

Max's Words

Written by Kate Banks
Illustrated by Boris Kulikov



Max's two older brothers collect stamps and coins, so Max decides to start a collection of his own. Max's word collection begins to grow when he cuts words from newspapers and magazines. His words become sentences, and sentences become stories, as Max and his brothers brainstorm several ways to manipulate the words in his collection.

About the Author

Kate Banks has written many outstanding children's books. In recognition of her many accomplishments, she was awarded the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award and the Charlotte Zolotow Award. Banks lives in the South of France with her husband and two sons, one of whom happens to be named Max.

About the Illustrator

Boris Kulikov has illustrated a number of children's books. Boris lives with his wife and son, Max, in Brooklyn, New York.

Accompanying Activities

1. English Language Arts: Writing

Activity 1: Sentence Construction

Discuss how Max made words into sentences and sentences into stories. Seat students in groups of 3-4 per table. Give each group an envelope with individual words that have been cut apart from a word list (word list included on page 18). Old newspapers and magazines can also be provided for students to cut out words themselves. Have students create sentences from their bank of words; encourage the use of adjectives to elaborate each sentence. Have students record their sentences with capital letters and correct punctuation on chart paper for the whole class to read together.

Activity 2: Sentence Construction

Create sentences by placing each word in the sentence on an individual index card. Pass out one to two index cards per student. Seat students in small groups of 4-5 members. Allow students time to manipulate the index cards creating complete sentences. When each group has constructed at least one complete sentence, have each group share by physically standing and sharing their sentences.

Activity 3: Pass It On Story

Have each child record the last sentence from *Max's Words* on a sheet of notebook paper "Once there was a big brown dog..." Students continue the story writing for about one minute. Call time and have students pass their papers to the child next to them. They will add a sentence or two to the new story. Repeat as time allows. On the last rotation make sure students end the story and return it to the original author. (For Kindergarten, write a whole class story with each child contributing the next sentence to the story starter.)

- **Writing/grammar/usage** - The student composes meaningful texts applying knowledge of grammar and usage.
TEKS: *ELA 110.3 (b) 21 AB; ELA 110.4 (b) 17 BC*
- **Writing/composition** - The student composes original texts.
TEKS: *ELA 110.2 (b) 15 AC*
- **Writing/purposes** - The student writes for a variety of audiences and purposes and in a variety of forms.
TEKS: *ELA 110.3 (b) 18 ACD; ELA 110.4 (b) 14 AB*

2. English Language Arts: Word Choice

Before reading the story, tell students to listen for "Wow" words. Explain that "Wow" words paint a picture for the reader. Brainstorm vivid vocabulary used in the story. Point out words such as *slithered*, *hissed* and *darted*. Discuss how these are "Wow" words. Cut several "Wow" words and place in a baggie. Allow each child to reach in and pull out a "Wow" word to illustrate. Ask students to fold a piece of blank paper in half, print their "Wow" word on the front and create an illustration to accompany the word. Share "Wow" words with the whole class or in small groups. The individually illustrated words can be combined to make a class book of "Wow" words.

- **Reading/vocabulary development** – Discuss the meaning of words and develop vocabulary through concrete experiences.
TEKS: *ELA 110.2 (b) 8 AB; ELA 110.3 (b) 11AB; ELA 110.4 (b) 8 ABCD*
- **Writing/Spelling** – Use resources to find correct spellings, synonyms and replacement words.
TEKS: *ELA 110.3 (b) 20 A; ELA 110.4 (b) 16 A*

Companion Books

Other Books by Kate Banks (partial list)

Alphabet Soup. Dragonfly Books, 1994.

The Cat Who Walked Across France. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004.

Close Your Eyes. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.

The Great Blue House. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.

Howie Bowles, Secret Agent. Frances Foster Books, 1999.

If the Moon Could Talk. Frances Foster Books, 1998.

The Night Worker. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000.

Other Books Illustrated by Boris Kulikkov

Morris the Artist. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003.

The Perfect Friend. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.

Books About Words

Cleary, Brian P. *Pitch and Throw, Grasp and Know: What is a Synonym?* Carolrhoda Books, 2005.

Clements, Andrew. *Double Trouble in Walla Walla*. Millbrook Press, 1997.

Frasier, Debra. *Miss Alaineus: A Vocabulary Disaster*. Harcourt, 2002.

Schotter, Roni. *The Boy Who Loved Words*. Random, 2006.

Shulman, Mark. *Mom and Dad are Palindromes*. Chronicle Books, 2006.

Steinberg, Laya. *Thesaurus Rex*. Barefoot Books, 2003.

Internet Resources

Interactive word games

<http://www.wordplays.com>