

## **Journaling for 2007 Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Ballot Grades 3-5**

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When the Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award program was implemented several years ago, I became very interested in finding ways to:

- Include the stories during my weekly library classes of around 45 minutes
- Inspire the students to write short summaries of the stories, so that they could recall the story when the time came to vote on favorite books
- Include all students in the writing process.

Before sharing a story with the class, I would decide on the central idea (usually a character) I wanted to emphasize. Sometimes I might pick two ideas or characters.

After reading the story to the class, I would write the idea or character's name in the middle of a chalkboard or large sheet of newsprint, then ask the students to give me words or phrases associated with the idea/character or describing the idea/character from the story. We would cluster the information around the central idea. (If there were two ideas/characters, there would be two clusters.) All valid ideas were accepted and written. These clusters worked as word/idea banks to provide students with the information needed to write about the story. Clustering does not take very long, but is an excellent way to provide all students with ideas for writing about the subject.

After collecting data from clustering, I would ask the students to complete an activity:

- As a class, we might compose a sentence or two about the idea or character, using the information clustered on the board. We ask students to write "Million Dollar" sentences which consist of at least eight words, use "and" or "then" only once, make sense, and be a complete sentence. Writing the sentence or sentences as a class insures that all students have correctly written sentences copied in their journals and gives practice in composing interesting, factual sentences.
- They might be asked to write one or two sentences about the idea or character, on their own, using the information clustered on the board.
- Another way to compose a summary is to use the formula SWBST: Somebody wanted, but (however) so then. (An explanatory sheet using GATOR GUMBO is included.)
- Students might be asked to write an "I AM" essay on the main character in a story. (A form is included.) This works especially well with biographies.
- Short poems, in the forms of cinquains or diamantes, might be composed. (Forms are included.) Cinquains use a character/idea from a story. Words and a sentence describing the character/idea fill the cinquain design. Diamantes use two different characters/ideas, one on the top line of the form and the other on the bottom line of the form. Words describing the characters/ideas are written on the appropriate lines of the design.
- When the story can be compared with another story the students know, a Venn Diagram can be completed by the class and included in the journal. (A form is included.)
- A Venn Diagram can also be used to compare two characters in a story.

At the end of each class, I would collect the journal entries, which also included the title of the book and the student's name. Each student's journal was kept in a folder, and,

before voting, each student was given his/her folder to review what had been written about each story.

If an activity was not finished by the end of the library period, the teachers permitted the students to finish up in class, then gave the journal entries to me.

Usually, I could not read chapter books in a class period, so I would talk about the book and ask students to write a short summary about the book after reading it, then give me their journal entry to add to their journal.

The forms can be adapted and revised in many ways.

### **Journaling Ideas for 2007 LYRC Books Grades 3-5 books**

Birney, Betty G. **The World According to Humphrey.**

Bolden, Tonya. **The Champ: The Story of Muhammad Ali.**

- "I am" essay
- Cinquain

Clements, Andrew. **Last Holiday Concert.**

- SWBST by individual readers

Fleming, Candace. **Gator Gumbo: A Spicy-Hot Tale.**

- SWBST
- Venn diagram comparing GATOR GUMBO with STONE SOUP or THE LITTLE RED HEN

Hannigan, Katherine. **Ida B: ...And Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World.**

- SWBST by individual readers

Harlow, Joan Hiatt. **Thunder from the Sea.**

- SWBST by individual readers
- Venn diagram comparing Tom Campbell and John Worth (from WORTH)
- Diamante using Tom and Thunder

Hopkinson, Deborah. **Apples to Oregon: Being the (Slightly) True Narrative of How a Brave Pioneer Father Brought Apples, Peaches, Pears, Plums, Grapes, and Cherries (and Children) Across the Plains.**

- Diamante using Papa and Delicious

LaFaye, A. **Worth.**

- SWBST from point of view of either Nathaniel or John, by individual readers
- Venn diagram comparing Nathaniel and John

Look, Lenore. **Ruby Lu, Brave and True.**

- Cinquain
- Diamante using Ruby Lu and Oscar

Moss, Marissa **Mighty Jackie: The Strike-Out Queen.**

- "I Am" essay

Salley, Coleen. **Why Epossumondas Has No Hair on His Tail.**

- Cinquain using PapaPossum

Scieszka, Jon. **Science Verse.**

Taylor, Debbie A. **Sweet Music in Harlem.**

- SWBST from point of view of either Uncle Click or C.J.
- Diamante using Uncle Click and C.J.
- Cinquain using C.J.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. **Secret Identity (Shredderman series)**

- SWBST by individual readers
- Cinquain
- Diamante using Nolan and Shredderman

Woodson, Jacqueline. **Coming On Home Soon.**

- SWBST
- "I Am" essay using Ada Ruth or
- "I Am" essay using Ada Ruth's Kitten

**SWBST Worksheet**  
**Title: Gator Gumbo**

<b>Somebody</b>	<b>Wanted</b>	<b>But (However)</b>	<b>So</b>	<b>Then (Finally)</b>
The next row is for putting your thoughts into words:				
Monsieur Gator	Wanted some possum or otter or skunk to eat.	However, he was getting too old to hunt for meat.	So he started making a gumbo,	Then tricked Possum, Otter, and Skunk into falling into the gumbo pot and becoming part of his gumbo.

