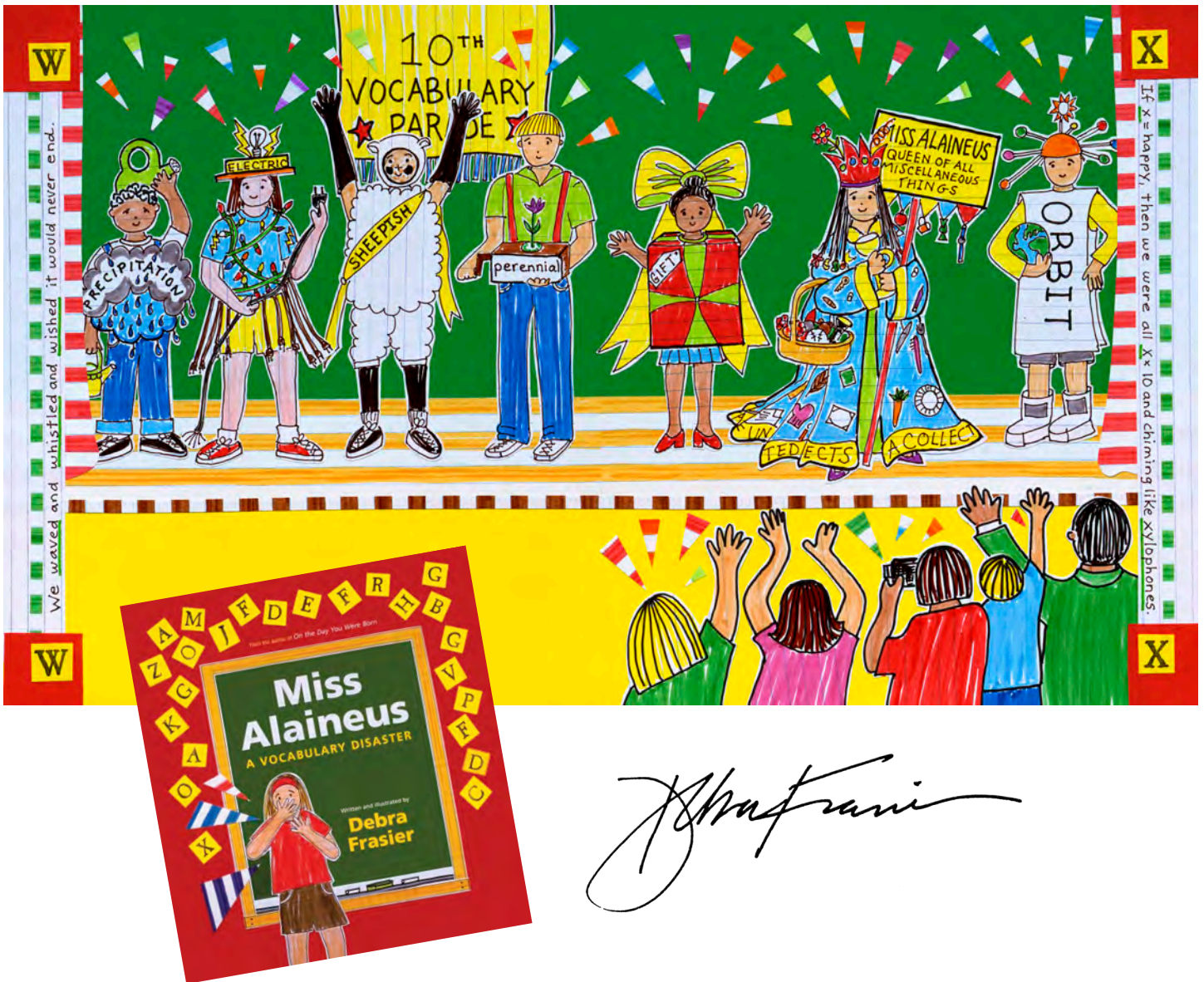


25th Anniversary Edition!



HOST A VOCABULARY PARADE

A How-To Kit with Classroom Extensions and Reproducibles

Based on *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*
written and illustrated by Debra Frasier

Vocabulary Parade Kit created by Debra Frasier. © 2005–2025 Debra Frasier, Revised 2025.
Design by Debra Frasier and Steve Palmquist of Winding Oak.

Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster, published by Harcourt 2000. ISBN 978-0-152-06053-4.



This copy of the
HOST A VOCABULARY PARADE KIT,
based on the book *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*,
written and illustrated by Debra Frasier
is given to:

Name

School

Address

E-mail

This kit may not be reprinted for sale under any circumstances.

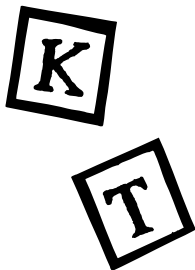
Off-school printers should consider this form as permission to reprint for school use only. Address questions to debrafrasier.com/contact.

If you would like additional print copies of this kit, please contact Debra Frasier at debrafrasier.com/contact.

A downloadable PDF file can be found at:
<https://www.debrafrasier.com/books-activities/miss-alaineus/>.

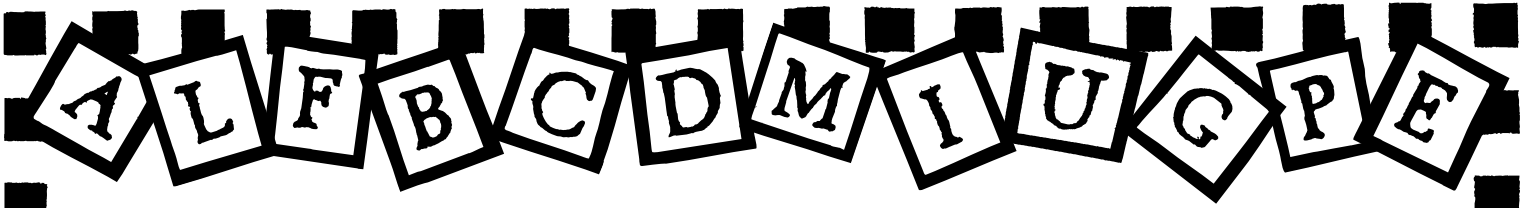
Author Study Information

Please visit debrafrasier.com for more information about the author. This site includes a reprintable biography, more curriculum support for the classroom, short videos about the writing process, an archived "River Journal" essay series, newsletter archive, how-to cut paper videos, and many other resources to accompany all of Debra Frasier's books.



