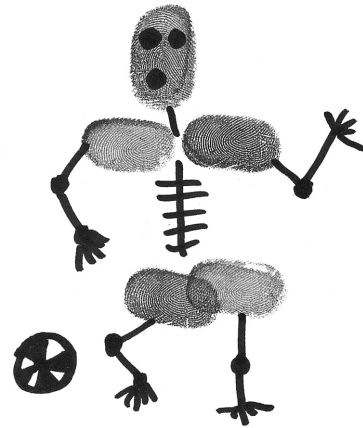


Mystery Bones: Thumb Print Skeletons

With a month of school under their belts the children in my first grade class are beginning to write more expressively. To encourage their process and give them another strategy to add detail to stories I introduce them to the use of action words using ing endings. They love to create thumb print skeletons. Here is how we do it:

1. Print the following poem on chart paper and display where children can read it frequently.

Once upon a happenstance,
I saw a skeleton doing a dance.
 Jumping
 Spining
 Twirling
 Leaping
What a beat his feet were keeping!
 Rattling
 Stomping
 Tapping
 Tromping



2. Children choose an activity for their skeleton to do, for example: singing, laughing, playing soccer, baking.
3. Give each child a 4X6-inch piece of paper.
4. Skeletons are made by placing 5 fingerprints on the paper: head, 2 scapula and two pelvic bones. These are "connected" with ribs, joints and limbs. Please note the example above and the examples that follow on the attached sheet.
5. Children describe the action: "Nicholas' skeleton is playing soccer." "Samantha's skeleton is singing."
6. Mount skeletons on orange paper and display with the poem. Behold! The children have a new writing strategy.

Children will have fun creating their own Mystery Bones Skeletons! They are motivated to write engaging stories about their skeletons following this activity. Enjoy sharing the seasonal stories that emerge.

Until next month,
Lynn