Teacher's Guide for Spider Magazine
April 2006

The following teacher's guide is designed to support students as they read, discuss, compose written responses, and engage in word study activities related to selections in the April 2006 issue of *Spider* magazine.

Lessons are designed with multiple formats for instruction and learning. These include whole class, small group, partners, and individual work settings.

Particular readings are used as a starting point for a discussion of *Digging Up Treasures*. Articles are used as content for read-alouds, listening activities, supported guided reading, guided reading, interactive writing, or independent writing. Suggested activities integrate the Language Arts skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening with content area studies.

Throughout the guide, children's skills in vocabulary (meaning), word recognition (*distinguishing features* of words and context clues), expressive and receptive language, comprehension, and writing will be expanded and refined. With the expository selection, children will experiment to distinguish types of soil.

Activities will offer differentiated levels of responding to accommodate children's diverse needs, interests, and competencies. The readings may not follow the order of presentation in the issue; issue selections are sequenced in a way that matches the flow of the concept presentation.

Benson, V. and C. Cummins. 2000. *The Power of Retelling: Developmental Steps for Building Comprehension.* Chicago, IL: Wright Group/ McGraw Hill
Fountas, I. and G. S. Pinnell. 1998. *Word Matters*. NH: Heinemann.
Kibby, M. March 18, 2004. *Researched-Based Strategies for Teaching Meaning Vocabulary*. Presentation for the Continuing Professional Education Series at the University of Buffalo.
Tompkins, G. 2003. *Literacy for the 21*st *Century* (3rd ed). Upper saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

The Overall Plan

Title: Digging Up Treasures
Time: approximately 40-45 minutes each session. *Independent Practice* is completed later in the day.

Objective:
Following instruction and teacher modeling, students will demonstrate through oral responses, group work, and written work that they've:
   1.) analyzed similarities and differences as well as *distinguishing features* in words.
   2.) increased their speaking, reading, and writing vocabulary.
   3.) actively participated in listening activities, guided reading, and partner reading.

4.) grown in their ability to monitor their own comprehension, make personal connections (*text-to-text; text-to-self; text-to-world* — Tompkins, 2003) with the content, make inferences and support these with "evidence" from the text, make logical predictions, draw conclusions, and effectively discuss the content of their reading.

5.) classified questions according to their QAR type.

6.) made logical inferences of character traits and used story content to verify their reasoning. This is reflected in worksheet responses and contributions to the class character trait web.

7.) contributed significant details from the article for the Soil matrix.

8.) created a group diamond poem that creatively fulfills the criteria.

9.) constructed a journal entry that addresses a prompt with voice, clarity, organization, good word choice, and appropriate mechanics.

10.) identified lessons in a fable.

Bloom's Taxonomy: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, and Synthesis

Materials:
copies of the April issue of *Spider*
post-it notes
chart paper
sentence strips
blank word cards
sand
cake pan
chicken bones
small paintbrush and cosmetic brush
Brendan's Traits Web
Character Trait sheet
Soil Matrix

Session 1
"The Danderfield Twins" by Polly Horvath will be read following a *guided reading* procedure. This means that, after an introduction to the theme and new vocabulary, students will read silently and independently. Periodically, they'll be invited to discuss the content, share their reactions, and make predictions for the next part of the selection.

Motivation:
1.) Fill a rectangular cake pan with sand and pieces of chicken bones. Sift gently through the sand using a straw as a probe. Pick up bone pieces with tweezers and dusk them with a small paintbrush or cosmetic brush. Carefully model how to place each piece on clean paper. Make a record of what was found. Write down the date, a number for the item, and a brief description of it. Make a sketch of it too. You might want to use a clipboard to look official.

2.) Explain that these are the steps that archaeologists and paleontologists following when excavating a dig. Explain the job of these scientists and what constitutes a *dig*.

3.) Say, "In this issue we'll learn about excavating for different purposes — for different kinds of treasures. Before we read particular selections, let's look over the whole issue."

Teacher Input:

1.) Have children sit with an assigned partner (use the clock buddy system). Distribute a copy of the April issue of *Spider* magazine to each dyad. Introduce the issue; discuss the title page and table of contents (TOC). Ask for comments, reactions, and predictions. Have students take a guided *picture walk* through the issue, reading captions and noting illustrations. Call on students to share their thinking. This activates background knowledge, stimulates predictions on the content, builds expectation, and sets personal purposes for reading.