Autographed Books

If you would like to order autographed copies of *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster* for awards, special recognition, or collectors' shelves please go to debrafrasier.com/contact and let Debra know what you need.



Bring the Vocabulary Parade to Your School!

A Kit to Help School Staff Easily Stage a Vocabulary Building Experience

based on the book:

Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster

written and illustrated by Debra Frasier

An Oprah Summer Reading Pick, IRA Reading Awards for Children, and Teachers Choice

25th Anniversary Edition!

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“How did you get the idea for *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster?*”

One evening I was helping my tired nine-year-old daughter into bed. Just as I reached over to turn off the light she said, “Mom, today I figured out that “miscellaneous” is NOT a person.”

Well, I laughed so hard I nearly fell off the bed.

She went on to recount the events of a food drive where she had helped with the sorting of various cans and boxes. Eventually she was asked to put the “miscellaneous” things in a pile—all those foods that did not fit in the categories of meat or cereal or soup or vegetables or pasta. She suddenly realized that **miscellaneous** was not *Miss Alaineus*, the woman on the spaghetti box, but was instead, *a collection of unrelated objects!*

I wrote this little vignette down in the tiny journal I carry with me everywhere. I returned to it often. *What could cause a girl to misunderstand this word?* I made up all kinds of answers to this question and recorded them in my journal. Months later I was traveling and had a day off. I sat down in my motel room with my journal ideas and a fresh yellow legal pad and wrote the entire story out in one sitting. This is very unusual for me!

Once *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster* was written and edited, I had to figure out how to illustrate this unusual picture book. Although each of my books share the common

technique of cut paper collage, each story requires a very different interpretation. (*Set out a collection of my books. Compare them. What characteristic of each story helped determine the very different selection of papers, type, color, and scale of the images?*)

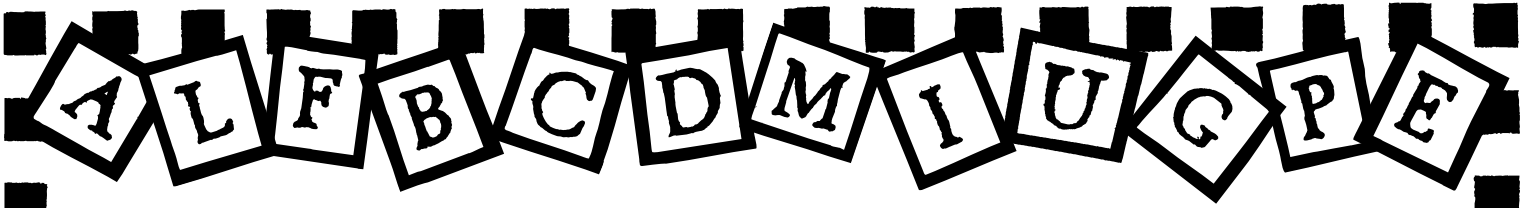
I never know what a new book will look like when I start. However, I do have ways of finding clues to this mystery, the most important of which is keeping a visual journal. In a large scrapbook with blank white pages I collect “clues” as to how this new book might look. A possible entry into this picture journal only has to “attract my attention,” even if I have no idea how I might use that idea. This might be true of a snippet of a catalog picture (*oh, look how that rug spirals out in blues and greens*) or a newspaper item (“*Water Molecules Respond to Happy Thought*”), or a gum wrapper (*look at those stripes*) or a photograph that I’ve snapped along the way (*I have a lot of these*).

After enough clues have accumulated I can start making test pictures and, slowly but surely, the look of the new book evolves. The pictures in *Miss Alaineus* were greatly helped by a Mexican book catalog cover that showed an odd use of stripes and a snapshot I took of my daughter’s new supplies for her fifth grade desk: lined paper, markers, and bright office papers. Illustrating a book is a lot like solving a mystery!

Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster

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A Short Biography of Debra Frasier

Debra Frasier writes and illustrates for children and her picture books have won many awards, including the *Parents Choice Gold Award*, a *Minnesota Book Award*, the *Hungry Mind Book of Distinction Award*, *Teacher and Children's Choice Awards* from the International Reading Assoc, and the *Best Children's Book Award* from the SE Booksellers' Assoc. She worked as the Director of Animation with the MN Orchestra's NotesAlive! label to produce their first video which won the American Library Association's highest honor for a children's video, the *Andrew Carnegie Medal*.

Her first book, *On the Day You Were Born*, has been translated into many languages and was a Reading Rainbow Feature Program for PBS. *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*, was selected as an *Oprah Summer Reading List* title and has inspired Vocabulary Parades from coast to coast. Debra's website has won national recognition for its classroom support for teachers.

Born on April 3rd, 1953, Debra was raised beside the Atlantic Ocean in the small town of Vero Beach, Florida. In 1983 she moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, to join her husband, photographer James Henkel. They have one daughter, the writer and artist, Calla Henkel. Debra and Jim now live in Asheville, NC.

