

The **READ**Saskatoon **READer**

February 2006



READ Saskatoon is seeking your input

Are writing activities the most challenging parts of your tutoring time? We are seeking the assistance of three tutor – learner matches to help trial writing activities.

What will this require?

- training will require an hour of your time.
- Writing activities will be trialed over 6 weeks, at about 15 minutes of every tutoring session.
- We will meet again for two hours in April to gather and discuss your feedback.

Your time is valuable – honorariums will be paid to participating tutors and learners. Call Sheryl at 652-5448 to participate or learn more.

Do you want to



**thank your tutor?
Then, nominate them
for our tutor award!**

Is your tutor really great? For the second time, READ Saskatoon is going to award a tutor who has volunteered more than they need to.

If you think your tutor should have a special award, call READ Saskatoon at 652 5448.

You can tell us a story about how your tutor has helped you with your reading and writing.

(Please don't tell your tutor about this award – we want to keep it a secret ☺)

Common Proverbs: Cloze Activity

Instructions: Read through the word list. Then read the sentences and pick a word from the list that best completes the sentence. Ask your tutor to help or to check that you got them right.

word list:

reap	roads	words
nine	eggs	Beauty
words	nose	Bad
end	policy	will
worm	perfect	leap

1. Practice makes _____.
2. Look before you _____.
3. _____ news travels fast.
4. Honesty is the best _____.
5. Don't cut off your _____ to spite your face.
6. A picture is worth a thousand _____.
7. All _____ lead to Rome.
8. Don't put all your _____ in one basket.
9. A stitch in time saves _____.
10. _____ is only skin-deep.

11. Where there's a _____ there's a way.

12. Actions speak louder than _____.

13. As you sow, so shall you _____.

14. The early bird gets the _____.

15. All good things must come to an _____.

- These activities were taken from: www.enchantedlearning.com/proverbs/cloze.shtml If you enjoyed doing these, be sure to visit for more Cloze activities

Contractions

We often "contract" or shorten words in English. For example, we may say "he's" instead of "he is". Note that we usually insert an apostrophe (') in place of the missing letter or letters in writing. Here are some example sentences:

- I haven't seen him. (I have not seen him.)
- Who's calling? (Who is calling?)
- They're coming. (They are coming.)

We do this especially when we speak. We do not contract words so much in writing.

Be careful. Some contractions can have two or three meanings. For example, **he'd** can be **he had** or **he would**. It depends on the rest of the sentence. Look at these examples:

- He'd like to go. (He would like to go.)
- He'd finished when I arrived. (He had finished when I arrived.)

The contraction '**s** (= **is** or **has**) is not used only with pronouns. It can also be used with nouns, names, question words and words like "here" and "there", for example: The train's late. John's arrived. Where's the phone? Here's your change. There's a policeman.

Complete the following contractions:

Short form	Long form	Short form	Long form
I'm	I am	they'll	_____
I've	_____	_____	they are
I'll	I will or _____	they've	_____
_____	you are	they'll	_____
you've	_____	_____	they had or
you'll	_____	_____	

- <http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/contractions.htm>

Punctuation? Why Bother?

Yes, I know it's not one of the most exciting parts of language, but it **IS** important. It's another one of those basics that can make all the difference to your writing.

Look at the following sentences:

Don't stop.

Don't, stop.

The first is a request to continue with the action; the second is the exact opposite - it's saying that the action should cease.

Commas are used to indicate a short pause - they alert the reader to the fact that the next thought will be connected to the one that has preceded it. (A full stop tells the reader that a new thought is about to start.)

Some writers adopt the "when in doubt, leave it out" approach, but, as we've already seen in the example above, the placement of a comma can radically alter the meaning of a sentence:

He was kicked by a mule which annoyed him. (The mule annoyed him.)

He was kicked by a mule, which annoyed him. (Being kicked annoyed him.)

Sometimes, omitting a comma can lead to ridiculous meanings:

While mother was cooking the baby wandered away.

Often, commas have to be used to avoid ambiguity in sentences:

You don't really like it; you're only pretending to please me.

You don't really like it; you're only pretending, to please me.

These sentences have two quite different meanings - as a result of the placement of the comma. (This is one of the really annoying things about built-in grammar programs, they can't respond to subtleties of meaning - my page is littered with wiggly green lines at the moment!)

There are pages of rules that govern the use of commas, but the best rule is to read the sentence - aloud - and notice where you would pause to convey the intended meaning. If it's a short pause (and the idea is all part of a single thought), whack in a comma. If it's a longer pause (but still part of the same thought), use a semi-colon. If it's the end of a completed thought - use a full stop. Now what could be easier?