2.) Have students turn to "The Danderfield Twins — Deep-Fried Funeral" by Polly Horvath on page 2. Talk about the picture. What's happening? What are the characters doing? What creature is depicted as writing? What connection might this creature have with what the friends are doing? Take students on a *picture walk* through pages 2-6. Invite them to share their comments and predictions.

3.) Words that need to be discussed before students read include the following. Decide which words will be added to the Word Wall and write these on word cards.

    sit-down comedian   pterodactyl

Examine word structures and meanings for this context. Explain how Marty's presentation would differ from what's typically called a *stand-up comedian*. Words are presented in context on sentence strips.

4.) Explain that the twins and Marty are planning to trick Marcus, but their trick backfires. Marcus doesn't make the paleontological discovery; an unexpected paleontologist makes it instead.

Guided Practice:

1.) Tell students that they'll be *word wizard* detectives as they read through the issue. Give each dyad a few post-its to flag additional words they think we should investigate. These are new and/or interesting words students want to know more about.

2.) Have students read page 2. Say, "Marty is going to practice being a scientist in his backyard? Do you think he'll discovery any dinosaur bones? Why do you think so? Talk about what type of QARs these questions represent (i.e. QARs as taught with the previous issue). Discuss their ideas. Say, "Let's read to find out how the twins and Marty plan a paleontological trick."

3.) Have students read and discuss pages 3-4. Ask, "Why did they wash the chicken bones? Why is this like a funeral — a deep fried funeral?" Have students identify the QARs for these questions and answers.

4.) Have students read and discuss pages 5-6. Ask, "Why did the plan flop? Who is the surprise paleontologist? Was the plan risky with Pluto around? Why? How could Pluto detect the bones if they were washed?" Have students identify the QARs for these questions and answers.

5.) Have students critique the creative quality of the story. Is it well organized? Does it flow smoothly? Is it interesting? Why? Why not?

Session 2

Motivation:

1.) Take students to the following websites or have printouts of the information and pictures at this site. Read and discuss the information and show the pictures.

www.desertusa.com/magjan98/jan_pap/du_rock_geode.html
www.bestcrystals.com/geodes.html

2.) Tell students that today's story is about digging or excavating for a rock treasure; that treasure is a geode.

Teacher Input:

1.) Have students open to "Dig This" by Julienne Matlaire on page 13. Guide students in a *picture walk* through the story, inviting them to share their comments and predictions. Have students infer Dad's mood from the illustrations.

2.) Introduce the following words using the method previously introduced. Point out *distinguishing features*, structures, and phonetic elements. Words are introduced in context and, then, written on word cards and added to the Word Wall.

slurping	grubbiest	owl pellet	dissect	scrunched
bolt	trudge	shriek	y'all	Walkman
rock hound	slump	scooch	gloomy	piercing howl
bridge the creek		drench	snort	jagged

3.) Tell students that Austin, a very grumpy and uninterested rock hound in the story, discovers a geode in a most unlikely way.

4.) Talk about character traits. Character traits describe what someone is like on the inside. Say, "We might think that someone is brave, kind, mean, careless, careful, or hardworking." Ask," How do we decide if we think someone is kind or mean?" Discuss children's ideas.

5.) Reinforce the idea that we observe people's behaviors, what they say, and what others say about them when making decisions about character traits. We can make decisions about characters in a story in the same way. We observe the character's behaviors, what the character says, and what others say about him.

Guided Practice:

1.) Follow a *guided reading* procedure with this story. Have students read page 13-14 to find out why dad is cross with Austin. Ask, "How does Austin feel about his Uncle Ted? Why do you think so? How does Payton feel about adventuring with

Uncle Ted? Why do you think so? What kind of a person does Uncle Ted appear to be? Why do you think so?"

2.) Have students read pages 15-17. Ask, "Why do you think Uncle Ted and his friends are so excited about finding a geode? Are they in a good place to find geodes? Why do you think so considering what we found out at the Internet site?"

3.) Have students read to the end of the story on page 20. Ask, "Why did Austin think he had found something special? Does he still wonder what the big deal is with these rocks? Why? What would make you suspect a rock might be a geode?"

