

The Great Word Catalogue



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FUNdamental Activities
for Building Vocabulary

Susan Ohanian

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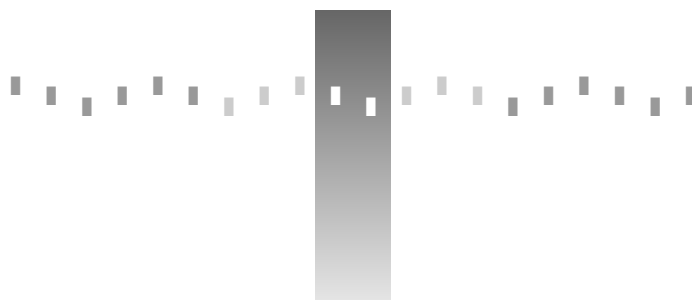
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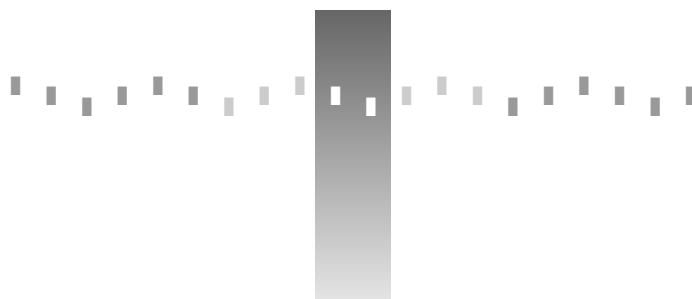
For Lois Bridges.
Anybody who has worked with her knows why.

For Vicki Kasabian.
Not just because she loves cats.



Contents

Introduction: Let Us Stand by Words / ix		
	1	Growing Vocabulary the Natural Way / 1
The Matter and Marvel of Dictionaries /14	2	
	3	Words Close Up and Memorable / 31
Prefixes, Suffixes, and Other Sacred Cows / 60	4	
	5	Context Clues: Cure-All or Claptrap? / 74
Word Play for Fun and Fundamentals / 87	6	
		Appendix: Words in Context Bank / 129



INTRODUCTION

Let Us Stand by Words

In a provocative essay titled *Standing by Words*, poet-farmer-essayist Wendell Berry noted the link between the disintegration of language and the disintegration of communities. Berry is not complaining about the way teenagers talk but about the *accountability* of language; he points out that when speakers aren't willing to be accountable for their words, not willing to act on what they say, then public responsibility is distorted into public relations.

This language accountability principle is crucial for classrooms. When we stand by our words then certain principles must underlie vocabulary instruction.

1. Children explore the wit, wonder, wisdom, and whimsy of words throughout the day, every day.
2. Teachers realize that memorization of lists of words and definitions is the least effective way of developing a rich vocabulary.
3. Teachers realize that answering vocabulary drills at the end of each chapter of an exciting book (or a dull book) is the second least effective way of developing a rich vocabulary—and is abusive besides.

Standing by words in the classroom means exploring words for today—for the

children and their needs—today. We must help children come to words today—in awe and in love—not in obligation for some committee's business plan for tomorrow. Business plans shift in terms. *Standing by words* means we have a constant faith—in the words and in the children who will use them. We can stand by these words because we stand with and for children as we study words together.

Putting Principles into Practice

Here are ten ways you can remind students about wonderful words throughout the day.

1. *Vocabulary Wall*. Start the day by drawing students' attention to wonderful words you've posted on the wall. This can be single phrases or sentences, excerpts from poems, or a word all by itself. You may want to ask students to keep *Wonderful Words* journals, in which they copy these words each day. Over time, what starts as a teacher-required chore evolves into serendipity: lovely little unplanned discoveries, different for every child, significant to all. Over time, students will start volunteering to post wonderful words they have found.

2. *Vocabulary Testimony*. A good way to end a day is to ask for a student to volunteer a reflection about an interesting word encountered that day. This can be a new word or a new look at an old word. For example, noticing the *ant* in *Anthony* causes young readers to see an old word differently, while noting the *ant* in *jubilant* might well mean encountering a new word.

3. *Arguing for Words*. Provide ongoing opportunities for focused investigation of words. Invite students to choose an “important” word in a play, poem, or story they’ve just read, and to provide an argument for convincing others of its importance.

4. *Question Box*. Invite students to put questions about words in a box and to become words sleuths, volunteering to find answers.

5. *Expanding Horizons*. Invite ESL students to teach words in their languages. Post some common words such as *mother*, *father*, *home* in many languages. Encourage students to come up with a list of basic words, words we can’t do without. Look for commonali-

ties and differences in these words in various languages.

6. *Pop-Up Words*. Invite students to create a pop-up card with a word surprise for a classmate, a member of the school staff, or someone special in the community.

7. *Word Collages*. Invite students to create a word collage to express an important idea such as joy, friendship, fear, or other abstractions of their choice.

8. *Word Games*. Invite students to teach a word game to someone they know outside school.

9. *Word Play*. Invite students to create word cartoons that involve puns or some other play on language; provide space in the classroom to display their work.

10. *Trying Out Words*. Encourage students to mark and share new words they try out in their own writing.

Doing all this—and more—means that we will stand up for children’s language infatuation rather than lie down for their indoctrination.

Words Close Up and Memorable

Eponyms: What's in a Name?

Names are special. When students hear stories about how people, places, and objects got their names, they begin to look at words in new ways. Names are not accidental but the result of the way people see the world.

Take car names, for instance. In 1913, Henry Ford called his first car the Model-T. In 1956, when the Ford Motor Company introduced a revolutionary new automobile, it considered more than six thousand names before choosing one. Ford officials asked Marianne Moore, the distinguished poet, to invent a name for their new car. They told her they wanted a name that would give cus-

tomers the idea of elegance and fleetness. Ms. Moore's suggestions included the Ford Silver Sword, the Pastelogram, Mongoose Civique, Anticipator, Intelligent Whale, and the Utopian Turtle Top.

Ford officials rejected Ms. Moore's suggestions. After consulting marketing research experts and looking at thousands of other names, including Zip and Drof (Ford spelled backward), Henry Ford named the car for his late son, Edsel. Three years after launching the famous car, the Ford Motor Company announced the end of production of the Edsel, and the name *Edsel* entered the language as a synonym for *dud*.

Other cars named for people have been more successful. Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, who landed at Fort-Pontchartrain-du-Detroit on July 24, 1701, is considered the founder of Detroit. The luxury car bearing his name has been a symbol of prestige for many decades. The German luxury car Mercedes Benz was named for Mercedes, the daughter of one of the company executives.

Cars whose names come from people introduce students to the fascinating topic of eponyms. Searching the world for other eponyms shows students that word study can be fun as well as informative.

Web Watch

- This site provides a list of Japanese car names: www.crossroads.net/h1/nihonsha.html.
- Here are two sites on the origin of car names: www.cybersteering.com/trimain/history/names.html and www.users.wineasy.se/elias/bilnamn.html.
- A letter writer to "Cartalk" muses about car names that don't mean anything: <http://cartalk.cars.com/Mail/Letters/2000/05.19/3.html>.

Word Watch

■ Invite students to provide convincing arguments about whether Marianne Moore's suggestions would or would not make good car names.

