

Activity: Writing "Pros"

Grade Level: 5

Major Emphasis: Nature Prose and Poetry

Major Curriculum Area: Language Arts

Related Curriculum Objectives:

Refer to Outdoor Education Curriculum Matrix 3-5:
Science



Program Indicator:

The students will demonstrate effective writing in academics, social and personal situations for a variety of purposes, audiences and topics.

Student Outcomes: The student will:

1. develop a trail guide for a mini nature trail.
2. describe the visual stimuli presented in the shoreline setting and the forest setting using verbal and written expressions including prose and poetry forms.
3. complete a chart based on the observations.
4. compare and contrast the shoreline and the forest habitat in paragraph form.

Readiness:

1. Introduce observation skills by comparing and contrasting objects in the room. **(DL3)**
2. Practice careful observation techniques. Have students visit a playground and observe an object, such as a tree, carefully. (Refer to Supplement A as a graphic organizer for a prewriting activity)
3. Have students practice recognizing details.
 - ! Yes or No/20 Question Game: A student thinks of an object and the group has to pose questions about the mystery object that can only be answered with a "yes" or "no".
 - ! Sentence Completion: Sentence is started by a teacher or a student and completed by students.
 - ! Describing Game: Student give sentence clues: I am brown; I am . . . ; I am . . . ; What am I?
4. Have students walk out-of-doors and do an A-Z alphabet scavenger hunt.
 - ! Divide students into small groups.
 - ! Establish time and area limits.
 - ! Send groups off to observe and complete an A-Z list of objects found in an outdoor setting.
 - ! Meet again and review findings.

Materials:

yarn	tagboard squares (5"x5")
meter sticks	clipboards
scissors	Nature Poetry Learning Station

Procedures:

Activity A: Mini Trails (DL2)

1. Direct students to at least two different study areas (i.e. forest, shoreline, field).
2. With teams of 2-3 students, have them design a mini nature trail using string or yarn approximately 5-10 meters in length.
3. Have students make 10 observations along their particular mini trail. Observation could be a statement or question about a specific natural object. Students should record observations on a numbered trail marker sign (tagboard signs) to form a mini trail.
4. After designing and laying out their trail, each student group should follow one another's group trail and share their own trail with the other groups.

Activity B: Nature Prose (DL2)

1. Choose at least two observation areas. Particular environments such as a shoreline and a forest will help develop similarities and differences concerning specific observations.
2. At each observation area, make observations using all the senses (except taste) about the particular environment. Use the categories on the student graphic organizer and record observations. (Refer to Supplements B and C)
3. After two observation areas have been visited, have students sort their observations into similarities and differences by using the venn diagram. (Refer to Supplement D)
4. From the strategy sheet, students can draft paragraphs about the similarities and differences between two particular environments (i.e. shoreline and forest).

Activity C: Nature Poetry (MC) (DL2)

1. Review two forms of poetry such as haiku and cinquain. (Refer to Supplements E1 and E2)
2. Choose an observation area and go on a nature hike to build an observation word bank. Generate words about objects, areas, or themes in the out-of-doors.
3. Make a word list using various parts of speech (nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs). This list may be used as a springboard for different types of poetry.

Example: Tree

- ! Nouns - leaf, stem, bark, trunk
- ! Adjectives - green, tall, leafy, branching
- ! Verbs - sheds, sways, stands
- ! Adverbs - gracefully, violently

4. From the word list developed from the observation walk, have students create a poem using the Haiku or Cinquain form. (Refer to Supplements E1 and E2)

Summary:

Have students share their writings orally.

Follow-Up:

1. Use another area such as the marsh or open field to substitute for one of the suggested areas.
2. Students might pretend to drink magic potion and turn into an animal or plant which lives in one of the studied environments. They could write an adventure story about life in their new habitat.
3. Write a contrast/comparison paragraph about a day in camp versus a day in school. **(DL3)**
4. Publish student writings in a school newsletter.
5. Use the observations from the mini nature trail to develop and illustrate a trail guide.

Related Activities:

1. Write a news article about the camp experience.
2. Create a topsy-turvy biome. Imagine what it would be like if normal objects were of different sizes, shapes, or textures and write a story (e.g. grasshoppers are as big as houses; trees are two feet tall).
3. Read and/or write nature myths.
4. Keep notes and prepare a camp journal.
5. Write outdoor similes: bent as a rainbow, creep like a shadow.
6. Poetry
 - < Find and share poems about nature.
 - < Read and illustrate nature poems.
 - < Write poetry triplets (poetry with three lines of rhyme-can be written in triangular form).

