

MARCH

Writing Activities

In March, winter begins to loosen its icy grip. Keep students' skills sharp as everyone anxiously watches for the first signs of spring. Set enough time aside in students' writing schedules to include both group work and individual activities.

Word Bank Words

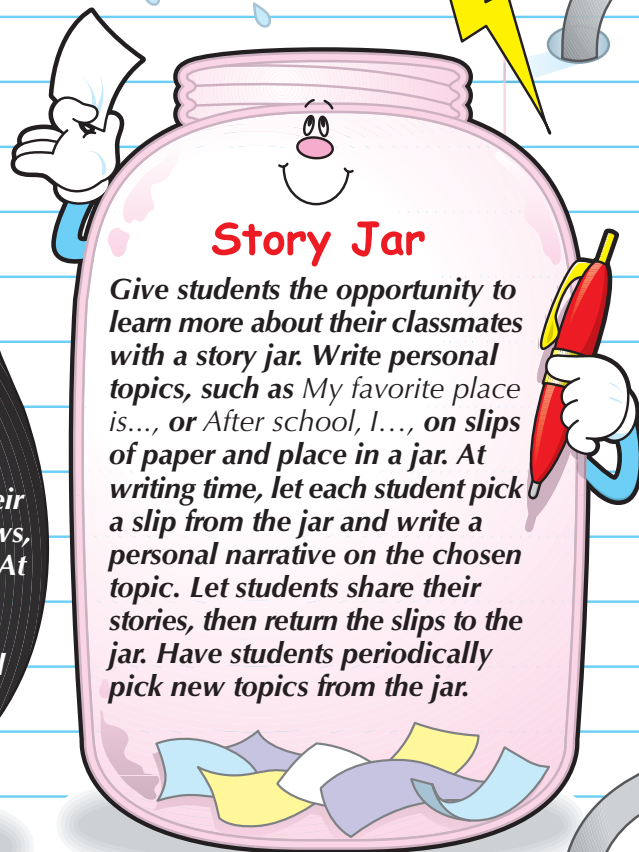
wind	nest
shamrock	birdhouse
leprechaun	crocus
spring	daffodil
lion	rainbow
Ireland	lucky
lamb	kite
robin	green

Stormy Weather

Animals are used to describe March weather, but March weather can also describe animals. Have students each pick a favorite pet or other animal to describe. Then, think of weather conditions that could be used to describe the animal. For example: My cat is lazy like a rainy day. Sometimes she races around the house like lightning. She scares me like thunder when she jumps on my bed in the middle of the night.



Having trouble catching up with a leprechaun? Write him a letter. Have students write letters to a leprechaun persuading him to share his gold. Students can explain why they should get the gold and what they would do with it. Have them seal their letters in envelopes decorated with gold and rainbows, then place the letters under a bush near the school. At the end of the day, gather the letters and write short responses to each on shamrock patterns (page 77), saying why you (the leprechaun) think they are all too deserving to choose just one—so you'll have to keep the gold! If desired, substitute a gift of a gold foil-covered chocolate for the real thing.



Story Jar

Give students the opportunity to learn more about their classmates with a story jar. Write personal topics, such as *My favorite place is...*, or *After school, I...*, on slips of paper and place in a jar. At writing time, let each student pick a slip from the jar and write a personal narrative on the chosen topic. Let students share their stories, then return the slips to the jar. Have students periodically pick new topics from the jar.

Picture Perfect

Turn things around in your writing classroom! Instead of having students illustrate after writing a story, let them illustrate before they write. Without telling students they will be writing a story, have them each draw and color a picture of their choice on white paper. If desired, let students exchange drawings. Then, tell students to look at the pictures and think about what is happening in the scenes.



Based on the illustrations, challenge students to write imaginative stories to accompany the pictures. Display the pictures, then have each student read his story and let the class guess which picture matches it.

Make a List

Are your students listless journal writers? Add some lists to their journals! List-making can boost memory and provide spelling and observation practice. Provide a different topic each day, such as things in a classroom or toys I have. Challenge students to develop a list of as many words as possible that fit the category.

Poster Poems

Welcome spring to your classroom by displaying a colorful spring-themed poster (flowers, rainbow, etc.) Ask each student to look at the poster and write a poem using it as inspiration. They may wish to describe the scene in their poems, or write about how they feel as they look at it. Provide spring-colored paper for students to copy their finished poems on, then arrange the poems around the poster, creating a cheerful spring display.

Senior Editors

Free up your time during writing activities by assigning students to be senior editors. Choose two or three students each week to be the official editors and help their classmates with their writing. Students can come to the senior editors and ask for help with spelling, grammar, and story ideas. Encourage senior editors to use the dictionary and to ask each student questions about his characters and plot to help him get past any writing difficulties.



I enjoyed reading your paper!
-Senior Editor

SPELLING REVIEW

Turn studying spelling words into fun and games! Divide the class into 4-5 groups and number students so each group has a number 1 student, a number 2 student, etc. Call a number and have each student with that number go to the chalkboard. Call out a spelling word. The first student to spell the word correctly on the board wins a point for her team. Give each member of the winning team a bonus point on the weekly spelling test.



13