■ Ask students to examine the connotative qualities of, for example, *Intelligent Whale*. How does calling a car a whale differ from calling it a Mustang, a lynx, or a turtle?

■ Students can make a chart, dividing the animal kingdom into "good" and "bad" names for cars.

■ Should word choices be different for motorcycles? Tractors? Bicycles? Motorboats? Airplanes? Why or why not?



■ Challenge students to invent a musical instrument that uses their name. After studying music reviews in magazines and/or newspapers, they should write a review for a recital that features a solo piece performed on their namesake.



■ Ask students to invent a piece of clothing that derives from their name. They should name it and create either a catalog description or a newspaper or TV ad for this clothing.



■ Car buffs can look at the names of contemporary cars and conduct research to find out how one got its name. Ask literary sleuths to find out if car names today are different from names forty or fifty years ago.

■ History buffs can research the significance of the names of famous ships, buildings, and wars. For example, how did the Battle of Jenkins' Ear get its name?



■ Ask students to make an argument for a clothing "look" featured by someone today that may be an eponym ten years from now. **Tip:** Students often confuse brand names such as Calvin Klein with eponyms such as Stetson. "Jordans" may become an eponym; the Gap won't—unless they invent a unique piece of clothing.



■ Invite students to investigate some of these scientific eponyms: watt, volt, Celsius, curie, Fahrenheit, baud, ampere, Beaufort scale, Richter scale, Bunsen burner, diesel, Geiger counter. For students of more militaristic bent, there's Bowie knife, guillotine, Molotov cocktail, shrapnel.



Eponyms Are for Wearing

From Levis to leotards, eponyms are popular garb. Bloomers, Stetsons, mackintoshes, and Wellingtons all have their own stories. Alert students will notice that you can eat one type of Wellington and wear another, both named for the same British general and statesman. The raglan sleeve is also named for a British military man, as is the cardigan sweater.

The jacket known as the sherwani in India is known as the Nehru in the United States, named for India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Toot Your Own Eponym

Antoine Joseph Sax invented the saxophone, the only reed instrument made entirely of metal. The instrument became immediately popular after Sax first played it in Paris in 1844. An accomplished musician, John Philip Sousa joined the Marine Band at age thirteen. He is better known for the composition of more than one hundred marches, which earned him the title "March King." Sousa invented the eponymous sousaphone, a large, circular tuba.

Other Amazing Eponyms

In his introduction to *Let a Simile Be Your Umbrella*, William Safire tells a charming story about having lunch with Frederic Cassidy, editor of the famed *Dictionary of American Regional English* (DARE). The waiter asked, "Would you like a Bibb lettuce salad?" The great lexicographer looked off into the distance and said, "I wonder who Bibb was." Then they discussed the possibilities through lunch. As it turns out, Bibb was Major John Bibb, a leading amateur horticulturist of the nineteenth century who developed a form of lettuce in the greenhouse behind his Kentucky home. Bibb never sold the lettuce but gave it and the seeds to friends and neighbors who called it "Mr. Bibb's lettuce." These days, when new foods are called things like "hybrid 1530," it's nice to think of a lettuce named for someone of generous spirit.

The majestic evergreen trees found in

Read More

Guppies in Tuxedos: Funny Eponyms by Marvin Terban.

A Chartreuse Leotard in a Magenta Limousine by Lynda Graham-Barber.

The Name's Familiar: Mr. Leotard, Barbie, and Chef Boyardee by Laura Lee.

The Name's Familiar II by Laura Lee.

Naming New York: Manhattan Places and How They Got Their Names by Sanna Feirstein is written for adults but is fascinating for readers of all ages. You don't have to be from New York to be fascinated to learn why places are named what they are.

California are named for Sequoya, the Cherokee leader who developed a syllabary for the Cherokee language. His system spread and by the 1840s two newspapers were published in Cherokee. Other popular flower and plant names come from Michel Begon, a seventeenth-century French patron of science; Louis Antoine de Bougainville, an eighteenth-century French navigator; George Joseph Kamel, a seventeenth-century Moravian Jesuit missionary; Anders Dahl, eighteenth-century Swedish botanist; William Forsyth, an eighteenth-century British botanist; Friedrich Heinrich Theodor Freese, a nineteenth-century German physician; Leonard Fuchs, a sixteenth-century botanist and physician; Alexander Garden, an eighteenth-century Scottish-American botanist; James Harvey Logan, a nineteenth-century American lawyer; Joel Roberts Poinsett, nineteenth-century American diplomat; Olof Rudbeck, seventeenth-century Swedish botanist. Renown botanist Thomas Nuttall, whose firsthand knowledge of North American flora was unmatched, named *wisteria*

Web Watch

The Chrysler car history site (www.chrysler.com/inside/heritage/index.html), searchable by decade, includes names.

floribunda for Dr. Caspar Wistar, eighteenth/nineteenth-century American anatomist who was an enthusiastic botanist as well as a friend of Thomas Jefferson. Nuttall got the spelling wrong. He realized his mistake but his attempts to correct the spelling of wisteria were unsuccessful. Nuttall, an Englishman, spent thirty years exploring the flora and fauna of North America. The pica nuttalli, the yellow-billed magpie, is named for him, as is the common poorwill, the *Phalaenoptilus nuttalli* (*Phalaenoptilus* meaning *moth-feathered*). Nuttall also had a woodpecker named for him.

Toponyms: Another Name for It

Toponyms are like eponyms except their names come from places rather than people. Denim, for example, comes to us from Nimes, France, manufacturing site of the popular cloth. People shortened *serge de Nimes* (cloth from Nimes) to *denim* (de Nimes). Duffel bags are named for a fabric made in Duffel, Belgium. The name for the bikini comes from a small island in the Pacific ocean. The Charleston, a popular dance of the 1920s flapper era, got its name from Charleston, South Carolina, which, in turn, got its name in 1620 from King Charles II. The Lindy Hop originated in Harlem and celebrated Lindbergh's solo flight across the Atlantic, so it would have to be the Harlem Hop to be a toponym. Another dance, the tarantella, got its name from Taranto, Italy. The Afghan hound's name comes from Afghanistan, as does the knitted blanket of the same name. The canary got its name from the Canary Islands in the Atlantic ocean off Africa. These islands got their name because they were overrun with dogs and the Latin word for dog is *canis* (*Canaria Insula*, "Isle of Dogs"). The bayonet, originally a short dagger, takes its name from Bayonne, France, where it was first made in the seventeenth century.

Eponyms Are for Eating

Eponyms usually pay tribute to people who invent something, but food eponyms are different, sometimes honoring the person who

Word Watch

Inventing Eponyms

- Student teams can create a menu for eponymous foods using their names. They can name the foods and describe them, including illustrations.
- Students might also search for eponymous food names at local restaurants.
- Thinking of how *Armstrong* became *Melba*, students can try creating new surnames from places they've seen—or been—or would like to visit.

creates a new culinary delight or someone he admires; other times the food eponym honors the person who first eats it. *Caesar salad*, for example, is named for Caesar Cardini, who owned a restaurant in Tijuana, Mexico, called Caesar's Place. According to eponym lore, he invented this salad for Hollywood stars who crossed the border to eat at his restaurant in the 1920s.