- www.write101.com/punct.htm

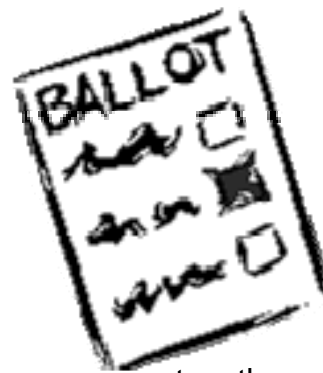
Hints when Listening in a Foreign Language

1. Listen to a video or audio cassette or streamed video/audio from the Internet whenever possible. Although live viewing of satellite TV can be fun and helps to train your ear, for effective language learning the use of recorded material presents 2 major advantages:
 - You have a much greater choice of subject.
 - You can PAUSE and REWIND (it is surprising how many students forget this !)
2. Think about the subject before you start. Make a list of words and phrases you expect to hear, and tick them off as they come up.
3. Listen actively. Don't just let the language wash over you. Always have a pen and paper with you to note interesting vocabulary, language points etc.
4. Take your notes in the target language. When listening to normal speech you do not have time to translate everything. Working only in the target language will train your brain to THINK in that language.
5. Don't worry if you can't understand everything. Concentrate instead on what you DO understand.
6. The first time, listen to the whole item without stopping. This will give you a better understanding of the overall context before concentrating on the detail.
7. For more detailed work, concentrate on quite short sections e.g. a single news item.
8. Use the PAUSE and REWIND buttons when using a cassette.
9. If a transcript is available, DO NOT look at it until the end of your activity. Your last step should be to listen again, reading the transcript simultaneously. You will normally understand the transcript more easily than the tape, and this exercise helps you link the written word to its spoken form. You should not, however, study the transcript as a written text.
10. Try using a monolingual dictionary when checking vocabulary. Often a definition is more useful than a translation, especially for items which are difficult to translate directly, and it is good practice to work entirely in the target language.



- These activities were taken from: <http://langcent.man.ac.uk/ill/lishints.htm> If you enjoyed doing these, be sure to visit their site for additional ESL activities.

How literacy friendly was our election? One Saskatoon adult learner tells her story.



January 23rd, 2006 was an important day for many politicians and it was also an important day for many learners across Canada. I had the privilege of sitting in a room with 6 other learners, just days after the election to share our thoughts and feelings on our voting experiences.

Most of us felt intimidated and scared. They did not understand the whole procedure. One female learner was yelled at when she passed the masking tape placed on the floor to help represent a line. When she gave back her ballot she was barked at because she did not fold her ballot right. She was horribly upset by this; she felt stupid and embarrassed. One man was unsure how to vote early because he was going to be away out of town the day of the election. He was upset that he could not have his vote heard.

Many of us did not know how to mark the ballot. Do we put an X? How about a check mark or do we simply color it in? Another learner heard that if you were to X or a mark outside of the designated area your vote would not count. If this is the case, my vote would not have counted because I think I went outside the circle. It would have been nice to have someone there to politely explain the rules to me.

I can truly say that I expected the ballot to be a lot different. To me it was hard to read because

the writing was so close together and being in one color just made it all blur together. I saw a television document about South Africa's First Democratic Elections on April 1994. The ballot was big and clear looking, it had columns straight across with the names typed, then they had color parties logos or symbol in which represented each members as well as a color photographs. Finally there was a big space to mark.

I just want to thank every literacy organization in which that had a hand in supplying information to learners about voting. Also so to all those learners that went out and voted, you should feel very proud of yourself. I just hope your experience was better then these 6 learners here in Saskatoon. I would also like to give deep thanks for the learners that shared their experiences and allowing me to share them with you. For the learners that did not vote please don't feel bad. You will have another chance in the future, and by then hopefully it will be a fun and exciting experience.

Forever a learner
Carey Rigby-Wilcox

Public Speaking in Your Future?

1. Almost everybody is nervous when they stand up to speak. There's no shame in being nervous. However, if you are too nervous, your anxiety will spread to your audience, making them nervous in turn. So how can you stop yourself from feeling too nervous? Here are a few tips.
2. Don't get hung up about being nervous. It's a normal human reaction. Don't make yourself more nervous because you're nervous.
3. Walk off your excessive nervousness. If possible, walk outside and get some fresh air at the same time. But a walk down the corridor is better than no walk.
4. Don't let your legs go to sleep. Keep the blood supply moving. Keep both feet on the floor and lean forward. Wiggle your toes. If you can stand up without disturbing anybody, do so.
5. Work your wrists, arms and shoulders to get the tension out of them. Gentle movements, not a major workout, will remove that tension.
6. Work your jaw. Gentle side-to-side or circular motion will help to loosen it.
7. Repeat positive affirmations quietly to yourself. "I am a good presenter." It may seem corny but it works.
8. Above all, breathe deeply. Make sure your stomach is going out when you breathe in.
9. Don't be self-conscious about these warm-up activities. Most good speakers do them. Most people won't even notice that you are doing them. They're here to hear you speak, they're not interested in what you do when you are not in the limelight.