Bibliography: Written and Illustrated (original publishers)

On the Day You Were Born, Harcourt 1991

Out of the Ocean, Harcourt 1998

Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster, Harcourt 2000

On the Day You Were Born, A Photo Journal, Harcourt 2001

The Incredible Water Show, Harcourt 2004

A Birthday Cake is No Ordinary Cake, Harcourt 2006

On the Day You Were Born, (board book) Harcourt 2006

A Fabulous Fair Alphabet, Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster, 2010

Spike, Ugliest Dog in the Universe, Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster, 2016

Illustrated

The Animal That Drank Up Sound, by William Stafford, Harcourt, 1992

We Got Here Together, by Kim Stafford, Harcourt, 1994

In the Space of the Sky, by Richard Lewis, Harcourt, 2002

This Is the Planet Where I Live, K.L. Going, Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster, 2024

Video

"On the Day You Were Born," score by Steve Heitzeg, Minnesota Orchestra, NotesAlive!

(For complete award list, visit debrafrasier.com/about.)

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A Vocabulary Parade is Coming!



based on the book:

Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster

written and illustrated by Debra Frasier

In this story, Sage, our heroine and a very word-smart fifth grader, publicly confuses the word “miscellaneous,” for the person, “Miss Alaineus.” She is **devastated** (*wasted, ravaged*), **ruined** (*destroyed*), **finished** (*brought to an end*), by this embarrassing mistake. But Sage transforms her mistake with a creative leap when she arrives on the Vocabulary Parade school stage as *Miss Alaineus, Queen of All Miscellaneous Things*—and thereby proves that her mother was right. There IS gold to be found in every mistake!

This very same Vocabulary Parade is coming to our school! Soon each student will be selecting a word which will become a costume. Put your thinking caps on! How would you show the word ADRIFT? or SHORTSIGHTED? or ZIGZAG? From A to Z, consider the entire dictionary your playground! A Costume Design Sheet will be coming home soon. Your student will be asked for their selected word, a definition, a sketch of their costume, and a supply list. Help us make vocabulary building into a Parade of Words!

Mark your calendars!

You are invited to be an honored guest at our Vocabulary Parade!

Date: _____

Time: _____

Where: _____

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A L F B C D M I U G P E



Tips for Encouraging Interesting Word Selection for a Vocabulary Parade Costume



- Some schools use vocabulary lists from a targeted area of study such as geography (*island, archipelago, peninsula...*), plant studies (*seed, pollen, cross-pollination, deforestation...*), health (*food pyramid, digestive tract, nutrients...*), and more.
- Make looking for a word as interesting as designing a costume. Create a school-wide buzz about words. Post word suggestions publicly. Give plenty of time for the selection process. Make dictionaries available. Introduce the habit of wandering through the pages or screens. Hold "dictionary search" times in class where students select a letter to wander through online.
- Start a "Word Bank" in a well-traveled hall, cafeteria, or pick-up area. Every day add more words contributed by students or parents.
- Hold a "Compound Word Day." (These often inspire amusing costumes.)
- Stuck? Post "Debra's Suggestions" – hundreds of words that have a visual ring to them! At a copy center, enlarge the enclosed reproducibles to poster size.
- Several weeks before the scheduled Vocabulary Parade, include a section in the schoolwide announcements where words are presented for a "practice costume design contest." Display the words and definitions, and select weekly winners from the submitted drawings. Encourage both simple solutions (*three boys once split the word ALLIANCE across their chests*) and elaborate productions (*a student once created an entire HARBOR on encircled arms, with toy boats and a lighthouse glued to cardboard, streamers falling for turbulent waters*).
- Pair younger primary students with older students for word research, costume building, or buddy parading.
- Host a costume building space for students who might need extra in-school help. Make construction paper, tape, paper bags, hats, crêpe paper, stapler, etc., easily available. Find a parent volunteer to staff.
- Always leave room for a "Student's Choice" in word selection.

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A L F B C D M I U G P E

100 Vocabulary Words to Spark Costume Ideas!

abdomen
abundance
accomplice
adrift
agitation
agony
air
aircraft
annihilate
appendage
arrow
assemblage



egghead
elasticity
error
extravagant
feast
ferocious
flexible
fortification
fruitless



lackadaisical
lightning
litter
luminous
midnight
monarch
monstrous
noteworthy
nourishment



separate
shortsighted
sinister
tendrils
threefold
throng
tidy
transparent
tremendous
tributary

blizzard
blockhead
bookworm
brilliant
busybody



ghastly
gigantic
gyrate
headstrong
heroic
horizontal

obstacle
outskirts
pierce
polestar
ponderous
proboscis
protuberance



unearth
unequal
useless
utterly
vacant
vain
vaporize
vigilant

cascade
cavity
celestial
cheerful
closefisted
collision



identical
illuminate
inflame



quiver
radiant
regal
rejoin
retract
rickety



web
workload
writhe
x-ray
xylem
yoke
zany
zigzag

dangle
decoy
disguise
divergent

join
killjoy
king snake
knothole
knuckleball

satellite
scale

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A L F B C D M I U G P E

More Words for Vocabulary Parade Costume Consideration!

afternoon
ahead
amiss
angel
apart
arise
ax
backyard
basketball
bat
behind
bite
blank
bone
box
branch
bright
bus
call
cash
city
clap
claw
clean
clock
color
cook
core
crash
crooked
crowd
dark
dates
day
dice
dirty
draw
ears



everyone
eyes
face
fall
fan
fat
feet
fence
firefly
fix
flag
flash
flashlight
fleet
float
fly
forest
friend
full
furry
glad
go
grow
gumdrop
haircut
happy
hard
hat
hide
hot
house
hurry
ink
inside
jagged
jailed
jam
join



juggle
jumpball
jungle
king snake
kingfish
lean
letter
line
lips
little
long
lost
mail
mean
money
mop
muddy
neat
nest
newspaper
night
no
noise
old
open
outside
paint
park
pasta
patch
pet
plunk
popcorn
pound
puzzle
quake
quarter
queen



