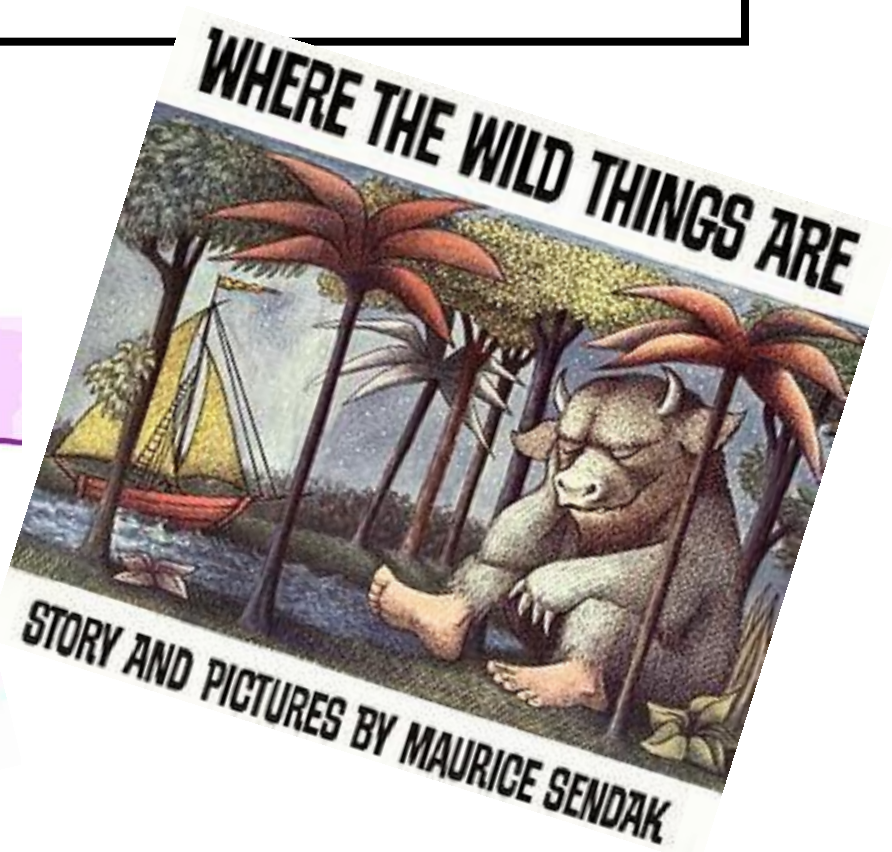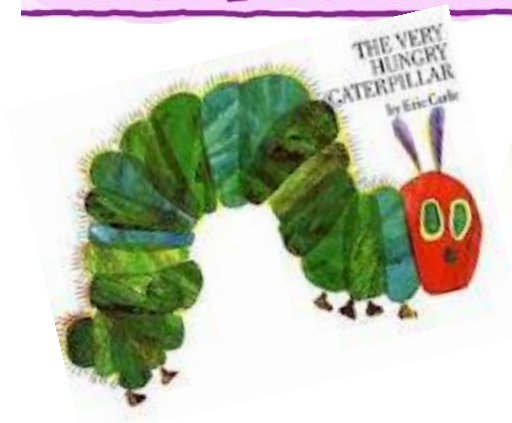Over the course of the next two weeks, we'll be not only writing and producing children's storybooks, but sharing them with preschool children as well. You are welcome to create a story on your own or work with a partner to put together your storybook.

FAVORITE STORIES:

Think back on all those books you loved having read to you as a little kid. List some of your favorites below:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What makes these stories memorable? Think about how the stories are written. Describe the qualities of the writing on the lines below.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2

INITIAL IDEAS:

Children's Book Ideas

You are welcome to work on your own or in a small group of no more than four students as you put together and publish a children's storybook. You will be writing your story for an audience of preschool students between the ages of 3 – 5 years old. This will be important to keep in mind as you brainstorm ideas for your book.