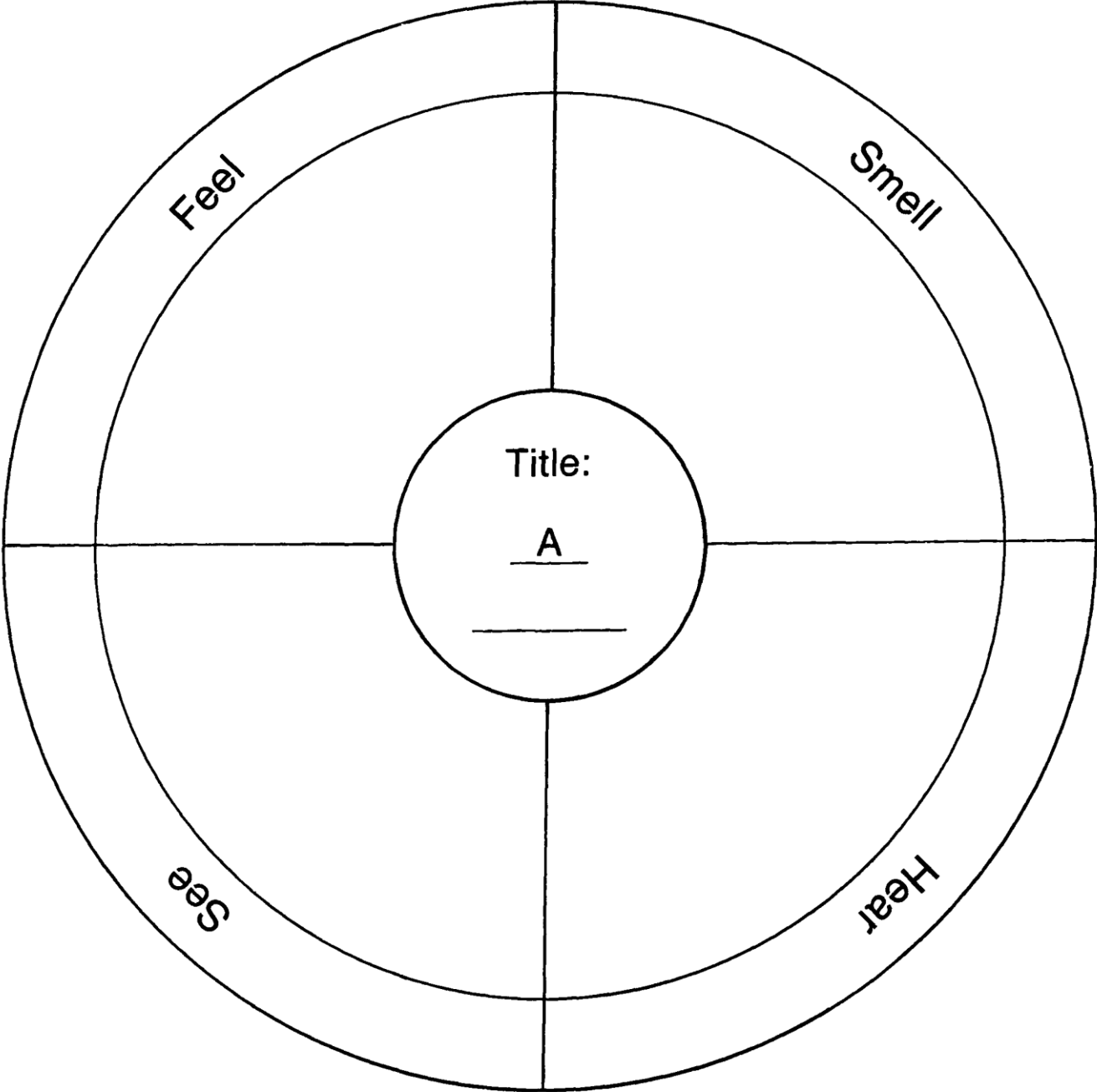


Teacher Resources:

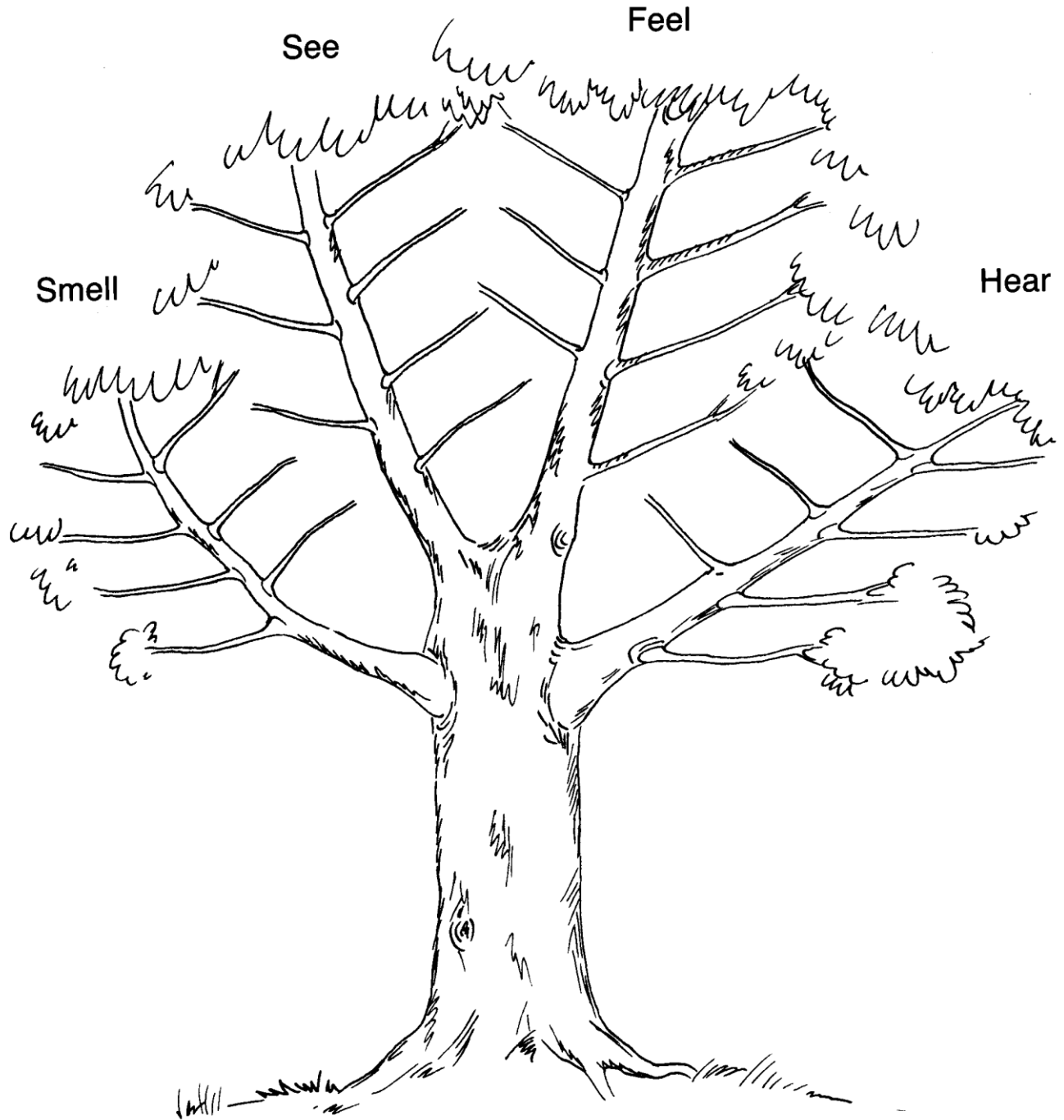
Books:

- < **Sharing Nature with Children*, Cornell, Joseph B., Amanda Publications, 1979.
- < **Life in the Chesapeake Bay*, Lippson, Alice and Robert, Johns Hopkins Press. Baltimore, 1984.
- < **Teaching the Pleasures of Reading*, Powell, Elizabeth and Thomas B. Goodkind, Prentice Hall, Inc., New Jersey, 1982.