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A L F B C D M I U G P E

quest
question
quibble
quick
quiet
quill
quilt
rag
rain
rash
read
refill
remind
ring
rip
rise
rope
rug
sad
safe
sail
saw
sea
see
shine
shock
short
sidewalk
sink
sky
sleep
smash
smoke
soft
splash
spring
star
stop
storm
straight



string
stuck
sunset
sweep
swing
tag
tail
teeth
telephone
throw
tiny
toes
top
tracks
train
treetop
tug
turn
twice
twine
twinkle
unattached
uncap
underfoot
underground
underhand
underlined
unite
unmask
up
uproar
uproot
upstairs
vacation
vain
valley
valor
van
vanish
vapor



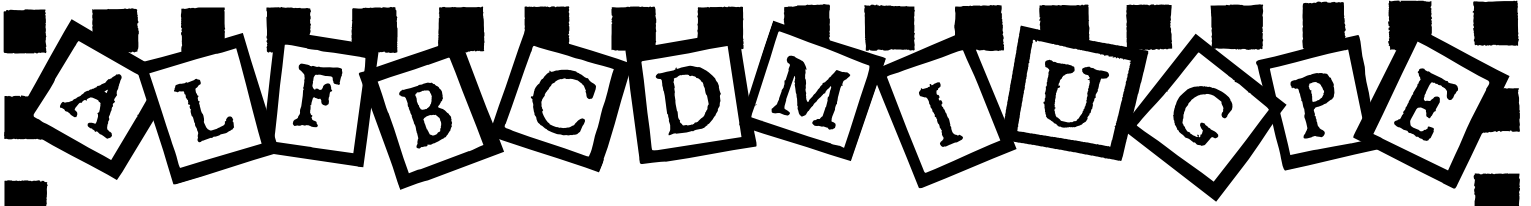
vast
vault
veer
veil
veto
vivid
volcano
vortex
waffle
wail
watch
web
weed
wet
wheel
whiskers
wide
wiggle
wilt
window
wings
wink
wonderful
x-ray
yak
yank
yarn
yawn
yolk
yo-yo
yurt
zany
zap
zero
zigzag
zilch
zipper
zoom



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Below you'll find all twenty-eight of the defined words included in *Miss Alaineus*:
A Vocabulary Disaster. Reprint this page enough times to provide at least one word OR definition to each participant. Cut words and definitions into separate slips. Mix them up and have each person secretly choose one slip. Set a time limit and have each participant who has a word pair up with the participant having the proper definition for that word. (*Keep it short and quick – maybe three minutes.*) When a pair is made, the two participants should sit at once. When all words are reunited with their meanings, have each team read its word and definition. (*Expect some chaos OR propose a no-talking-only-reading rule while searching.*)

catastrophe	a momentous tragedy
disaster	an event bringing great misfortune
triumph	a true success
daunted	discouraged or disheartened
calla	a cup-shaped lily growing in the Tropics
forest	a thicket of trees
star (r)	a luminous celestial object seen as a point of light in the sky
(Mrs.) page	a single side of a printed sheet of paper usually found bound in a book
pride	an unduly high opinion of oneself
goeth	Old English for "to go"
ancestor	an ancient relative long dead
museum	a building for exhibiting objects about art or history or science
cliff	a high, steep face of rock
dinosaur	a prehistoric, extinct reptile, often huge
grinned	to draw back the lips and bare the teeth, as in a very wide smile
sage	one who shows wisdom, experience, judgment
miscellaneous	1. consisting of various kinds or qualities, 2. a collection of unrelated objects
humbled	aware of one's shortcomings, modest, meek
devastated	wasted, ravaged
ruined	destroyed
finished	brought to an end
gold	a bright yellow precious metal of great value
mistake	something done, said, or thought in the wrong way
impossible	not capable of happening
knew	to apprehend with certainty
wildly	in a manner lacking all restraint
astonishment	great shock and amazement
mysterious	full of mystery, hard to explain or understand

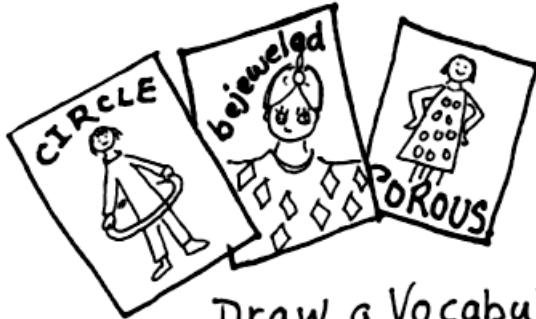
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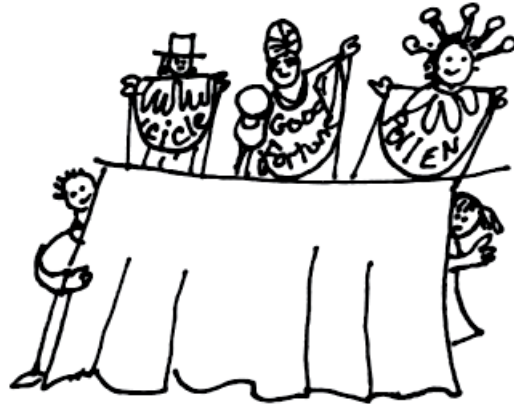
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A L F B C D M I U G P E

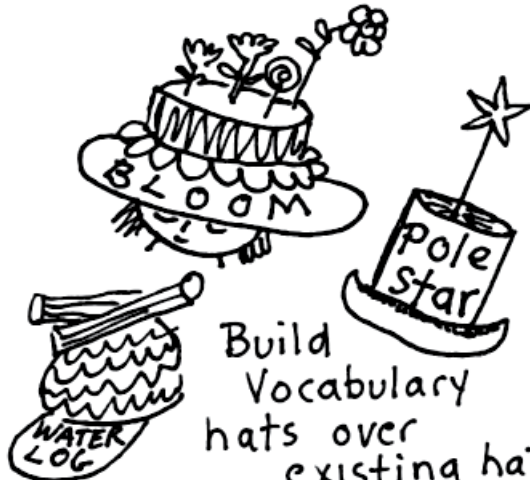
Sample Costume Ideas



Draw a Vocabulary Parade. Display or carry in a parade.



