



# Connell's Corner

## The Road Travelled

5B is finally done with poetry writing. Each student has created a poetry book that will be published in their electronic portfolio when it is up and running (hopefully in January, see below). We have now moved on to sentence writing, which will lead to paragraph writing, which will lead to short story writing. It is a bit of a road to travel, however our goal is for each student to have the skills to write proper complex sentences, write proper paragraphs (with a minimum of 4 sentences per paragraph), and how to write a short story with all the elements that will make it a good short story.

## Mahara

I have given up on trying to get ePEARL to work after 3 months of frustration and futility. I have now moved on, and have been working with Marcie Perdue, a technology specialist in the school division. She has shown me, and has let me test out a program called Mahara, that will do everything ePEARL did, and more. This program will be much easier to have access to, and I hope to have it up and running for 5B in January so that we can finally have an electronic portfolio for them to work in, and share with you.

## New Language Arts Program in 5B

After a couple of months of figuring out where everyone in 5B is at skill and knowledge wise, I have redesigned our language arts program which will go into effect December 11th. It is a more balanced program, that allows me to work with students in small groups (5 to 7 students) in working on their reading, writing, and word work (which affects both reading and writing). I will be splitting the class into four groups and will be working with each group on a rotational bases on their reading and writing while other students are working on reading, writing or word work either independently or in small groups. Some other changes include how we are doing spelling, incorporating more guided and independent reading into the program, as well as more guided and independent writing. Each of these things are at each student's ability level so that we can either fill in gaps in their learning, and/or push them to the next level of understanding in their learning.

I will be posting the new schedule, as well as an explanation of the different components of the new program on my teacher page so that you have a better understanding of what will be going on. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

## The Brave Tin Soldier

At the end of November we started to work as a class on the short story "The Brave Tin Soldier," by Hans Christian Andersen as an introduction to the elements of short stories, and how to analyze a short story. From there students will work in small groups to analyze a different short story to put what they learned as whole class into practice, and then move on to analyzing a story on their own to show me what they have learned.

Please note that my teacher page is up and running on our school website  
<http://www.greentree-school.com/>.