THE MESSAGE:

Most children's picture books share a moral or message through the use of creative main characters who are not necessarily human. So your first step is to figure out what you want your message to be. Do you want your young reader to learn about the importance of imagination? Or maybe you want them to learn about the power of saying "please".   Or, maybe your story will be about all that you can learn from listening. Use the space below to brainstorm with your group on what the message of your story will be.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

THE MAIN CHARACTER:

If you think back on your favorite children's stories, you'll remember that not all of the main characters were human. In fact, many children's books use animals to share an important message or moral. While some stories like *Harold and the Purple Crayon* and *Where the Wild Things Are* use humans as main characters, many kid's stories use animals to tell the main story, like the *Hungry Caterpillar*, *Guess How Much I Love You?*, and *If You Give A Mouse a Cookie*. So will your main character be human or animal? Use the space below to brainstorm the details and characteristics of your main character.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

THE STORY:

What will happen to your main character? How will he or she learn a lesson? Use the space below to do some initial brainstorming of your story's plot. If you need more space, do some of this brainstorming in your Writer's Notebook.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

STORYBOOK WRITING:

Children's Book Review

A mentor text is a piece of writing that writers use to learn more about some aspect of the writing process or craft. A mentor text inspires us to write, to revise, to publish. We will be reviewing example children's books to use as mentor texts and models for our own writing. Search out a children's book written in a style that captures your attention, that is written like the story you would like to write. And once you've found your mentor text, complete the form below.

TITLE OF BOOK:	AUTHOR OF TEXT:
WHAT TO ANALYZE	**YOUR ANALYSIS**
Who is the SPEAKER? • Who is telling the story? • Is the story written in first-person (I, me, mine, etc.) or is it written from an outside, third-person perspective (he, she, it, etc.)? • Identify the main voice within the text. Is the story written in the voice of a child or written in the voice of an all-knowing, unseen narrator?	
What is the ORGANIZATION? • The text of a children's book is usually organized into simple sentences and short paragraphs. How is the text organized in the book that you have chosen to review?	
What about the main CHARACTER? • Describe the personality of the main character. • Identify two character traits of the main character that young children identify or sympathize with. • What was the main problem that the main character faces in the book? How is this problem similar to a problem that most children have faced before? • Sometimes a children's book character will solve the main conflict on his or her own. How did the character in the book you selected turn to self-reliance to solve the main conflict of the story?	
What about the VISUALS? • Some picture books have an illustration on the front cover that presents the main conflict or point of the story. Identify two or more elements from the front cover of the book you are reviewing and explain how they relate to the story. • What is the primary medium (collage, drawings, photographs, etc.) used in the illustrations? • Identify two elements that are repeated throughout a majority of the illustrations. Explain how these elements support the story.	
What is the STYLE? • Children's book authors often employ literary tools to help make the story more vivid in the readers' minds. Commonly used literary tools are rhythm, alliteration, repetition, refrains, onomatopoeia, simile, personification, rhyme, and imagery. Identify three different areas in the text where a literary tool has been employed. For each example you identify, state the type of literary tool that is used and how the employment of the tool helps support the story.	

TIPS FOR WRITING A CHILDREN'S PICTURE STORYBOOK

Definition
Children's Picture Storybook—A work written for children that uses both text and illustrations to present a simple plot.

Format
Most picture books average 30 pages, consisting of 14 to 16 two-page spreads. A spread is the two pages of an open book.

Text
- The text of a children's book should be organized into simple sentences and short paragraphs.
- The use of active verbs will keep the story vivid in the reader's mind.
- Children's book authors employ literary tools to help make the story more vivid in the reader's mind. Rhythm, alliteration, repetition, refrains, onomatopoeia, simile, personification, rhyme, and imagery are commonly used devices.
- Consider ending each page with a question or other method that sparks the reader's curiosity for what will happen next.
- Repeating a phrase throughout the story will help hold your reader's attention.
- Use a question at the end of the page to help move your reader to the next page.

Illustrations
- Some picture books have an illustration on the front cover that presents the main conflict or point of the story.
- The illustrations are usually created after the text has been written.
- Illustrations serve as a partner to the text.

