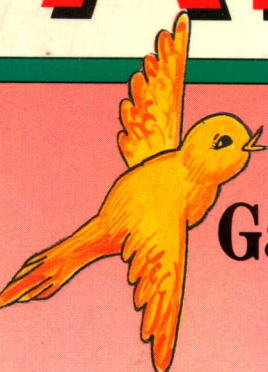



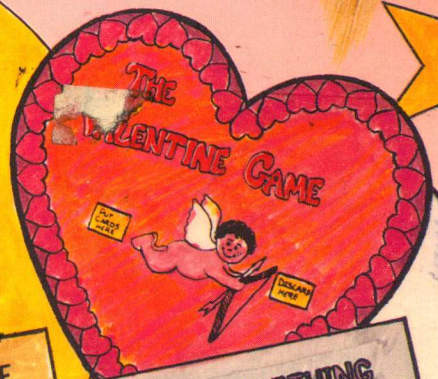
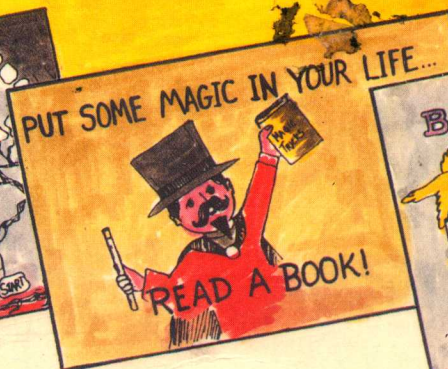
# The Reading Teacher's ALMANAC



Hundreds of Practical Ideas,  
Games, Activities, Bulletin Boards  
and Reproducibles for Every  
Month of the Year



PATRICIA TYLER  
MUNCY



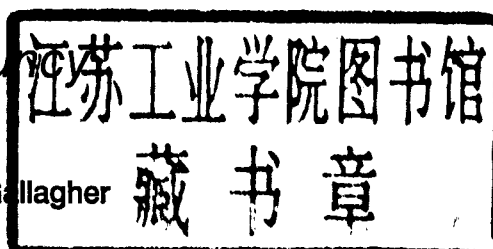


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*Patricia Tyler Muncy*

Illustrated by Janice Mori Gallagher



THE CENTER FOR APPLIED  
RESEARCH IN EDUCATION  
West Nyack, New York 10995

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Mrs. Muncy is also on the Editorial Advisory Board of The Center's *Primary Teacher's Ready-to-Use Activities Program*, as well as being a contributing author to that program.

# ABOUT THIS ALMANAC

Developed for elementary classroom teachers and reading specialists, *The Reading Teacher's Almanac* provides hundreds of ready-to-use activities and games for teaching and reinforcing basic reading skills. The *Almanac* is organized by the months of the school year, and each monthly section includes a variety of original activities, games, worksheets, bulletin boards, flash cards, bookmarks, manipulatives, and projects. In addition, for each month you will find:

- *Instruction tip of the month*, which will give you step-by-step techniques for improving the effectiveness of reading instruction in your classroom. For example, in October you will find specific group response techniques to stamp out wandering minds during reading class. In January, you will get tips for linking reading and writing.
- *Book report activity sheets* are designed to encourage children to read for pleasure and to replace the standard oral book report format with motivational book-based activities.
- *Story extension activities* to use with any story in a basal reader or trade book.
- *Bonus idea of the month* offers you ideas for teaching new sight words, making envelopes to hold game pieces, making book covers, and more.