Peach melba is named for Helen Porter Mitchell Armstrong, who left her husband and child in Australia and moved to England

Word Watch

Investigating Eponyms

It's a Fact: Apples Charlotte are named for a character in a wildly popular novel by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

- Invite students to invent a food for a literary character.

It's a Fact: Napoleons are named for Napoleon, the famous French military commander and emperor. Napoleon is said to have eaten chicken flavored with tomatoes, onion, mushrooms, garlic, and olives to celebrate his victory over the Austrians at the Italian village of Marengo. Today we call this dish *Chicken Marengo*. *Beef Wellington* is named for the British commander who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo.

- Invite students to create a dish for a famous person in history. For example: What might a Lincoln be? A Truman? A Frederick Douglass?
- Invite students to create a food specialty named for a place they've been, or a place they'd like to visit.



A World of Names



Directions

Toponyms are things whose name comes from a place in the world. Your task is to find some toponyms in the world around you and put them on the map.

First, choose a category: *birds and animals*, *food*, or *clothing*. For example, if you choose birds and animals, you will discover that *canary* gets its name from the Canary Islands and *afghan dogs* from Afghanistan. Where will you put Clydesdales? The Saint Bernard? If you choose to investigate food, where will you put *bologna*? If you choose clothing, where will you put *jeans* and *dungarees*?

Web Watch

For an eponym feast, students can go to www.spellingbee.com/feast.htm. Students participating in the Scripps-Howard National Spelling Bee contributed more eponyms at www.spellingbee.com/cc02/Week04/eponyms.htm.



to become an opera singer. She changed her name to Nellie Melba, because the surname reminded her of her home city of Melbourne. Nellie became so famous that a London chef named melba toast in her honor, and Escoffier, the famed chef at the Savoy Hotel, created peche melba, a dessert of peaches and vanilla ice cream in her honor. Eggs Benedict was named for someone named Benedict, but whether it was Samuel, Lemuel, or LeGrand depends on which story you believe. In any case, the dish was created for a customer named Benedict at a Manhattan restaurant, some say Delmonico's, others the Waldorf Hotel. Nobody remembers the name of the chef—just the man who ate the eggs. In 1876, a chef at Delmonico's created baked Alaska—in honor of the newly purchased Alaskan territory.

More Eponyms and Toponyms and How They Got That Way

J. Lechmere Guppy, the president of the Scientific Association of Trinidad, Venezuela, discovered a small fish that is native to the area around Trinidad, presenting this fish to the British Museum. The scientific name for this tropical fish is *Poecilis reticulate*, but everybody calls it the *guppy*.

William Russell Frisbee founded the Frisbee Pie Company in Bridgeport, Connecticut. In the 1920s, once students at Yale University had eaten the pie they threw the tin around. In the 1950s, the Wham-O Toy Company tried to market a flying saucer toy called the Pluto Platter, but when the executive heard about the game they played at Yale, he changed the name.

Teaching Tip

Students who collect fabulous words for the fun of it are well on their way to vocabulary expertise. These words may be challenging, amazing, weird, or just plain fun. Learning about food eponyms is a good enticement for starting a word collection about eating. Here are a few from *Playing with Words* by Margie Golick. This list lets students know that not only can they collect nice words; they can also invent some.

Crunchy, munchy, chewy, slurpy
Dippy, flippy, frosty, freezy
Fishy, squishy, squashy, squeezey
Juicy, bitey, bubbly, burpy
Mashy, splashy, floaty, fluffy

And then there's Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel, France's master of metal. Nicknamed Madicien du Fer, or the Iron Magician, Eiffel's name graces the famous tower he designed.

Some other fascinating origins include surgical gauze, also known as cheesecloth, which takes its name from the place it was first made, Gaza, Palestine. Venetian blinds weren't invented in Venice, but the people in the Italian city are the ones to popularize this Persian invention. Capitol, one of those words causing confusion, has ancient origins. Congress meets in the Capitol Building on Capitol Hill (*capitol* comes from the Capitoline Hill, the highest place in ancient Rome), but Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States.

Some people think the Baby Ruth candy bar is named for the baseball star, but actually it was named in honor of Ruth Cleveland,

Read More

Invite students to check the library for a book about things named for real people. Laura Lee has written two informative and entertaining titles, *The Name's Familiar: Mr. Leotard, Barbie, and Chef Boyardee* and *The Name's Familiar II*.



Put Your Name in the Headlines

Think About It

Do you want your name to go down in history for finding a fish, inventing a game, designing a building . . . or something else? Once you decide, write the newspaper story announcing the feat. Here are some headlines to help you get started. (Note that Sara named the planet for herself.)

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Saraphus: New Planet Discovered by 10-year-old!

BUSINESS NEWS

The Candyman Corporation Announces New Confectionary: *Heavenly Bob*

Directions

Your turn—create newspaper headlines out of these suggestions.

The Nebraskan, a new _____
sensation, _____

Deep Sea Divers Discover (make up the name of a sea creature, using part of your name or a friend's name), a _____

Architects Complete Construction of the _____,
a _____

Now that you've warmed up, create an object, name it, and write a news story about it.

the infant daughter of President Grover Cleveland.

Over six billion Oreos are sold annually, but there's no "Mrs. Oreo." The fig newton isn't named for Isaac, but Milton Hershey gave his name to the candy bar as well as to the town in Pennsylvania that houses the largest chocolate factory in the world. Orville Redenbacher decided his name on a line of popcorn would sell better than calling it Purdue-20 or Hybrid Dent. Harry Heinz's company was actually producing sixty-five products when he named he came up with the slogan *57 varieties*, but Harry liked the way *57* looked in print.

Sir Hugh Beaver, managing director at the Guinness Brewery, was out hunting and wondered if the golden plover was the fastest bird in the world. This gave him the idea for a book which informed the reader of the fastest, slowest, oldest, youngest, and so forth. He looked around for writers and found Norris and Ross McWhirter, identical twins who had a passion for collecting odd bits of information. The first *Guinness Book of Records* appeared in 1955, and was an immediate bestseller.

Numerous flowers are named in honor of the Virgin Mary, including marigold, Mary lily, rosemary, and lady's slipper. The lady bug also gets its name from this same source. Sometimes a plant's name depends on its national heritage. Both the English and the Scots acknowledge a flower named for William, Duke of Cumberland, who defeated the Scots in the Battle of Culloden in 1746. The English call the flower *sweet William* and the Scots *stinky billy*.

We have borrowed a lot of terms from heroes of Greek mythology. Atlas, one of the Titans, was forced by Zeus to hold up the heavens, an image that later changed to Atlas holding up the ball of earth. Gerhard Mercator, sixteenth-century Flemish geographer, included this image of Atlas on the title page of his collection of maps, calling the collection an atlas. A famous and ill-fated luxury liner also took its name from the Titans.

Word Watch

Challenge students to look on their supermarket shelves for products that might be eponyms or toponyms. They should write down the name of the product and check the label for the name and address of the manufacturer. Then they can write the company, asking how the product got its name. The Internet is another source for product information, though students should be cautioned that just because they read something there does not mean it's accurate.



Many American place names derive from Native American words. Take Yeehaw Junction, Florida. *Yeehaw* isn't a hillbilly term but comes from *yaha*, the Seminole word for *wolf*.