Create puppets based on words.



Build Vocabulary hats over existing hats.



Make paper crowns.



Double over white fabric, then draw or paint.



Use poster sheets for sandwich board costumes.

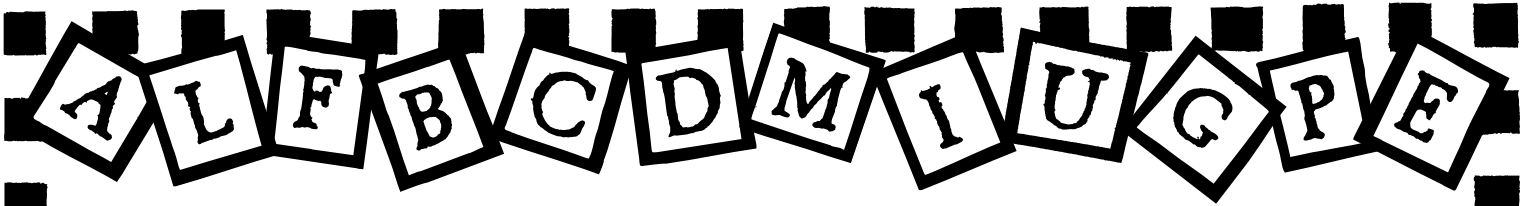
Younger students fit into paper bags.



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Vocabulary Parade Costume Planner

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Teacher: _____

WORD:

DEFINITION:

USE IN A SENTENCE:

Costume Due:

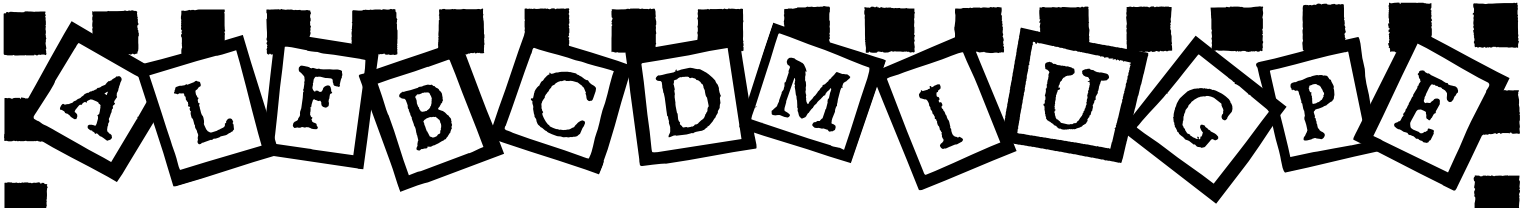
Vocabulary Parade Date:

Costume Design Materials Needed:

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Vocabulary Parade Staging Ideas

Schools have offered Vocabulary Parades in many different forms. Some schools want to host an elaborate evening event for parents and the community. Others want to keep the event confined to the school day. Here are various approaches to consider when staging a parade:

- Invite participating costumed classrooms to parade through the halls, passing through selected classrooms in a long line. Students sit at their desks to view the parade.
- Consider breaking participants into letter groups...all the words that begin with A are in the front, followed by the B words, etc. Appoint "Letter Carriers" to break up the alphabet.
- One school did not have enough parade time for as many students who participated. They solved the problem by splitting costumed participants into two groups. The first group formed several long lines in the gym. A generous space was left around each costume. At the appointed time each costumed word "froze" in a position. The second group snaked through the gym, admiring (no touching, no talking) the costumes. After 15 minutes of viewing, the groups switched places.
- Make a production of it! Using a stage, have students enter one-by-one, or in pairs or small groups (or pair upper elementary students with a primary buddy). Announce word and definition. (Have each student submit name, classroom, word and definition neatly printed on a 3x5 card. Use these cards to establish parade order.) Invite a Master of Ceremonies to host the event. Keep it snappy. Hold applause until the end.
- Several media specialists have used a digital camera to photograph each costumed student. Later they have created a Vocabulary Parade as a digital slide show. Students coming to the library can watch the parade via computer. (Tip: Name and definition can be written on a chalkboard, or held on a placard, to eliminate typing later.)
- Hold a Video Parade. Film each costumed student as they walk in front of the camera, saying the word and definition. To keep the parade moving, film a line of five students at a time. View later.

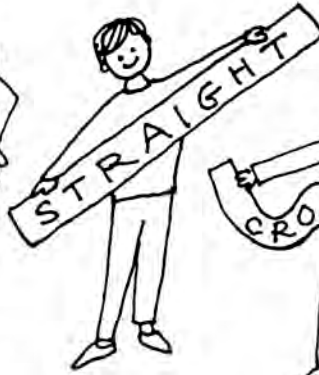


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A L F B C D M I U G P E



COME SEE OUR VOCABULARY PARADE

Date: _____

Time: _____

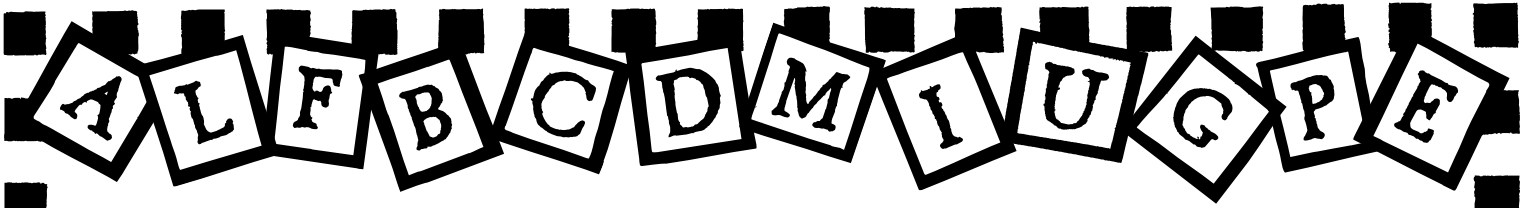
Place: _____



Don't miss this **magnificent** (*impressive, splendid*),
parade of costumed words!