Independent Practice:
1.) Introduce the Character Trait worksheet.
2.) Later in the day, have children work on the sheet. The teacher provides assistance as needed. Allow time for step #3.
3.) Compile the sheets; allow children to read them during free reading time.

Sessions 3

Motivation:
1.) Conduct the experiment described on pages 24-25 with the class to test the soil at the school site. Report findings.
2.) Explain that soil scientists test soil for many reasons. Ask children why it would be important to know the composition of the soil at a specific place (e.g. when building there, when planting there).
3.) Tell students that scientists identify soils by the ingredients in them. The article we'll read today describes the characteristics of different soils.

Teacher Input:
1.) Have partners turn to the article, "Sandy Skyscrapers to Clay Cobras" by Julie Brooks Hiller, P.G. on pages 22-23. Direct students to the illustration on page 23; invite their comments, reactions, and predictions.
2.) Introduce the following words using the method previously introduced. Point out *distinguishing features*, structures, and phonetic elements. Words are introduced in context and, then, written on word cards and added to the Word Wall.

    gouging   gritty   gravel   silt   freckle   coarse

3.) Introduce the information gathering feature matrix that will be used for this article. Have the matrix prepared with items (soil types) and features (across the top) filled in. (A completed *model* is displayed on the Soil Matix, but you'll want to complete the matrix with students.)

Guided Practice:
The reading will be done as *supported guided reading*. Assigned readers have had an opportunity to pre-read their paragraph.

1.) Assign partners (using clock buddies procedure) to share a copy of the issue. Partners will follow along as assigned readers read aloud.

2.) Have students volunteer information for the matrix after each paragraph is read. The teacher (or student) writes the information in the appropriate box on the matrix.

3.) Discuss how this information relates to the findings from their soil experiment.

4.) Record their findings about the local soil under the matrix.

Session 4

Motivation:

1.) Ask students, "Can cleverness or quick thinking ever be better protection than strength or weapons? Why do you think so?" Discuss children's responses

2.) Tell students that in today's story, a character uses his quick wit to save his life. In the process, he excavates treasures.

Teacher Input:

1.) Have students open to the story, "Rocks, Sand, and Water" by Maggie Murphy on pages 8-12. Guide students through a *picture walk* of the pages, inviting their predictions, comments, and reactions.

2.) The teacher reads the first paragraph aloud. Ask, " What is the setting for this story? What kind of a story do you think it will be? (tall tale) Why? What clues have the pictures and first paragraph provided?"

3.) Introduce the following vocabulary using procedures previously described.

snuff	laundress	reluctantly	driftwood
slither	brine	snout	serpent
valiantly	sea-urchin	blanketing	fleece
lonesome		bargain	scour
impressive		lodged	laboring
cloak			

Note in context used to introduce the adverbs (valiantly and reluctantly) how these words add information that helps a reader imagine exactly how the action (verb) was performed. Remind children that they can use words that have the same effect in their writing.

4.) Ask children to identify appropriate listening behaviors — ones that ensure comprehension. Record children's ideas on chart paper. Tell children that they should listen to find out how Brendan used cleverness first and, then, rock, sand, and water to survive and change his luck.

Guided Practice:

This reading is done as *a teacher read-aloud*. The teacher reads as students follow along. Stop at appropriate places to discuss content and words or phrases they wish to have clarified.

1.) The teacher reads the story aloud, modeling components of fluent reading (e.g. pace and expression). Stop at appropriate places to discuss story content.

2.) Complete the Brendan's character traits web together. Have an enlarged version on chart paper or make a transparency of the Brendan's Traits Web page.

Independent Practice:

Later in the day children will respond to the following prompt in their journal.

What lesson can be learned from this tale? Explain your answer.

Session 5

1.) Read and discuss the poem "Geode" by John Frank on page 21. Have students share their comments and evaluation of the poem. Ask them to consider imagery the writer evokes, choice of words, metaphors, and other literary devices used to describe a geode.
2.) Have children think of something that is a treasured thing and an opposite or less appealing thing (e.g. a butterfly and moth). They will create a diamond poem about these two things.
3.) Model how to write a diamond poem. Emphasize the importance of using words that evoke images.

