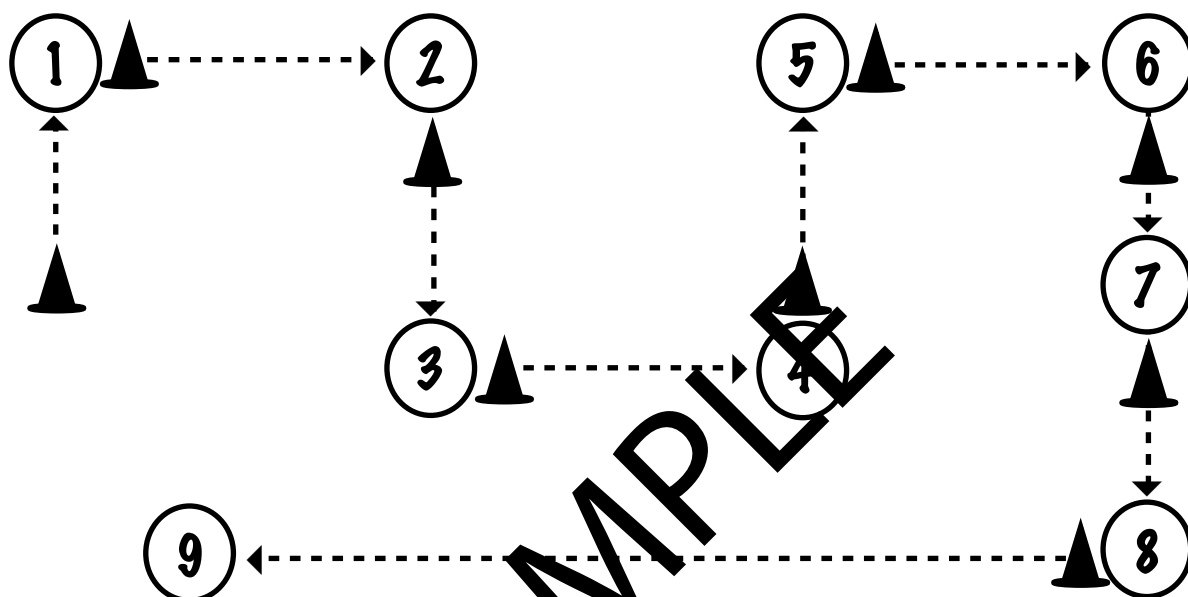


Beanbag Golf

Equipment:

- 9 witches hats
- 9 hoops
- 1 beanbag per child

Mark out the course as follows:



Instructions:

Children play in pairs. *Child One* stands at the first tee (hat) and throws his/her beanbag. *Child Two* throws his/her beanbag. They each have three throws to get the beanbag into the hoop for a par.

Scoring:

These rules are discussed in the classroom before going outside. The goal is to score a par, i.e. 3 throws. If it takes more than three shots then the number of shots taken is written in the score column (see the score card templates on page 27).

Shots: Birdie = 2, Par = 3, Bogey = 4, Double Bogey = 5

Note: This applies to the first 8 holes – for the last hole add one (1) to each category.

Once a pair has finished a hole, the next pair can tee off. The last hole is longer so this is a par 4. The distance between holes is about 30 metres, however, this can be altered to suit the playing area.

Students can have input on designing their own course layouts and there are plenty of follow-ups for maths lessons. Issue each child with a score card.

Children swap cards at the start and score for their partner. They sign the card at the end when both agree on the final score.

The Great Debate: Topics

Start up a suggestion box for debate topics and also brainstorm for topics in the classroom. The list below contains 20 topics for starters.



1. Students should not have to wear uniforms to school.
2. There should be no P.E. or sport at school in summer.
3. We should have lolly/cool drink machines at school.
4. The canteen menu should include junk food.
5. We should get to choose what subjects we want in upper primary.
6. Upper primary students should have a Common Room.
7. Teachers should have to wear uniforms.
8. Homework should be banned.
9. Mobile phones have become a social curse.
10. Handwriting is a waste of time today because of computers.
11. We would learn better in single sex classes.
12. One day a year should be set aside so children can swap roles with parents.
13. All children should have a compulsory set menu.
14. Television causes harm to how children think.
15. Computer games influence children's behaviour.
16. Girls Vs Boys.
17. There should be separate beaches for different nationalities.
18. All sharks should be wiped out.
19. Children should learn a second language in primary school.
20. We should be able to drive at 16 years of age.