We plan to both **astound** (*overwhelm and stun*) you,
and bring you **delight** (*enjoyment and joy*),

while making words
memorable (*most likely to be remembered*)!



Vocabulary Parade Awards

Many schools want to acknowledge a student's participation in a Vocabulary Parade. Some schools prefer to follow an athletic team model, selecting the most outstanding efforts, based on criteria. Other schools want to reward participation on an equal basis. This is up to each school, but here are some ideas to consider when determining how to handle awards:

- In the early planning, discuss with the faculty what they want to reward. Participation only? Offer prize incentives? Serious? Wacky?
- Review the participation award certificate enclosed in this kit. Consider how it could be best used.
- Consider naming a winner for each letter of the alphabet. If you want to increase the size of the winners' pool, have first, second, and third place prizes for each letter.
- Divide parade participants into grade levels. Judge only by grade levels.
- Have students vote on their favorite costumes through a picture gallery. These could be sketched or photographed versions of their costumes. Make a "Student Choice" Award category.
- Invite the adult audience at your event to vote on a program that lists all the words and definitions, without names. Score with 1 through 10 points. Tally results later, awards to be announced in school, but not at the event.
- Draft a teacher panel from another school (agree to swap panels later), and have this panel select the first, second, and third level prizes.
- Think of lots of categories so there are many prizes and lots of buzz about different kinds of words. Consider:
 - Best Adjective
 - Best Verb, Noun, or Adverb
 - Funniest Word and Costume
 - Hardest Word Successfully Illustrated
 - The Miss Alaineus Award: Most Original Use of a Word
 - Best Shortest Word
 - Longest Word

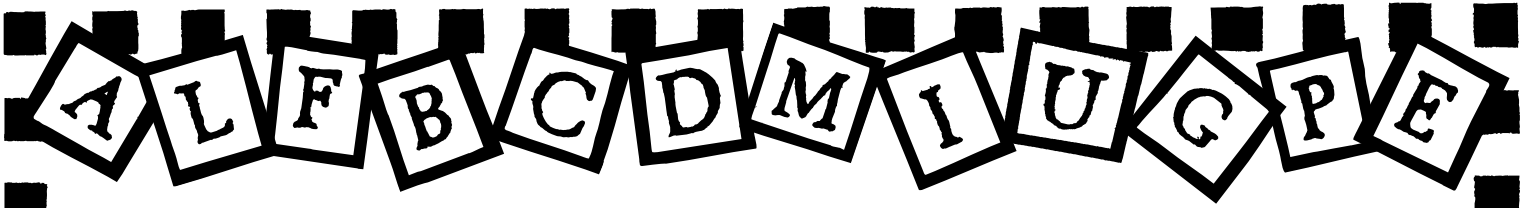
(continued)



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Vocabulary Parade Awards

(continued from previous page)

- Best Adjective
 - Saddest Word
 - Happiest Word
 - Most Ingenious Costume
 - Most Ridiculous Word
 - The Word that Made Us Think
 - Bravest Word
- Award dictionaries to the winners. Tuck in gift certificates in certain letters: "I" for Ice Cream, "M" for movies.
 - Ask individuals to sponsor letters of the alphabet. For example, donate a \$10.00 prize to support a letter in your name.
 - Go traditional! All kids love trophies. Order ribbons and trophies from an awards company. Make this A Very Big Deal.
 - Award winners author-signed copies of *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*. (Signed books available via the *Store* link at www.debrafrasier.com/store or select other books that highlight vocabulary.)

Consider Prizes:

- Cans of alphabet soup for the winners. Decorate?
- Art Class Project: Make trophies out of found objects (or find trophies at the Goodwill and glue with words, buttons, jewels, or pasta— as a tribute to Miss Alaineus).
- Use the enclosed Certificate. Have the principal sign each certificate? Add a touch of hand coloring? Affix a gold sticker or ribbon?
- Solicit donations from businesses who would like to be linked with vocabulary building (bookstores, newspapers, banks, printers).



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Congratulations!

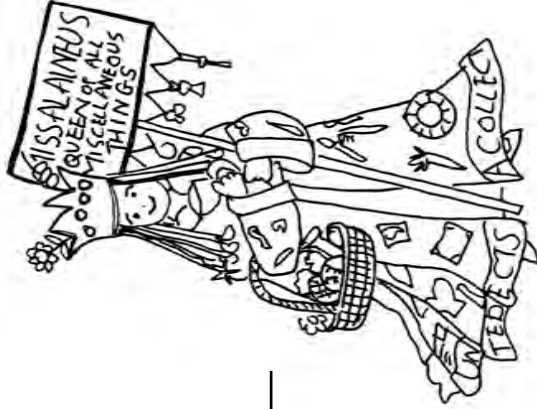
(the expressing of pleasure to someone for an achievement)



_____ has delighted (extremely pleased) us
with the word _____

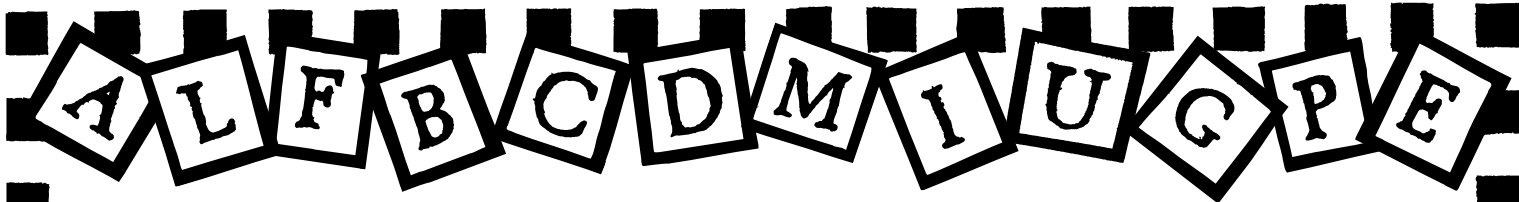
_____ in our Vocabulary Parade!