Characterization
- The main character should have one or two easily identifiable dominant traits.
- Present the traits of your characters through both the illustrations and text.
- Young children should be able to easily identify with the dominant traits.
- Avoid using text to present detailed descriptions of what the characters look like. Let the illustrations present the physical details of the character.

Conflict
- Limit your story to just one conflict that the main character must overcome.
- The main character should be able to deal with the main conflict in concrete terms.
- The main character should resolve the conflict him- or herself.
- Four of the most common types of conflict are individual vs. individual, individual vs. society, individual vs. nature, and individual vs. self.
- Some of the most common concerns of children include acceptance by others, family dynamics, physical growth (especially size and looks), and fear of the unknown (e.g., learning something new, participating in a new activity, going to a new place, getting lost).

Plot
- A solid, well-developed plot is essential to creating a good children's book.
- The resolution of the conflict should teach a lesson. However, the lesson should not be told in a didactic way but instead be presented indirectly through the plot.
- Jump right into the main conflict of the story.
- Flashbacks should be used with great caution. They can confuse younger children.

BRAINSTORMING TOOLS

Brainstorming the Conflict

1. What is the conflict? In one sentence, describe the conflict the main character will face in your story.

2. How will it be dealt with? In the left column, list actions that the main character will take to deal with the main conflict. In the right column, list complications that would or could result from the action listed in the left column.

ACTION	COMPLICATION

Developing the Plot

Use the following questions to help develop the plot of your story.

1. Does the main character have one or more identifiable traits that appeal to children?
2. Is the conflict something that a child will understand?
3. Does the main character attempt at least three different actions in an endeavor to solve the conflict?
4. Is the conflict resolved through the main character's self-reliance?
5. Overall, does the plot have "turnability" potential? Will the reader be drawn in by the plot and want to turn each page to find out what happens next?
6. Will the reader care about what happens to the main character?
7. Where are the more exciting places?
8. Where are the places that need more "zip" added to them?

Use the plot grid below to chart the basic details of your idea:

CLIMAX: How does the main character solve the conflict in a way that helps him or her learn a lesson?

RISING ACTION: What is the main conflict? What actions does the main character take to deal with the conflict? Resulting complications?

FALLING ACTION: How does the main character feel now that the conflict is resolved?

EXPOSITION: What do we need to know in the first few pages? Character's name? Setting?

DENOUEMENT: Tie your story together with a clever ending. What are your last words?

NEXT STEP: Write out the text of your story. Do not move forward with storyboarding your images and illustrations until your story has been submitted for approval. **SUBMIT THE TEXT OF YOUR STORY TO MS. WARD FOR APPROVAL.**

Developing the Plot

COVER

What is your title?
Cover image?

TITLE PAGE

1

INTRODUCE CHARACTER AND SETTING

2

INTRODUCE CONFLICT

3

CONFLICT	ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT
4	5

ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT	ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT
6	7

CONFLICT	ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT
8	9

ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT	ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT
10	11

ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT

12

ACTIONS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT

13

CLIMAX

14

CLIMAX

15

Developing the Plot

FALLING ACTION

16

WRAPPING UP YOUR STORY

17

CLEVER ENDING

You do not have to use exactly 18 pages. This is merely a place to jot down your ideas. Use this space in a way that make sense for you.

18

PREPARATION – The student found and successfully analyzed a mentor text, which served as a model for the student's writing. The student then completed a draft of the story which was approved by the teacher. The student completed brainstorming activities as part of the planning process.   /10 The student worked with others in the class to workshop and revise the story to a polished piece.

FOCUS - The piece hones in on a specific theme/thesis which drives the writing.   /15 Regardless of the format of the writing, the piece identifies a central theme which the student then develops with appropriate examples and details.

STYLE - The style of the piece fits the intended audience. The student's word choice, sentence structure, and format are appropriate for the intended audience.   /15 The writing showcases the student's voice through the student's deliberate choices in topic, format, and diction.

STYLE/ GRAMMAR The student's use of descriptive and strong verbs helps to develop the writing more fully. The writing does not rely heavily on telling the story,   /10 but instead uses more descriptive words to carry the tone of the writing.

COMMENTS: **TOTAL:**   **/50**