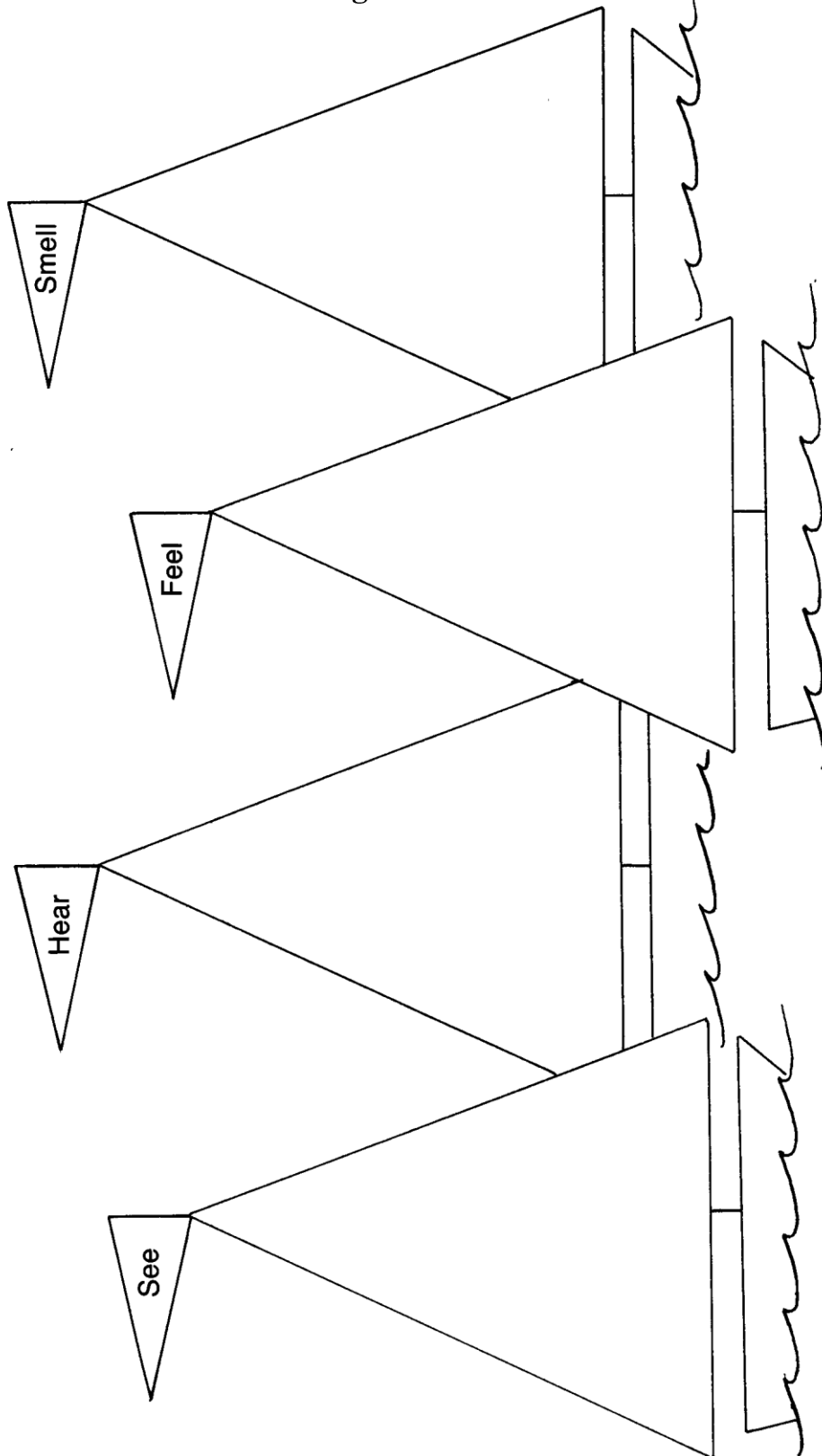
Observation Wheel



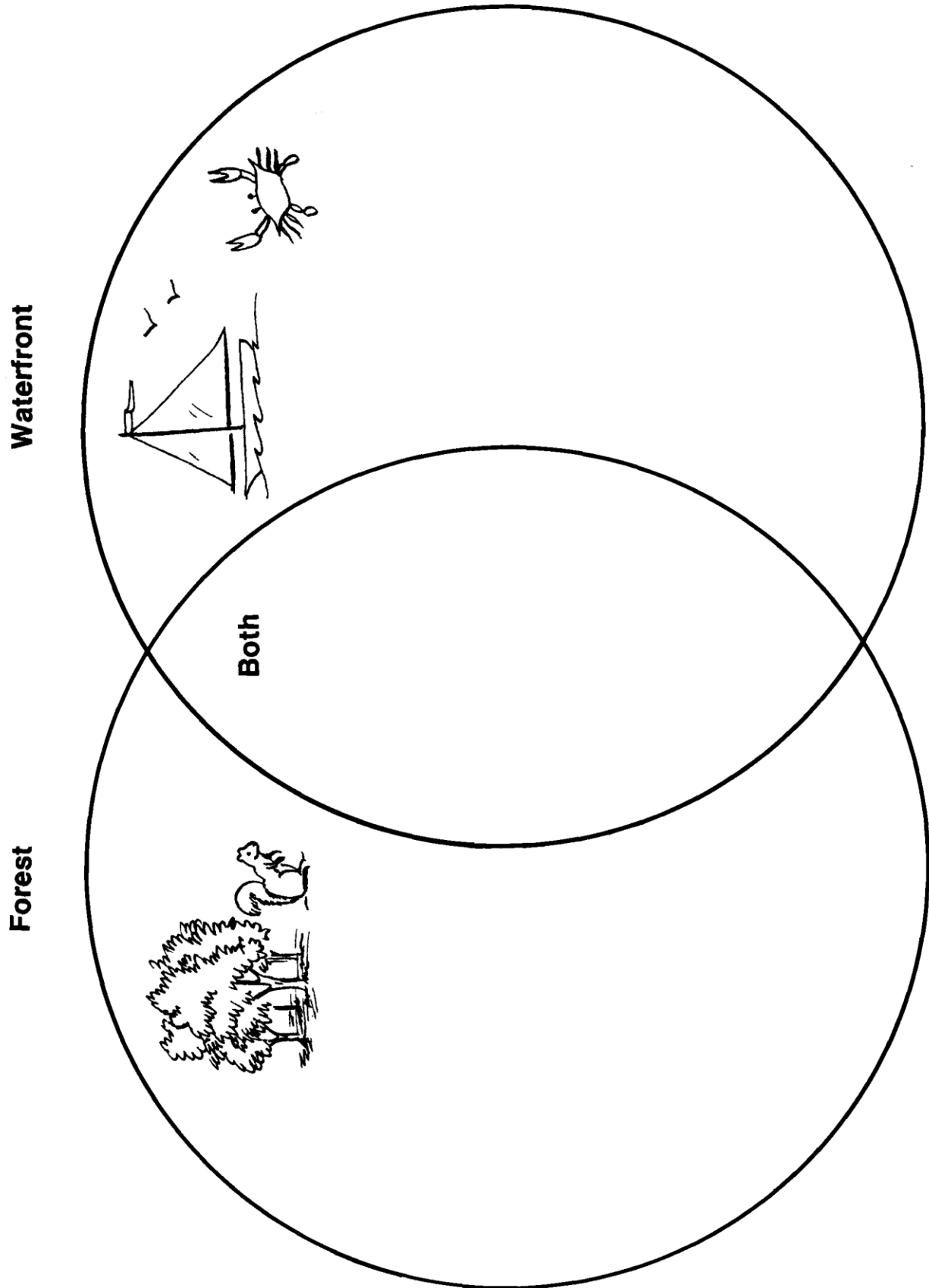
Writing Pros: Forest Habitat



Writing Pros: Water Habitat



Venn Diagram



Haiku Poetry Form

The Haiku is a Japanese poem based on patterns of syllables instead of parts of speech or rhyming. The poem consists of three lines of 5, 7 and 5 syllables.

Introduction:

1. Familiarize students with the differences between a syllable based poem and a rhyming poem.
2. Review syllabication using hand claps for the 5, 7 and 5 syllable three line format.
3. Create possible word lists and write a group Haiku from these lists.

Format:

Five (5) syllables

Seven (7) syllables

Five (5) syllables

Example:

It rains and it rains (5)

Like the sound of little bells (7)

Drip, drop, drip, drop, stop (5)



Cinquain Poetry Form

Cinquain comes from the French and Spanish words for five. The poem is based on syllables and each line has a purpose. There are five lines.

Introduction:

1. Like the Syntu, the Cinquain uses descriptive words to express impressions of nature but, like the haiku, is based on syllables. Preparation in the classroom is recommended.
2. Review syllabication using hand clapping.
3. Create a list of events or objects in nature and another list of synonyms for those words. Describe the objects or events in terms of actions, feelings and simple descriptions.
4. A review of the parts of speech may be an offshoot to this activity (i.e. action words can be verbs or participles, but this is not necessary for the poem itself).

Format:

Two (2) syllables - Title

Four (4) syllables - Description of the Title

Six (6) syllables - Description of Action

Eight (8) syllables - Description of a Feeling

Two (2) syllables - Synonym for the Title

Example:

Forests (2)

Graceful, growing (4)

Climbing among the clouds (6)

Joyfully stalking the sunset (8)



Alive (2)

[110]