A number of people are named for states, but the story of Virginia Hamilton's name tells a history of bravery. Ms. Hamilton came from a family of storytellers. Her grandfather Levi Perry was born a slave in Virginia and crossed the Ohio River to freedom. Once a year, Ms. Hamilton wrote, he gathered his children around him. "Sit down," he would say, "and I will tell you about slavery and why I ran, so that it will never happen to you." Ms. Hamilton was named Virginia in remembrance of his flight.

Place Name Panache

Place names is another area where our "borrowings" are visible. Different languages predominate in different areas of the country. For example, note the Spanish borrowings in the South and Southwest, the French in Louisiana, German in Pennsylvania and many Northern cities. The German-American bilingual communities in Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Cincinnati brought thousands of German words into American English.

In *Naming New York*, Sanna Feirstein provides an entertaining, historical account of how Manhattan's streets, squares, and neighborhoods came to be named, and in so

doing shows how name research is history at its best. The famous Broadway was originally an Indian trail that ran from the southern tip of the island. Its name is literal, deriving from its unusual width. Harlem was named by the Dutch for the Haarlem they had left in Europe. The Bowery ran through an area set aside by early Dutch inhabitants for farming, “bowerji” being the Dutch word for farm. The British anglicized some Dutch names, so that the street named for Dirck Van der Clyff became Cliff Street, Markveldt became Marketfield, and so on. And Manhattan names keep evolving. SoHo, an acronym for South of Houston (Street), was adopted in the 1960s. TriBeCa, a name adopted in the mid-1970s, is an acronym for the TRIangle BELOW CAnal Street.

In *Made in America*, Bill Bryson points out that until 1916, New Hampshire had a stream called the *Quohquinapassakessamanagnog*, but then some “cheerless bureaucrats at the Board on Geographic Names in Washington, D.C., arbitrarily changed it to *Beaver Creek*.” The present-day *Connecticut* is the result of a number of name changes—Quonectacut, Quonaughticut, Qunnihticut, Conecticot, and so on. Bryson notes that “probably the liveliest diversity of spelling belongs to Chicago, which in its early days was rendered as Schuerkaigo, Psceschaggo, Shikkago, Tschakko, Ztschaggo, Shecago, Shakakko, Stkachango,

Web Watch

Much of the contents of *What’s in a Name* are available at the Merriam-Webster website (www.m-w.com/lighter/name/apronym.htm); it’s well worth a visit.



and many others, all trying to capture a certain sound.”

The variety is fun, but the real point is the influence of Native American words on our landscape:

- thirteen of the nineteen largest U.S. rivers (Mississippi, Ohio, Yuon, Missouri, Tennessee, Mobile, Atchafalaya, Stikine, Susitna, Arkansas, Tanana, Susquehanna, and Willamette);
- ten of the major U.S. lakes (Michigan, Erie, Ontario, Okeechobee, Winnebago, Tahoe, Upper Klamath, Utah, Tustumena, and Winnibigoshish);
- numerous natural wonders (Niagara and Yosemite; Denali, Sequoia, and Shenandoah national parks).
- only two states of original thirteen colonies bear Indian names, but two-thirds of the last thirty-six do.

Word Watch

Students can begin an apronym hunt with just a few categories and a supply of old telephone books. Ask student teams to scan pages for names that would be apt for doctors, lawyers, teachers, and people who work in restaurants. Each team can draw a letter out of a hat. Establish a grid on the bulletin board, where students can put in names as they find them. As one category fills, add others. As they come across provocative names, student teams are likely to want to add categories. This is a project some students enjoy working on independently. They may want to illustrate their work.

DOCTORS
Tom Coffin
Mary Cutter

POLICEMAN
James Copper
Kevin Crook

TEACHERS
Andy Lerner
Jane Crammer

RESTAURANTEURS
Alice Cook
David Cheeseman



Read More

Lots of amazing aptronyms can be found in two fun books by Paul Dickson, *What's in a Name? Reflections of an Irrepressible Name Collector* and *Names*. Dickson says that he has found most of the names in his collection from newspapers and telephone books. He also says that once you start collecting interesting names, it's impossible to stop.

Charles Cutler, author of *O Brave New Words! Native American Loanwords in Current English*, observes that Native American loanwords in English “are freighted with implied significance” and display an esthetic appeal beyond their intended use. In concluding his work, Cutler expresses the hope that greater awareness of these words will heighten our awareness of the Native Americans’ lasting cultural impact in other ways.

More About Names: Aptronyms

Franklin P. Adams, a popular New York columnist and one of the original members of the Algonquin Round Table, coined the term *aptronym* to designate a name that is aptly suited to its owner.

According to a story in the *Washington Post*, when Pentagon reporters ventured north to Alaska, “the Northern Warfare Training Center assigned Lieutenant Colonel Will B. Snow to issue their Arctic gear.” Snow’s name is an aptronym lover’s delight. Students will enjoy coming up with other suitable occupations for Mr. Snow.

Ask students to consider other people whose names match their occupations. Sally Ride, for example, is an astronaut. Students can consider other apt professions for someone with the last name of Ride. What would be another “apt” name for an astronaut?

Here are a few more aptronyms: John Buckmaster is a banker in Maryland; Linda Toot plays the flute in an orchestra in Florida; the Bury Funeral Home is in Buffalo; Gary Player is a professional golfer.

How People Get Their Names and How They Feel About It

From Rumpelstiltskin to Chrysanthemum, names are important in children’s literature. Often characters have strong feelings about their names. Here are some provocative “name” snippets from popular tales that can act as conversations starters and as prompts for lots of possibilities.

“Galadriel Hopkins. What a beautiful name! From Tolkien, of course.”

“No,” muttered Gilly. “Hollywood Gardens.”

Miss Harris laughed a sort of golden laugh. “No, I mean your name—Galadriel. It’s the name of a great queen in a book by a man named Tolkien. But you knew that.”

Hell. No one had ever told her that her name came from a book. Should she pretend she knew all about it or play dumb? —From *The Great Gilly Hopkins* by Katherine Paterson

I have always hated my name: Enid Irene Crowley. Now really. It would be a terrible name even for an old woman; for a fourteen-year-old girl it was unbearable. —From *Taking Care of Terrific* by Lois Lowry

“Now, Miss Brownmiller,” said the principal, “There must be a story behind your name as well. Don’t tell me you’re a witch.”

Salem laid her pencil down. “That’s not far off, actually. My mother and father met each other in Salem, Massachusetts. My father says she

Teaching Tips

- Ask students what image they get of the characters simply from their attitudes about their names. Which character would they like to know more about?
- Invite students to contribute other name stories from books they are reading. They can create a “Name” bulletin board.
- Invite students to write a letter of advice to one of the characters.