**Write your entire story as a paragraph:**

# SWBST Worksheet

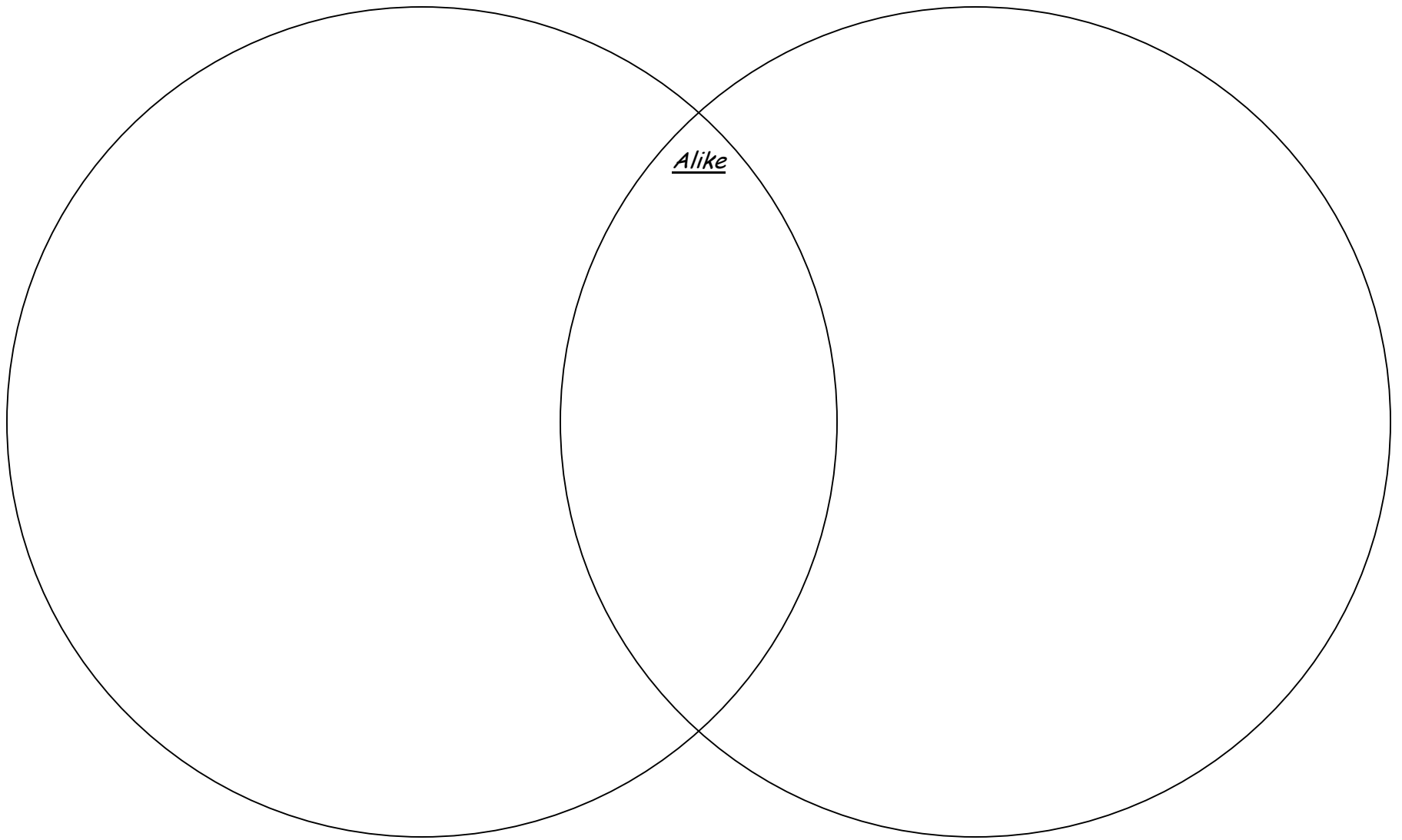
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Somebody</b>	<b>Wanted</b>	<b>But (However)</b>	<b>So</b>	<b>Then (Finally)</b>
The next row is for putting your thoughts into words:				

Write your entire story as a paragraph:

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## I Am

I am \_\_\_\_\_.  
name of character

I see \_\_\_\_\_.

I hear \_\_\_\_\_.

I touch \_\_\_\_\_.

I want \_\_\_\_\_.

I hope \_\_\_\_\_.

I wonder \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_.  
name of character

## Cinquain

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
noun

\_\_\_\_\_  
adjective

\_\_\_\_\_  
adjective

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING word

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING word

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING word

\_\_\_\_\_  
Short sentence that tells about the noun.

\_\_\_\_\_  
synonym for the noun



Diamante

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
noun

\_\_\_\_\_  
adjective

\_\_\_\_\_  
adjective

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING word

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING word

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING word

\_\_\_\_\_  
noun for top word

\_\_\_\_\_  
noun for top word

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOUN FOR BOTTOM WORD

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOUN FOR BOTTOM WORD

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING WORD

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING WORD

\_\_\_\_\_  
ING WORD

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADJECTIVE

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADJECTIVE

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOUN