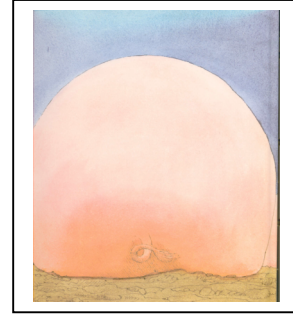


Teaching Ideas  
for  
*Pigs in the Mud in  
the Middle of the Rud*



\*\*\*John Schoenherr hid names in some of the illustrations in *Pigs in the Mud*. They are written in cursive and are part of the art, such as in the squiggle lines in the mud. Look closely and see if you can find any hidden names. (HINT: On the “Budge, scatter, shuffle” page, under the boy, look for Mr. Schoenherr’s granddaughter’s name “Emily.”) Do you know any other illustrators who hide words or images in their books?

\*\*\**Rud* is a slang Maine word for "road." In Maine, we might say, "I'm going up the rud a piece to visit my neighbah." (Some Mainers also leave off the final /r/ sounds in words) Brainstorm a list of regional/colloquial words for your area. Make a list of these words and what they mean.

\*\*\**Pigs in the Mud* is one of my favorite books to act out as a play. Try it! A teacher or good reader can be the narrator and read the story aloud, pausing while others act out and repeat the words for their parts. Chairs (two in front & three in back) can be a Model T Ford. Black construction paper can be cut with a curve and then bobby-pinned to the hair of the person playing Grandma for a bonnet, Papa might simply wear suspenders, the pigs could hold curled pink construction paper by their backsides for pigs' tails, bulls could hold up toilet paper tubes on their heads for horns, etc. Use simple props and have fun!

\*\*\**Pigs in the Mud* is a 3-P or PROBLEM story. That is, a story with the following parts:  
~The story starts with a PROBLEM  
~In the middle it has a PATTERN (where attempt after attempt is made to solve the problem)  
~It ends with a PROMISE (a promise to find a solution for the story’s problem)

Find the 3P’s in *Pigs in the Mud* and then in other stories, such as Lynn Plourde’s *Wild Child* and *Moose, of Course!*

Then after students practice *finding* the 3-P’s in these stories, have them try *writing* their own 3P or PROBLEM stories. Have students use the organizer on the following page to help them plan/organize their stories before writing them. Note: The following organizer encourages students to start with a PROBLEM by coming up with a SUBTRACTION IDEA for a story (i.e. the lion who couldn’t roar, the rainbow with no colors, the giraffe with the short neck)—that is, think of an object, animal, or person and subtract or take something away that it is supposed to have. Then the PROMISE is that the object, animal, or person gets back in the end what it was missing at the beginning. In the PATTERN in the middle, attempt after attempt is made to solve the problem—with the first two attempts *not* working, and then the final attempt *does* work. After students’ plans are completed, they are ready to turn the plan into a story. Note: a sample plan is filled in on last page of the pdf.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

My subtraction story IDEA (such as the tiger with no stripes or the sun that wasn't hot or the kangaroo that couldn't hop):

### 3 P Plan

My problem (same as subtraction story idea above):

My pattern (how I try to fix the problem, but 1 & 2 do NOT work and 3 **does** work!):

1.

2.

3.

My promise (to fix the problem):

Name: *Example*

My subtraction story IDEA (such as the tiger with no stripes or the sun that wasn't hot or the kangaroo who couldn't hop):

*The skunk that was NOT stinky*

### 3 P Plan

My problem (same as subtraction story idea above):

*The skunk is NOT stinky*

My pattern (how I try to fix the problem, but 1 & 2 do NOT work and 3 **does** work!):

1. *The skunk rolls around in garbage, but it rains and washes off the garbage smell*

2. *The skunk calls and orders some "stinky," but OOPS, a stinky was delivered instead*

3. *The skunk's skunk friends feel sorry for him and ALL spray him—then he's the stinkiest skunk in the forest*

My promise (to fix the problem):

*The skunk IS stinky*