Techniques to calm yourself

1. The best technique to calm yourself is to breathe deeply. Inhale through your nose until your stomach can stick out no further and then exhale through your mouth. Do this at least ten times and you will feel much better.
2. Arrive early and familiarize yourself with the room, the podium, the a/v equipment and the seating arrangement. Stand at the podium and breathe deeply.
3. Mix with the audience as they arrive. Find out a few names and ask them why they have come. Chatting to them informally helps break the ice and will help remind you that your audience is made up of ordinary people like you and me.

4. Bring a photo of a child, spouse, pet with you and keep it where you can see it. Glance at it from time to time. If you are getting lost in your speech, look at it for 5 seconds and gather your thoughts. Remember that you are somebody's hero.
5. Make eye contact with members of your audience. Look out for the friendly faces encouraging you to succeed. If you are too shy, connect with the empty chairs!
6. Smile warmly and act confidently and enthusiastically, even if you don't initially feel that way. As you begin to relax, this will become less of an act.

*- This information was taken from: <http://www.better-english.com/>.
If you enjoyed doing these, be sure to visit their site for additional ESL activities.*

Tongue-Twisters

A tongue-twister is a sequence of words that is difficult to pronounce quickly and correctly. Even native English speakers find the tongue-twisters on this page difficult to say quickly. Try them yourself. Try to say them as fast as possible, but correctly!

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A proper copper coffee pot. 2. Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascals ran. 3. Long legged ladies last longer. 4. Mixed biscuits, mixed biscuits. A box of biscuits, a box of mixed biscuits and a biscuit mixer! 5. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper. Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled pepper? If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper, Where's the | <p>peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Pink lorry, yellow lorry. 7. Red leather, yellow leather, red leather, yellow leather. 8. She sells sea-shells on the sea-shore. 9. The sixth sick Sheik's sixth sheep is sick. (Sometimes described as the hardest tongue-twister in the English language.) |
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- These activities were taken from www.englishclub.com/pronunciation/tongue-twisters.htm

READer Family Fun Page



Hey Diddle Diddle

Hey diddle diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped
over the moon;
The little dog laughed
to see such sport,
And the dish ran
away with the spoon.



Colour me!

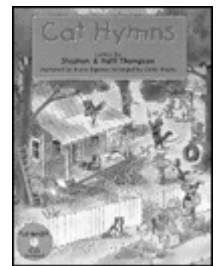
What is this poem about? In England's royal court, it was the custom to dub people with silly nicknames. Elizabeth I was often called "The Cat" from the way she fiddled with her Cabinet ministers as if they were mice. The cow, moon and her "lap-dog" were also characters in these court charades. The dish was Elizabeth's serving lady and the spoon was, of course, the royal taster. When these last two secretly eloped, Elizabeth had them captured and confined to the Tower of London. Nobody fiddled with Elizabeth! www.rooneydesign.com/HeyDid.html

On your next visit to the library look for:

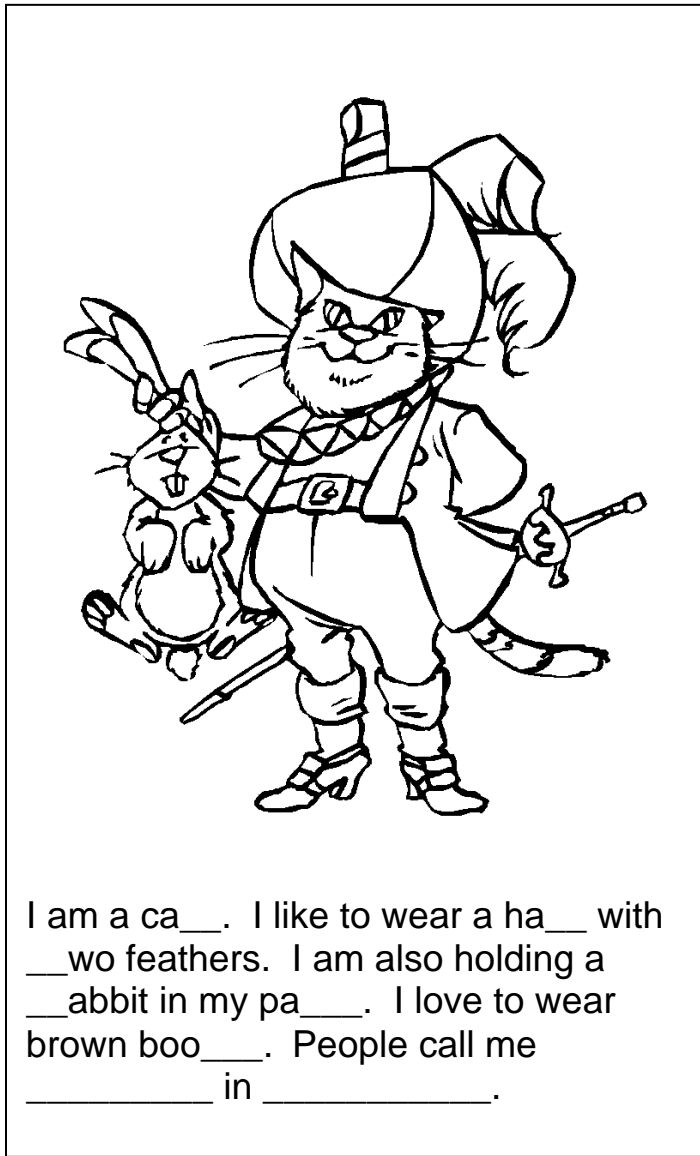


Three Little Kittens by Paul Galdone (Illustrator) The favorite Mother Goose rhyme about the three careless kittens who lost their mittens is given added appeal with Galdone's bold and colorful illustrations. "This refreshingly hearty version of the nonsense verse will be as much a favorite of adult storytellers as it will be of toddler listeners." -- School Library Journal **Ages 3-8**

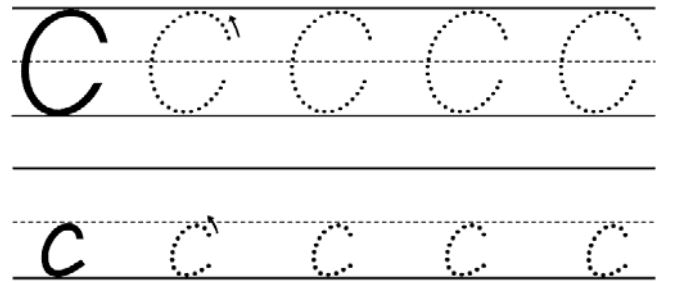
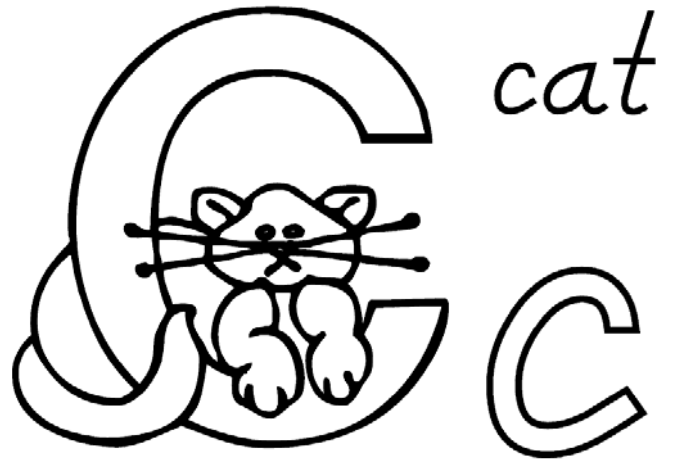
Cat Hymns Book + Music CD by Stephen Curtis Thompson Cat Hymns is the most kids can have with a book in a long time! The illustrations in this book are great! The words to the songs are clever, and the music and singers on the CD are fantastic! You can tell the people who did this book know and love cats. Kids can sing these songs in the car, "act out" the songs in little plays, or entertain themselves using the songs and cat-characters from the book for puppet shows.



The activities and information has been provided by: http://www.first-school.ws/activities/crafts/animals/pets/cat_2.htm, <http://www.miss-kitty.com/cathumor/store/poetrykids.html> and www.rooneydesign.com/HeyDid.html. Be sure to visit these sites for additional information and activities you and your children can do together.



Name _____ Date _____



Practice writing the big and small letter C. You can also trace the upper and lower case letters with your finger to demonstrate how these are written and sound out the letter Cc as it sounds in the word cat. Do you know any other words that start with C? List them here:

How much do you know about cats? Discuss basic cat facts, like

- How many legs do cats have?
- What are whiskers?
- What do cats eat?
- Are they big or small?
- Where do cats live?

Images and information about domestic cats can be seen at www.encyclopedia.com. Click on the pictures to enlarge and view information.