Fun with Aptronyms

Directions

Using names from your community, find an apt name for each occupation below. The newspaper or phone book is a good source for names. If you find other names that seem well-suited to particular occupations, add them to the list. The names around the border, taken from a phone book, will help you get started. You will see they are only from the beginning of the alphabet.

doctor	barber
grocer	botanist
truck driver	mathematician
lawyer	optometrist
baseball player	plumber

Find "apt" occupations for these people

Joe Bunt	Louis Chase
Art DeWire	Bill Dollar
Dorothy Reading	Tom Stamper
Juan Trippe	Bernard Twigg
Robert Furlong	Barbara Boxer
James Bugg	Dan Druff
John Lawless	Alex Hogg
Roger Roper	Chip Wood

Reginald Achilles Bob Acomb Don Alderman Cheryl Alley Juanita Baker David Bannister

John Barker
Richard Battle
Beverly Beach
Amanda Bean
Stephen Beard
Rick Bellows
Dorothy Billings
Laura Blood
Barbara Bloom

Jake Danger
Bill Church
Louis Child
Stacey Chase
Alan Cashman
Alex Carver
Bruce Carrier
Judith Carpenter
James Bright

bewitched him. He said he wanted his firstborn to be named Salem, whether it was a boy or girl.”

—From *Report to the Principal's Office* by Jerry Spinelli

His grandmother had said that in the old days, people had a secret name that was known only to one other person—a name that described who they really were, not who the world thought they were. He had thought he would like to have such a name for himself, but this naming was no longer done. “I’ll take a name for myself,” he thought, eyeing the stone in his hand. “I don’t need a father; I don’t need anyone.” Then he said aloud, “My name is Lone Bear.”

—From *Bearstone* by Will Hobbs

Last year when David Bernstein was in third grade, there had been three other boys named David in his class. . . . David Bernstein did not like that a bit. It was much too confusing. Then, one day when he was reading a book called *The Arabian Nights*, he discovered a wonderful name: Ali Baba. There were no other Ali Babas in this class. And as far as David Bernstein knew, there were no other Ali Babas in his school. It was the perfect new name for a boy who wanted to be different.

—From *Hurray for Ali Baba Bernstein* by Johanna Hurwitz

Interesting and Unusual Names

In Julius Lester’s *Sam and the Tigers: A New Telling of Little Black Sambo*, everybody has the same name:

There was a little boy in Sam-sam-sa-mara named Sam. Sam’s mama was also named Sam. So was Sam’s daddy. In fact, all the little boys and little girls and mamas and daddies were named Sam. But nobody ever got confused about which Sam was which, and that’s why nobody was named Joleen or Natisha or Willie.

Most people live in places quite different from Sam-sam-sa-mara and the choice of names—for children and pets and houseplants—is not automatic or prescribed. Some people want to name their children “regular” names so they won’t be teased in school, so

Word Watch

In many Native American groups the name given to the male child must be one not currently in use by someone else. John E. Koontz at the University of Colorado, maintains a website where he answers lots of questions about Native American language. On his name page he says that “traditionally a man might run through several names in the course of a life . . . often trading up as a name with more panache became available.” Parents sometimes changed a child’s name to confuse evil influences or to mark a rite of passage.



Web Watch

Check out John Koontz’s site: <http://spotcolorado.edu/~koontz/faq/names.htm>. Ask students if they could change their name as a rite of passage, say, when they become teenagers, would they do it? Why or why not?



Read More

Newbery Medalist Linda Sue Park’s *When My Name Was Keoko* is inspired by the author’s family stories of living in South Korea during the Japanese occupation before World War II. Japanese occupation forces required all Koreans to take Japanese names, which meant Sun-hee became Keoko, and she had to call all her classmates by their new names. This compelling story of two siblings and their battle to maintain their identity and dignity makes for a compelling read-aloud. As an interesting historical note, Park reveals a little-known Olympic story about names. Kitei Son, wearing the Japanese flag on his shirt, won the marathon in the 1936 Berlin Olympics, the only time Japan has ever won the marathon. But Kitei Son was a Korean runner forced to run under an imposed name and flag; his real name was Sohn Kee Chung.





How Did I Get My Name?

Directions

Even if you think you know the answers to these questions, just to make sure, interview an adult in your family for help in answering at least two of these questions. You may uncover some interesting information about a very important person—you!

1. Who named me?
2. Was I named for anyone?
3. Why was this name chosen?
4. What does my name mean?
5. My nickname is . . .
6. I got my nickname when . . .



Choosing a Name

Read about the feelings of a boy who feels his parents made a mistake when naming him:

Call me Bernie. All truly famous people need only one name. Like Superman and Bozo . . . What were my parents thinking when they picked out that name [Bernard]? They should have waited and asked me my choice. I'd have chosen an astronaut's name. Like Bim or Buzz or Gordo. Bernard is a name for a nerd, not an astronaut.

—From *Bernie Entertaining* by Larry Bograd

- Write a letter of advice to Bernie/Bernard.
- Then write a letter of advice to new parents. What tips can you give them on naming the baby? Give examples to support your advice. For example, should names be popular? Or unique?
- You may want to do some research on names. The Social Security Administration provides a website with the most popular given names in the US since 1880, www.ssa.gov/OACT/NOTES/note139/note139.html. Or just go to the Social Security page and enter "popular names" in Search.

TOP TEN NAMES FOR 2000

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| 1. Michael | Hannah |
| 2. Jacob | Emily |
| 3. Matthew | Madison |
| 4. Joseph | Elizabeth |
| 5. Christopher | Alexis |
| 6. Nicholas | Sarah |
| 7. Andrew | Taylor |
| 8. William | Lauren |
| 9. Joshua | Jessica |
| 10. Daniel | Ashley |

TOP TEN NAMES FOR 1880

- | | |
|------------|-------------------|
| 1. John | Mary |
| 2. William | Anna |
| 3. Charles | Elizabeth |
| 4. George | Margaret |
| 5. James | Minnie |
| 6. Joseph | Emma |
| 7. Frank | Martha |
| 8. Henry | Alice |
| 9. Thomas | Marie |
| 10. Harry | Annie/Sarah (tie) |

Teaching Tip

The idea of making some columns for the criteria for the Place Names reproducible (page 47) will emerge. One possibility is offered below, but hold off giving too much information and advice. Encourage students to develop their own rationale. You can write *study skills, geography*, as this activity is much more than just choosing and sorting names.

I LIKE THE SOUND	THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE	I KNOW SOMEONE WITH THIS NAME	I WOULD LIKE TO TRAVEL THERE
Limoges	Florence	Florence	Zimbabwe

For social studies connections, ask students to investigate three names. Then they can prepare travel posters or websites for the place name of their choice.

adults won't say, "Where did you get *that* name?" Other people prefer family names, names with special meaning, or out-of-the-ordinary names. Some people name their children for cities and states, such as Dakota, Madison, Trenton, and Savannah, to name just a few. Foreign place names are also popular, such as Paris, India, Martinique, and Persia.

The Place Names reproducible (see next page) is first for the fun of the sound of the words and then for thinking about. After students have tried out the alphabetic list of place names on their tongues, ask them to

think about the names as possibilities for personal names. They can read the list independently or in groups and think about which ones they might choose for a name—and why. Ask students to consider how they make their choices; they should list some criteria.

Color Names

Colors provide more possibilities for naming. Paula Danziger's *Amber Brown* series has given fame to that word. There are lots more possibilities: Burgundy, Cerise, Ebony, Forrest, Grey, Hazel, Ivory, Jonquil, Kelly, Lilac, Mauve,

Read More

Anita Lobel's masterful *Away from Home* provides a stunning model for more alphabetic fun with names. This is definitely a picture book with possibilities for older students. They can write their own alphabetic books by following Lobel's pattern, using name, verb, and place name for each letter.