Thank you and keep up the
excellent (of a very high quality) work!



Debra Frasier

Debra Frasier, Author & Illustrator



Documentation

Documenting your Vocabulary Parade is not just a frivolous afterthought!

Developing a parade archive is a very important part of the process as students will use the documentation to revisit the words that are modeled, further strengthening vocabulary retention. Over the years a school will build a “visual dictionary” of costumed words that students will pull off the shelf or pull up on the computer with real delight.

A Vocabulary Parade is a theatrical event, and all such events are ephemeral unless we carefully plan to “capture” them for future viewing. (*Try to eliminate the last minute panic of—Who has a camera? Phone charged? Who is going to take pictures?*)

First, decide what final form you would like your documentation to take. How would you like your students to revisit these words? How much time do you realistically have? What is the budget? Consider these suggestions:

- create a simple picture scrapbook for the library
- collage individual classroom scrapbooks
- build a PowerPoint show students can access
- edit a video
- design a set of posters with enlarged photos to inspire future parades
- install a Photo Booth on the night of the event (for family documentation)

Once a form is selected, designate one or two recorder/photographers. Be sure they collect their supplies ahead of the parade date. Consider phones, cameras, cords, batteries, cleaned flash cards, and maintenance checks. Give the task to someone who has no other job than to be ready to document an event that will flash by! Set up an easy charging station!

Photograph costumes both alone and in groups. Single pictures make very effective samples, especially where the word is prominently displayed. If using the Photo Booth idea, paint a backdrop, or use red or yellow roll paper and letter blocks as a background, carrying the visual theme of *Miss Alaineus* forward. Keep it simple and colorful.

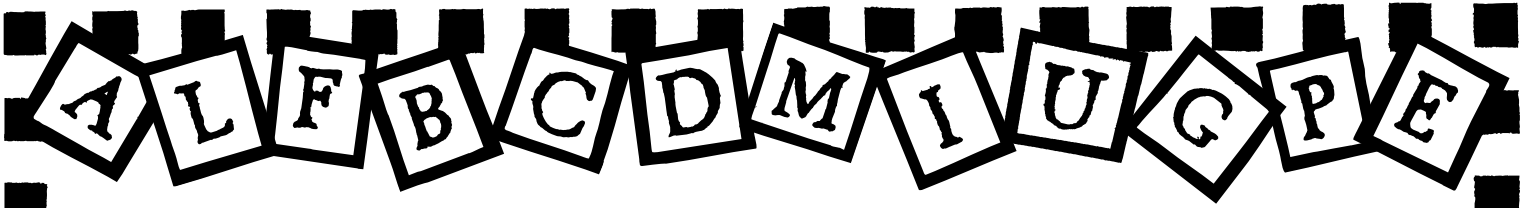


**WORD
MAGIC**

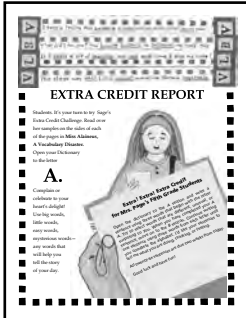
Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster

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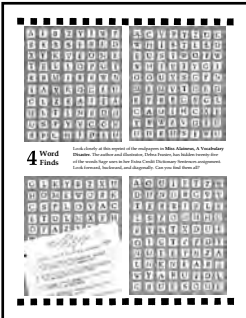
Classroom Extension Activities



Extra Credit Report: Using the Dictionary

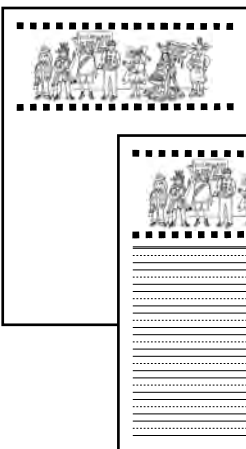
On the edges of each page of *Miss Alaineus*, Sage records her *Extra Credit Report* sentences. These twenty-six sentences highlight seventy-eight additional vocabulary words in a parallel story that tells us about how she is feeling as the main story unfolds. Her final grade and teacher comments are on the back endpapers.

Read the main story aloud. Next, read the sidebar sentences. Have students record all of the underlined vocabulary words. Using the enclosed reproducible (which includes directions and a few samples of Sage's response), assign the *Extra Credit Report* to your students. Each student will need access to a dictionary to look up "three words that begin with the letter A," and so on. (Encourage "Very Creative Complaining.")



Sidebar Story Vocabulary: Four Word Finds

The front and back endpapers of *Miss Alaineus* are actually four Word Finds where students can find twenty-five of the extra credit words hidden in the array of letters. After reading the sidebar story, list the underlined words. Copy the enclosed reproducible and ask students to locate the twenty-five selected words.



Illustrated Stationery

Use this lined or unlined stationery topper and invite students to write:

- a description of their own or another student's costume
- a descriptive letter to a family member
- a thank you note to someone who helped with the Vocabulary Parade
- an invitation to the Vocabulary Parade!

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V

I have a feeling this awesome ailment will cause me great agony soon.

V

B

What did I tell you? This berserk bacteria has bulldozed me badly. Help!

B

L

Is it likely a bit of learning was lost each time I blew my nose?