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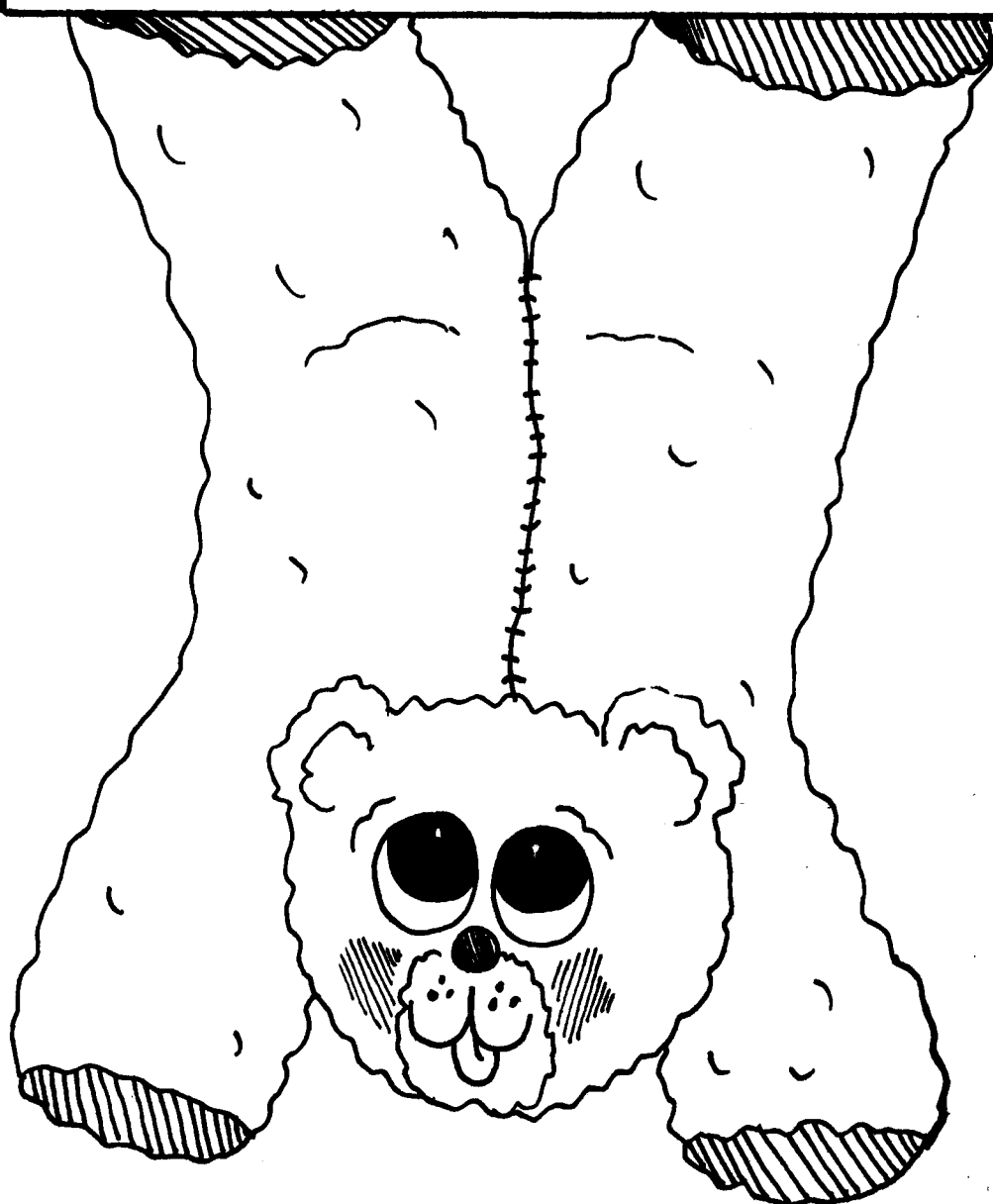
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# AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER





## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

We usually think of New Year's resolutions about the first of January. However, for teachers, New Year's resolutions should be formed in August before the beginning of a new school year. This is the time to think about the instructional techniques we use in our classrooms and the ways we can make our reading instruction even more effective. Remember, even the best instruction can be improved upon.



On the next page you will find an excellent classroom reading teacher's New Year's Resolutions list. You may wish to photocopy it, laminate it, and tape it on your desk or place it in some equally visible location to serve as a constant reminder. Ample space has been left at the end of the list for you to add your own additional New Year's Resolutions.

Take time now to think about your reading instruction and develop the rest of your New Year's Resolutions list.



### **The Classroom Reading Teacher's New Year's Resolutions**

1. I will structure my instruction to make maximum use of available learning time.
2. I will use group response techniques to maximize student involvement and student learning.
3. I will always make certain students clearly understand how to do all assigned reading seatwork activities before they work independently.
4. Whenever appropriate, I will model for the students the thinking process to be used in arriving at the correct answer.
5. I will provide the students with guided practice and make sure each one is firm in the process needed to do the assignment with a high degree of accuracy before letting them proceed independently with the assignment.
6. Except in first and second grade, I will *not* use round-robin oral reading in my reading classes.
7. I will actively promote reading for pleasure with my students.
8. I will find ways to incorporate writing into the reading program on a frequent basis.

## 12 HELPFUL HINTS FOR CONSTRUCTING GAMES AND TEACHING DEVICES

Use these hints throughout the year to make the construction of games and teaching devices easier and to make the activities more attractive and usable.

1. To save time and extend the use of an instructional game, prepare the gameboard omitting the words to be practiced. After the gameboard has been laminated, add the words, letters, or phonics elements to be practiced, writing them along the pathway using a transparency pen. When the students have played the game a number of times and no longer need practice on those words or skills, simply wipe off the words (etc.) with a damp cloth and write new words or phonics items along the pathway. Thus, the gameboard can be used over and over throughout the year, providing the drill needed at that particular time. In this way the gameboard can also be multipurpose, allowing flexibility in the skills the game will reinforce at a given time.
2. Words written on gameboard laminated surfaces with transparency pens have a definite tendency to smear as game markers are moved along the pathway. To overcome this problem you may want to write the words on the gameboard using a *permanent* fine line pen such as a Stanford's Sharpie pen. Later, when you are ready to put new words or phonics items on the gameboard, spray hair spray on the words and wipe them off with a soft cloth. The permanent ink is quickly and easily removed and the gameboard is ready for you to write the new words!
3. Papermate Fine-Line Flair Pens work best for writing words on game cards. The ink will not bleed through to the back side of items made with the lighter weight materials such as oaktag, coverstock, and heavy art paper.
4. Stanford Sharpie Fine-Point Pens work very well for outlining drawings on gameboards and other activities made on railroad board or posterboard. Because they are permanent ink pens, they will not smear when you color in pictures with broad-tip markers.
5. Permanent-ink broad-felt-tip markers are excellent for coloring in pictures on gameboards, etc. made on railroad board or posterboard. To get a smooth, deep color appearance, color the picture once with the permanent markers, then go back and color them in again. All of the Magic Marker streaks will disappear!
6. Watercolor felt-tip markers work best for games and activities constructed on the lighter weight cardboards such as oaktag or coverstock. The water color markers will not bleed through to the back surface.
7. Crayon can be used for coloring games and instructional devices that will be laminated only if the crayon is applied lightly. CAUTION: Heavy