Adam arrived in Amsterdam.

Bernard ballooned in Barcelona.

Teaching Tip

Alexander Theroux says, "There are many more blues than there are words to name them," but there are plenty of blue words. You may want students to compile their own color lists first or you may want to distribute the reproducibles as a way to help them get started. Students can also compile other color lists: brown, yellow, orange. If they want to check out colors, there are many websites showing Internet colors.



Place Names

Directions

Read this list of place names. Think about the way they sound and the way they look.

Aberdeen	Java	Reykjavik
Abilene	Jericho	Rio
Alaska	Jersey	Roanoke
Arizona	Jilin	Sacramento
Aspen	Jonquiere	Seychelles
Baja	Kagera	Shawnee
Brazil	Kahoolawe	Sicily
Brooklyn	Kentucky	Sydney
Burlington	Kenya	Tabora
Calcutta	Killarney	Tahoe
Calgary	Lamia	Tasmania
Cambria	Lammermoor	Tibet
Casablanca	Laramie	Ubangi
Cordova	Limoges	Udine
Dallas	London	Ukraine
Des Moines	Madrid	Umbria
Djibouti	Maine	Umtata
Dominica	Milan	Venice
Eleuthera	Miami	Venta
Encinitas	Montana	Ventura
Erie	Narobi	Verseille
Euphrates	Navarre	Vienna
Everest	Nevada	Wembley
Falaise	Nigeria	Wenatchee
Famagusta	Nova Scotia	Wessex
Florence	Oberammergau	Wichita
Fremont	Oita	Windermere
Fresno	Oklahoma	Xanthus
Gambia	Oregon	Xenia
Gascony	Orissa	Xiamen
Geneva	Padua	Xingu
Ghent	Panaji	Xinjiang
Gisborne	Panama	Yalta
Halmahera	Pasadena	Yampa
Hama	Peleliu	Yao
Hastings	Qena	Yazoo
Hong Kong	Qishon	York
Ichikawa	Queens	Zambia
Ife	Quemoy	Zamora
Illinois	Quincy	Zermatt
Ireland	Raleigh	Zibo
Izmir	Rangoon	Zimbabwe



Color List

BLUE

baby blue
azure
aquamarine
indigo
turquoise
marine
cobalt
peacock
robins-egg
lapis lazuli
periwinkle
wisteria
midnight
Mediterranean
teal
delphinium
sapphire
cadet
Wedgewood
navy
slate

PURPLE

lavender
magenta
orchid
indigo
mauve
violet
hyacinth
lilac
mulberry
burgundy
periwinkle
plum
damson
fuchsia
indigo
heliotrope
maroon
hot pink
violet-red
blue-violet
amethyst

RED

scarlet
cherry
coral
blood
lobster
ruby
brick
rosy
pink
cardinal
strawberry
terra cotta
Chinese
vermillion
barn
fire
crimson
poppy
salmon
chestnut
orange-red

GREEN

emerald
verdant
olive
pea
jade
sea green
apple green
celery
parsley
chartreuse
viridian
Nile
shamrock
hunter
Kelly
British racing
jungle
pistachio
khaki
lime
forest



Color Choices

Directions

Share the color word list with a friend. Take turns reading the colors to each other.

1. Three names I like best are:
2. Three names my friend likes are:
3. We think these three colors are exciting:
4. Write ads to sell three items—a bicycle, a piece of clothing, or anything else you can think of. Be sure to mention the color of the item.



Color Mystery

The color list will be useful in completing this activity.

1. If you were writing a mystery in which someone had stolen a valuable antique vase,
 - what color *blue* would you make it?

 - what color *green* would you make it?

 - Would you make the vase *banana yellow*? Why or why not?
2. List three things that might be called *banana yellow*.
3. If the hero or heroine of your story had *green* eyes, which green would you use?
4. What color would his or her hair be?
5. Try writing a parody of a heroic description, using any colors you wish. For example, it is one thing to say a woman's teeth are as white as ivory or pearls. It is quite another thing to say her teeth are as white as cottage cheese or Elmer's glue or boiled fish eyes.

Read More

For adult reading, there's *The Primary Colors* by Alexander Theroux—his three essays devoted to the colors red, blue, and yellow include every color allusion imaginable: artistic, literary, linguistic, botanical, cinematic, scientific, culinary, climatological, and lots more. John Updike says Theroux has squeezed the world into this book. Here's a sample: Theroux points out that these things are yellow: the sun, cowardice, third prize, honey, school buses, urine, New Mexico license plates, Penzcoil, Easter, butter, arsenic, and Busby Berkeley's great banana epic starring Carmen Miranda, among others. Theroux also includes impressive trivia; he tells us that "a yellow baseball was actually used for the first time in the Major Leagues on August 2, 1938" (and he tells us the score of the game). And that an umbrella of yellow silk, a symbol of dignity, is one of the traditional Tibetan good-luck symbols. The sequel, *The Secondary Colors*, devotes 108 pages to orange, plus hundreds more to purple and green. There's also poetry, song, fable, opinion, gossip, and more fascinating trivia.

Ochre, Primrose, Russet, Saffron, Taupe, Umber, Viridian, Yellow, and others.

- Make a Color Wall and students will come up with lots of variations on the theme.
- Ask students to keep track of color words they find in their reading. Not just the word but the sentence or paragraph in which it appears.

Names to Eat

Third graders collected ice cream names. Each time a student came in with a new name, he wrote it on a piece of adding machine tape strung down the hallway. To add a new name, students first had to read all the existing ones. No repeats allowed. This was not a chore but a popular pastime. Following are the names they collected; you

may want to share this list with your students, but it would be more fun for them to collect their own.

lemon
vanilla
vanilla/chocolate
butterscotch swirl
chocolate swirl
cherry vanilla
Columbian coffee
chocolate chip
chocolate marshmallow
chocolate
French vanilla
cream 'n coffee fudge
black raspberry
vanilla/chocolate/butter pecan
mocha chocolate chip
black sweet cherry
mint chocolate chip
butter pecan

Student: Ice Cream Interview

Choose an ice cream poem or memory to share with at least two adults. First read the piece. Then ask the adults about their ice cream thoughts.

- You might ask about the adult's favorite flavor.
- You might ask for an ice cream memory.
- You might ask about something else.

At the end of the interview, ask the adult to give you two words about ice cream.



Ice Cream Poem

ice cream
ice cream
ice cream

You
I
We all
for
bites of
licking
delicious
tasting
remembering
chocolate
maple walnut
rocky road

licking
scooping up
sticky
melting
swirling
biting
slurpy
chewing
syrupy
hurry
ice cream
hurry
lick
chew
finish
before
dissolves
integrates
mantles
appears
appoints
a hole and happiness
drips drips drips drips drips drips
down between your
sticky fingers drip
drip drip drip
drip drip
gone

vanilla butter pecan
pistachio black sweet cherry
peanut butter cup
caramel apple dapple
bubble gum
black raspberry
coffee
coconut fudge
peppermint

scream
scream
scream
cold
ice cream
dripping
scrumptious
melting
flavors
strawberry
rum raisin
lemon

licking
drops
sweet
licking
melting
silent
bites
sweet
urgency
before
puddles
scurry
quick
goo
goodness
cone
dis-
dis-
dis-
dis-
gets

Directions

Here's an ice cream poem written using ice cream words. Read them out loud with a buddy reader. Then collect your own ice cream words and write a poem.

strawberry
maple walnut
chocolate buttered almond
rocky road
peanut butter cup
strawberry cheesecake
caramel apple dapple
cocoanut fudge
peaches 'n cream
rum raisin
peppermint candy

This list then became the word bank for lots of delicious short pieces of writing, mostly silly but sometimes reflective. From this initial list, we wrote ice cream poems; we wrote ice cream tongue twisters, riddles, menus, and memoirs.