First noun	Butterfly
2 descriptive words for the first noun	beautiful, graceful
3 descriptive words for the first noun	colorful, symmetrical, light
change from first to second noun (4 words)	flitting around — sneaking inside
3 descriptive words for the second noun	drab, annoying, camouflaged
2 descriptive words for the first noun	ugly, clumsy
Second noun	Moth

NB: The words can also be phrases.

Butterfly
brightly colored
gracefully fluttering to flowers
delightful sight — annoying pest
frantically clinging to lights
grayish brown
Moth

4.) Have students work in groups to create a diamond poem.

Session 6

Motivation:

1.) Say, "We've read fables or stories with animals. Think about one that you remember." An example is "The Fox and the Grapes" in The *Fables of Aesop* as told by Joseph Jacobs.
2.) Explain that today's story is a fable. Like all fables, it has a lesson for us.

Teacher Input:

1.) Have students discuss the concept of *daring* someone to do something. Why do people dare others? Is it a good idea to "take a dare"? Why?

2.) Have students turn to "The Great Bayou Flying Race" by William Kelly on pages 26-31. Guide students in a *picture walk* through the pages, inviting their comments, reactions, and predictions.

3.) Teach the following new vocabulary using procedures previously introduced.

bayou   cypress tree   hunkered   slurpy
murky   croak   gasping   cramped
goofy   smirk

Find Louisiana on a map of the US. Explain that the bayou in the story is located in this state.

4.) Tell students that they should think about the following questions as they read. Have them written on chart paper.
   • What was the dare?
   • Why did the birds accept the dare?
   • What happened to the animals that took the dare?
   • What lesson did the trickster (alligator) learn?

Guided Reading:
The story will be read following a *partner reading* procedure.
   1.) Have partners read the first two pages (26-17). The teacher circulates to assist.
   2.) Allow students to lead a discussion of the story's content, question vocabulary or sections that need clarification, and summarize story elements presented thus far.
   3.) Have students infer why the birds accepted the dare, giving support for ideas from the text and their experiences.
   4.) Have partners read pages 28 and 29 (half way through second column). Allow a discussion of the birds' success with the dare, why they stopped, and the trickster's reaction. Ask children to predict what will happen next.
   5.) Partners read to the end of the story. Discuss lessons learned — by the birds, by the trickster.

Independent Practice:
Have other fables available for children to read during silent reading time. Have children share their story and its lesson with a friend at the end of the session.

Session 7

Word Study:
Throughout the reading word cards have been made and added to the classroom Word Wall. Devote a lesson (or more) to word study activity with these new words. You can mix in other words to round out the word cards needed for group work.

Model how to do a *word sort*. Assign children to four groups. Select 12 verbs for each group to sort. This will be an open sort. An *open sort* is one where the sorters decide the categories. The verbs can be categorized by sound, structure, or meaning.

Prepare charts for groups to record their words. Children can have as many categories as they deem appropriate. Leftover words are listed in a miscellaneous category. However, the miscellaneous category cannot be larger than any other list.

Give each group a bag of verb word cards and a prepared chart. Children sort their words as the teacher circulates to help. The teacher checks word placement before children write each word on the chart. All groups share their work with the class. Open sorts usually have very interesting results. Children are encouraged to use some of these interesting verbs in their own writing.

Word cards are replaced on the Word Wall when charts are completed. They can be used for another sorting or word study activity. Note: The cards will stand up better if they're laminated.

Overall Assessment:
The teacher will assess children's
- oral responses, noting the clarity of expression, depth of comprehension, and critical thinking revealed in them. Observations will be recorded as anecdotal notes.
- ability to work together with a partner or in groups. Observations will be recorded as anecdotal notes.
- written work for evidence of message quality and creativity (clarity, sentence variety, organization, vocabulary, "voice"), and technical accuracy (spelling, grammar, punctuation).
- transfer of new words to their speaking vocabulary. Observations will be recorded as anecdotal notes.
- ability to make inferences and support these with "evidence from the text and personal experience. This is demonstrated in children's determination of character traits and lessons taught by the fable.
- ability to think creatively and apply this to writing and reading poetry.
- text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections for appropriateness.
- ability to accurately identify QARs
- contributions to a feature matrix for accuracy.