application will result in melted streaks of crayon wax when the object is laminated.

8. White felt-tip markers can be purchased from school supply stores and office supply stores. White felt-tip markers are not found in the packaged sets of markers. They are packaged separately. The white markers are excellent for marking on gameboards made on dark blue, brown, or black railroad board or posterboard.
9. A good set of colored pencils is a must for constructing teacher-made instructional games and teaching devices. The colored pencil sets usually found in discount stores and drug stores do not have the soft lead that will produce smooth, rich colors on your teacher-made items. You will want to avoid these. Instead, purchase a Prismacolor Colored Pencil Set or a Venus Colored Pencil Set. These brands of colored pencils can be purchased through school supply catalogs and through office supply stores.
10. When you wish to erase lines from the posterboard or railroad board surface of a gameboard under construction, use a gum eraser to do the erasing. A gum eraser will not leave markings or remove the color from the surface of the cardboard. Most other types of erasers leave noticeable marks that detract from the final appearance of the gameboard.
11. Only use rubber cement for gluing things to gameboards before laminating. When laminated, the glue marks will be invisible. If white school glue is used, the glue dabs will show through when the object is laminated!
12. An X-acto® knife (a type of art knife) or a single-edge razor blade will work well for cutting slots in a teacher-made tachist-o-scope and for slicing open laminated manila envelopes.



### **EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION TIP OF THE MONTH**

#### **GROUP PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES: SIGNALLED RESPONSES**

Begin the school year implementing group participation activities in your classroom. Group participation activities will increase the reading skill development of students in your classroom by keeping their attention focused on learning more of the time. Group participation activities are effective with both small

and large groups and are appropriate for primary, elementary, and junior high school classrooms.

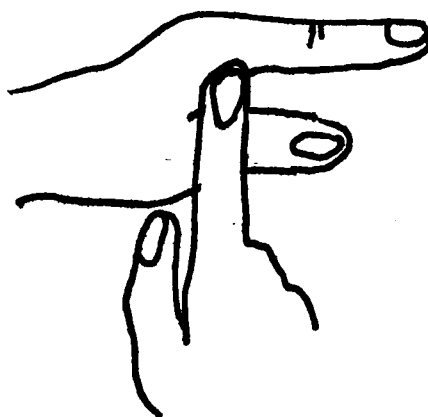
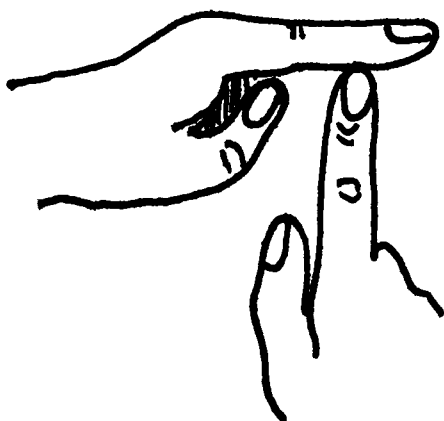
Think of your class for a minute. When you ask a question and call on one student to respond, many of the other students in the group simply do not participate in the thought process needed to come up with the correct answer. As soon as you call on a student, the rest of the students can disengage. They simply do not need to think of the correct answer. When students are not actively thinking through the questions, developing their own answers, and listening to see if they were correct, valuable learning opportunities are being lost and children are not learning as much as they could have been learning.

Group participation activities keep *all* students in the group focused on the learning activity, thinking through *each* answer and responding to *every* question. Group participation activities require responses from all students, not just the one called on.

One category of group participation techniques is signaled response activities. Here are some excellent examples of signaled responses.

*Have the students show their answers with hand signals.*

1. Pronounce words with one, two, or three syllables. Have students hold up one finger if they think the word contains one syllable. Have them hold up two fingers if the word contains two syllables or three fingers if the word is a three-syllable word.
2. Ask the students a series of true or false questions about the story. Have the students make a T with their fingers if they think the statement is true. Have them form an F with their fingers if they think the statement is false.



Or, instead of asking a series of true or false questions, you may wish to intersperse an occasional true or false question (to which all students signal