When students write, I write too. That's the rule, and it gives an added incentive to make assignments interesting and inventive. On the previous page is an ice cream poem I wrote for a homework assignment. Students read it, filled in the blank spaces with ice cream names and sensations I'd left out, and they wrote their own ice cream pieces. You can guess what prefix we were studying at the time.

Here's another one I wrote just to hear the kids go "Ycch!"

VEGETABLE ICE CREAM

Many people dream
Of strawberry ice cream;
Chocolate's bite
Fills thousands with delight.
But me?
I long for a scoop of frozen pea,
Olive, mushroom, or Harvard Beet,
Carrot with sprinkles—now there's a
treat
That can't be beat.
I would kick up a fuss for a three-decker
cone of asparagus.
Vanilla does many please,
But can it compete with cheddar cheese,
Green pepper, broccoli, tomato, or yam?
Vegetable ice cream! Gee whiz! Wham!

Cold Words

When I began teaching at the junior high, I wondered if I could transfer the adding machine tape strategy. When one teaches students identified as high risk, one doesn't want to expose them to ridicule. I had certain doubts about seventh and eighth graders building up enthusiasm for displaying winter words on adding machine tape stretched down the hallway: But the dull, bare walls in our school were such a challenge. I found it a shame and an affront that student work was not on display in our school. And the adding machine tape device provides visible evidence that vocabulary is growing, not to mention that it provokes repeated reading from kids who carry a sophisticated repertoire of strategies for avoiding reading. So I took the risk. The rule here was the same as with the third graders: You have to read all the words before you can post a new word—no duplicates allowed.

The unexpected bonus of this activity was that it transformed my students into fervent newspaper browsers. I can't think of a better way to teach scanning skills. Students raced to class—to be sure to get hold of one of the five copies we received every day. Kids who read the paper at home thought they were pulling a fast one. Imagine a "reluctant reader" sneaking a read of the morning paper before heading off to school.

Here is a partial list of the words that stretched down the hallway of our junior high: Snow, slush, storm, icicle, blizzards, floods, freezing, frozen, chillier and chillier, Arctic air mass, shattered water pipes, hoarfrost, cold front, frigid, windchill factor, frostbite, North Pole, bitter cold, snowed-in, icy winds, ice, snowbank, shovel, snowball, whiteout, howling winds, rain, snow squalls, Brrr!, skiing, cold wave, hazardous driving conditions, freezing point, goose bumps, ZERO, frozen feet, polar bear, nippy, snowplow, swirling snowstorms, winter misery, deep freeze, blowing snow, shivering, blue with cold, Jack Frost, coldsnap, glacial, record-breaking cold, record cold paralyzes U.S.

Students engaged in fierce debates over the last two. Was the last one a repeat or not? Finally, “paralyzes” won the day and the phrase was admitted.

One of the benefits of this activity was students argued passionately over whether words qualified for the list. Determination to win an argument inspired lots of dictionary work. With word work, one thing leads to another, and *coldsnap* provoked interesting discussion about *cold-blooded*, *cold-hearted*, *cold-water flat*, *coldcock*, and *coldshoulder*.

Two weeks into the project, students began complaining bitterly when local journalists didn’t come up with any new ways to describe our frigid weather. They’d rush in, grab the papers, read intently for five minutes and then sneer in disgust, “Same old words!” They began scanning my copy of the *New York Times* to see if out-of-town writers were doing any better. Michael commented, “We should be grateful we don’t live in Florida” and then added, “Can you get us an Alaska newspaper, Miz O?”

The list became a word bank for the writing of winter memoirs and tall tales. But the best part of the project was the interest it generated throughout our eighteen-hundred-student school. There’s something about a list that proves irresistible and students and faculty began stopping by each day to look for additions. Imagine how my students felt when they saw throngs outside our class reading *their* words. The certified rotten readers of the junior high were catapulted into the linguistic limelight—school experts on winter words.

American Names: A Rich Variety

Robert Louis Stevenson took a trip across the United States by train, remarking, “There is no part of the world where nomenclature is so rich, poetical, humorous, and picturesque as in the United States of America.” Walt Whitman loved place names too. “Mississippi!” he exclaimed, “the word winds with chutes—it rolls a stream three thousand miles long . . . Monongahela!”

Teaching Tips

Point out to students that there are certain conventions to animal naming. Some people follow these conventions, other people don’t. Name collector extraordinaire Paul Dickson points out that zoo animals get their names for various reasons. The famous pandas Ling-Ling and Hsing-Hsing were given names from their country of origin. Zoo llamas are often given names like Llulu. Here are some zoo gorilla names: Ramar, Sampson, Tanga, Shamba, Maximo, Massa, Kumba, Togo, Kanda. Dickson tells this story about how a gorilla at the Ringling Brothers–Barnum & Bailey Circus got its name. In 1937, the circus gorilla was named Buddy but the staff wanted something to convey its large size. They found a giant named Gargantua in a novel by Rabelais, and renamed Buddy Gargantua the Great. The adjective *gargantuan* has been popular ever since.

Some students like the idea of awful names. When asked the worst name for a horse he had ever heard, famed trainer Woody Stephens said, “Bug Juice.” This is a story that grabs the attention of a twelve-year-old, but third graders like it too.

In his volume *The American Language* (available online at www.bartleby.com), H. L. Mencken said, “Some of the most mellifluous of American place-names are in the areas once held by the Spaniards. It would be hard to match the beauty of *Santa Margarita*, *San Anselmo*, *Alamogordo*, *Terra Amarilla*, *Sabinoso*, *Las Palomas*, *Ensenada*, *Nogales*, *San Patricio*, and *Bernalillo*.”

The Forty-Niners in the California Gold Rush weren’t so melodious in their place naming, but they certainly were colorful: Jackassville, Whiskey Flat, Humbug City, Dirty Sock Hot Springs, Poker Flat, Mule-town. Some claim the town of Paradise was actually named for the Pair o’ Dice Saloon.

Frank K. Gallant, author of *A Place Called Peculiar: Stories About Unusual American Place-Names*, says as a ten-year-old he tried to get hold of Wilmer Mizell’s baseball card because he loved the pitcher’s nickname,



Naming Pets

In *The Very Kind Rich Lady and Her One Hundred Dogs* by Chinlun Lee, a very kind rich lady does have one hundred dogs, and she gives them all names.

- Read the names out loud with a buddy reader and circle the ones you like best.