Peer Groups

Although peer groups have been operating at many schools for a number of years, they are still considered a state of the art concept.

The system outlined below is based on one school's peer group program which has been successfully running for over 20 years.

The concept is very simple. A peer group consists of one upper primary (final year) student leader and one member from every other class in the school. This varies according to the number of student leaders and classes in the school but is basically very easy to organise.

At the beginning of the year the student leaders have training for 1½ to 2 days where they are given specific skills to prepare them as peer group leaders. This training can include visiting speakers, e.g. police officers, politicians, business owners, etc. as well as teachers. Topics cover ice breakers, games, planning a session, communication skills, leadership skills, coping with problems, and many others.

Peer group sessions are held once every three weeks and are timetabled on the school calendar. A session lasts for 30 minutes but can go longer depending on the activity. One classroom usually has three groups operating in it. The teacher only plays a supervisory role and will only intercede if a leader cannot cope with a problem.

The activities in a session usually coincide with special calendar events – Father's Day / Mother's Day, Anzac Day, Clean Up Australia Day, Easter, etc. The peer group leaders have a planning session and each leader is given a folder to hold resources, notes, list of names of group members, and other necessary details.

The main benefit from the use of a peer group program is not just the interaction in the group itself, but that it also provides a valuable learning and leadership experience for the final year students. It has been noted many times that some of the more 'challenging' older students actually shine in their roles as peer group leaders.

The program also negates many bullying situations as younger children feel they have someone to turn to on the playground, as they will know students in the older year levels. A good idea is to dedicate some lunch time sessions to peer groups by having students eating their lunches together.

A simple concept but a fantastic learning experience for the whole school.

Calligraphy in Chalk

A simple idea that only requires a bit of practice to bring your blackboard to life.

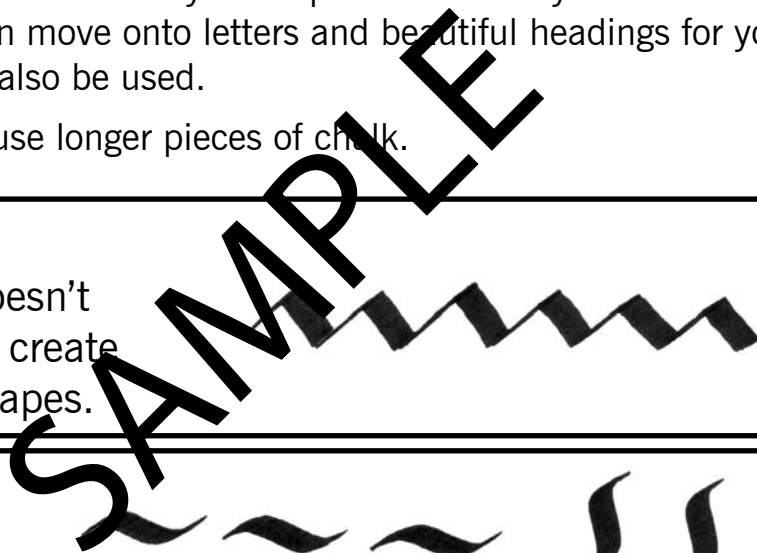
By snapping a piece of chalk into a piece about two centimetres long you now have a tool for writing in calligraphy. There are many styles to be found in lettering books or on the Internet, however, the Foundation style is the easiest to begin with.

Hold the chalk at a 45° angle and be careful not to move the angle. Write with the side of the chalk and try these patterns. Once you can do these basic shapes you can move onto letters and beautiful headings for your board. Patterns can also be used.

For larger headings use longer pieces of chalk.

Step 1

Angle of chalk doesn't move so you can create thick and thin shapes.



Step 2

Try the s shape



Step 3

Try basic lettering.



Step 4

Now try a heading

It's fun, looks good and is very therapeutic.