Papa	Pizza	Esme	Brutus
Mr. Samuel	Madeleine	Molly	Denver
Mary	Candy	Nova	Spider
Mrs. Fifi	Nero	Scamp	Sausage
Eeny	Pipi	Buster	Princess
Meeny	Nana	Billy	Curry
Miney	Flint	Toast	Charlotte
Mo	Mrs. Chips	Floss	Smoky
Sooty	Ruthie	Morris	Silk
Willow	Tuesday	Foxy	Ruby
Coco	Ginger	Peanut	Dizzy
Muffin	Abdul	Crispin	Harvey
Wesley J.	Pooch	Jasmine	Hobo
Camel	Jacket	Jumbo	Taffy
Yogurt	Tinkle	Tara	Mountain
Pudding	Tammy	Scat	Captain
Lola	Biscuit	Juno	Heidi
Lady	Toot	Wags	Hank Daisy
Honey	Crystal	Yum-Yum	Freddy
Queenie	Poppy	Pig	Groucho
Max	Arthur	Zaba	Harpo
Pepper	Tangle	Archie	Chico
Pirate	Fluff	Rusty	Mr. Scratch
Olive	Pretzel	Moff	Bingo
Julio	Henry	Darling	

- Interview three people about how they chose a name for a pet. If you have a pet, you can interview yourself too.
- Using information from the interviews, write an essay about how pets get their names.

Challenge: Can you come up with 101 good names for pets? Prove it!



Names of Virtues

Children born during Colonial times were often given the names of virtues. Some of these names are again popular. Read this list and see how many you know.

THE NAMES

Admiration	Halcyon	Prudence
Adoration	Harmony	Quietude
Amity	Honor	Radiance
Amnesty	Hope	Rejoice
Bliss	Hosanna	Reliance
Bronchial	Imagination	Remembrance
Benevolence	Innocence	Resolve
Charity	Jocund	Reverence
Chastity	Joy	Sanctity
Chivalry	Keeness	Serenity
Comfort	Kindness	Silence
Constance	Liberty	Solace
Courage	Loyalty	Solemnity
Delight	Memory	Solidarity
Dependability	Mirth	Tolerance
Dignity	Modesty	Tranquility
Elation	Narcissus	Truth
Emancipation	Nobility	Unity
Endurance	Obligation	Valor
Euphony	Observant	Verity
Faith	Pacific	Wisdom
Fidelity	Panache	Warmth
Freedom	Patience	Watchful
Grace	Peace	Zeal
Gumption	Prosperity	

- Choose at least ten words from this list to study. Write a letter of advice to parents explaining why one or more of the names would be an excellent choice for their child.
- **Note:** There are two trick words on this list, two words probably nobody would want to be named. See if you can find them!
- Come up with a name of opposite concepts, names that would be unfair to give a child (names such as Apathy, Cowardice, and Envy).

“Vinegar Bend,” the name of the Alabama town where he was born. Frank admired his sister’s boyfriend for making up stories about how the nearby Massachusetts towns got their names: Duxbury had to do with burying ducks; Sandwich was so named because that’s what the first settlers ate at every meal. Despite his love for the imaginary, Frank grew up to travel around the country collecting the real stories of how towns got their weird names. “Why would someone name a town Toast? Intercourse? Santa Claus? Rough and Ready? Clever? Neversink? What was behind the name Peculiar, a perfectly ordinary Middle American town a short drive from Kansas City?”

From Eclectic, Alabama to Adamant, Vermont, town names can be quite a vocabulary excursion:

Oracle, Arizona
Paradox, Colorado
Enigma, Georgia
Aroma, Indiana
Amity, Maine
Gratitude, Maryland
Nirvana, Michigan
Novelty, Missouri
Quietus, Montana (near Hanging
Woman Creek)
Alliance, Nebraska
Paradox, New York
Chagrin Falls, Ohio
Sublimity, Oregon
Frugality, Pennsylvania
Prudence, Rhode Island

There is a good story behind every one of these names. And if you look at them again, you’ll see that each is a word likely to appear on the SATs or other standardized tests. Kids will love to know that Ambia, Texas is the only place in the world named for spit. According to Gallant, “The word was derived from the *amber* jets of tobacco juice expectorated by the men who congregated at the local store every afternoon to swap lies.”

Word Watch

Garrison’s Keillor’s *Prairie Home Companion* acknowledges Georgia as a state with names like poetry: Mystic, Dewy Rose, Coofee, Ogeechee, Chicamauga, Chickasawatchee, Cisco, Oconee. Keillor notes that in Georgia you’ll find Jerusalem, Jordan, Delhi, Damascus, Waterloo, Scotland, Vienna, Dublin, Macedonia, and Montezuma. Encourage students to find far-off place names in their own state.

Vocabulary lessons are all around us. Frank Gallant provides the weird ones. The classic compendium of all American place names is by George R. Stewart, *American Place-Names*.

Name That Storm: Tropical Cyclone Names

Hurricane is the name given to tropical cyclones that originate over the oceans. They were formerly identified by their longitude and latitude coordinates but authorities decided that short, distinctive given names makes for quicker, more accurate reporting. When there is more than one hurricane at a time, the use of distinctive names is important, helping to prevent confusion about what storm is moving where. Since 1953, Atlantic tropical storms have been named from lists developed by the National Hurricane Center and now maintained by an international committee of the World Meteorological Center.

Web Watch

- The variety of worldwide cyclone names is fascinating; check them out at www.nbc.noaa.gov/aboutnames.html.
- A clear, kid-friendly site with informative and appealing hurricane lore can be found at www.usatoday.com/weather/whretire.htm.

A storm is named when it reaches winds of 39 miles per hour. A storm becomes a hurricane when it reaches wind speeds of 75 miles per hour.

Until 1979, only women's names were used to designate hurricanes. Since then,

men and women's names are alternated. Six lists are rotated. This means that in 2007, the 2001 list will be used again. If a storm is particularly deadly or costly, the name is not used again. Here are the Atlantic names.

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Allison	Arthur	Ana	Alex	Arlene	Alberto
Barry	Bertha	Bill	Bonnie	Bret	Beryl
Chantal	Cristobal	Claudette	Charley	Cindy	Chris
Dean	Dolly	Danny	Danielle	Dennis	Debby
Erin	Edouard	Erika	Earl	Emily	Ernesto
Felix	Fay	Fabian	Frances	Franklin	Florence
Gabrielle	Gustav	Grace	Gaston	Gert	Gordon
Humberto	Hanna	Henri	Hermine	Harvey	Helene
Iris	Isidore	Isabel	Ivan	Irene	Isaac
Jerry	Josephine	Juan	Jeanne	Jose	Joyce
Karen	Kyle	Kate	Karl	Katrina	Kirk
Lorenzo	Lili	Larry	Lisa	Lee	Leslie
Michelle	Marco	Mindy	Matthew	Maria	Michael
Noel	Nana	Nicholas	Nicole	Nate	Nadine
Olga	Omar	Odette	Otto	Ophelia	Oscar
Pablo	Paloma	Peter	Paula	Philippe	Patty
Rebekah	Rene	Rose	Richard	Rita	Rafael
Sebastien	Sally	Sam	Shary	Stan	Sandy
Tanya	Teddy	Teresa	Tomas	Tammy	Tony
Van	Vicky	Victor	Virginie	Vince	Valerie
Wendy	Wilfred	Wanda	Walter	Wilma	William

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