L

V

The stage was vast, I felt valiant, and no one threw a vegetable.

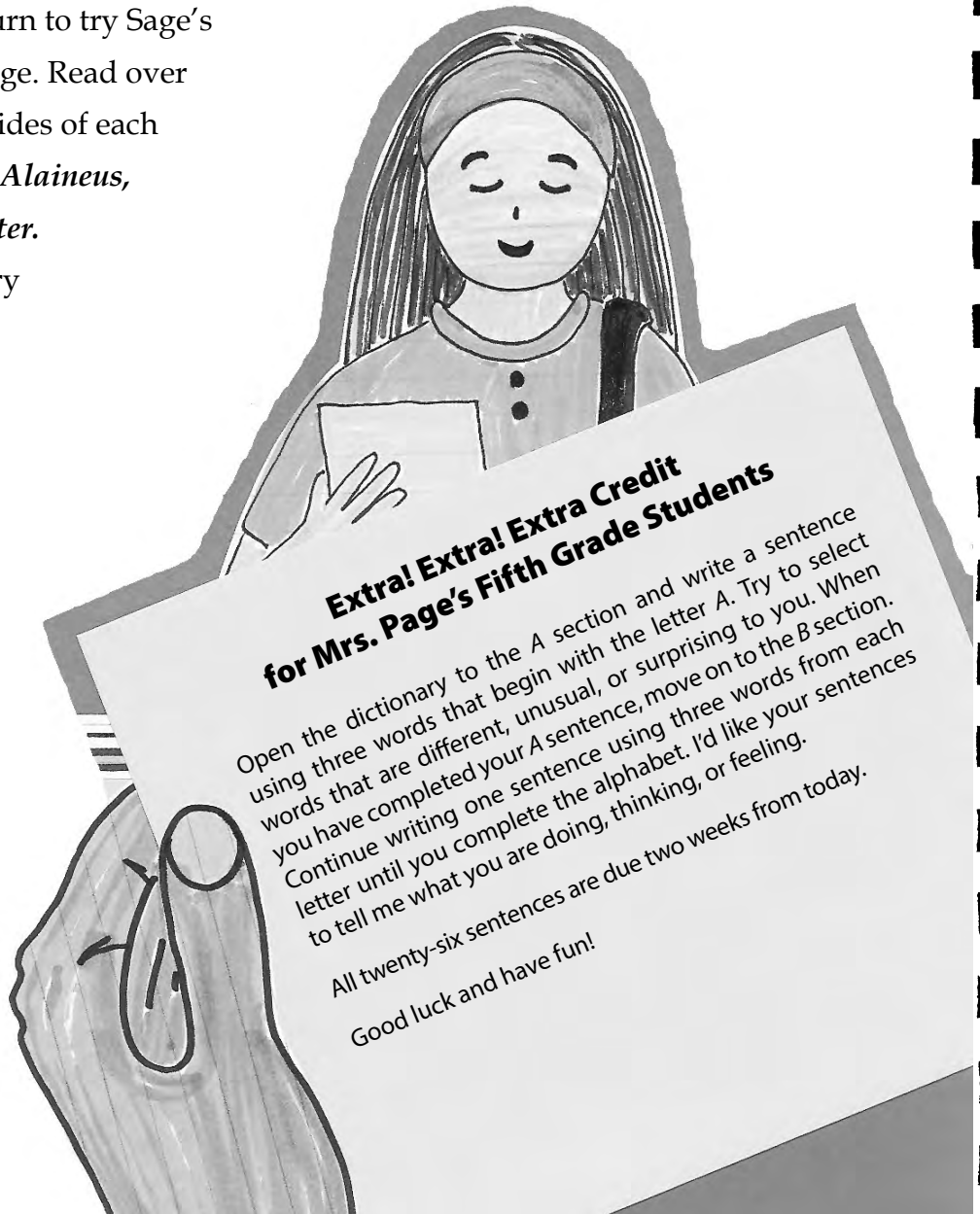
V

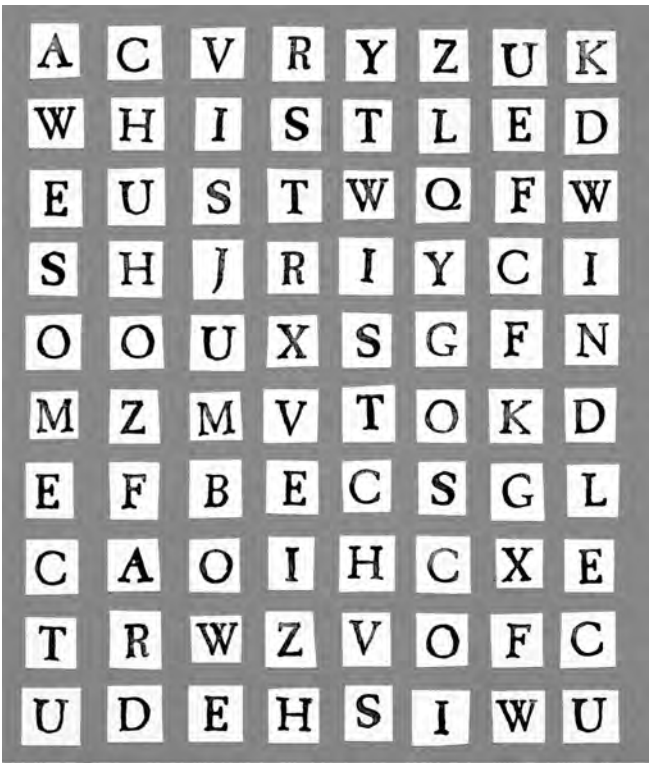
EXTRA CREDIT REPORT

Students! It's your turn to try Sage's Extra Credit Challenge. Read over her samples on the sides of each of the pages in *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*. Open your Dictionary to the letter

A.

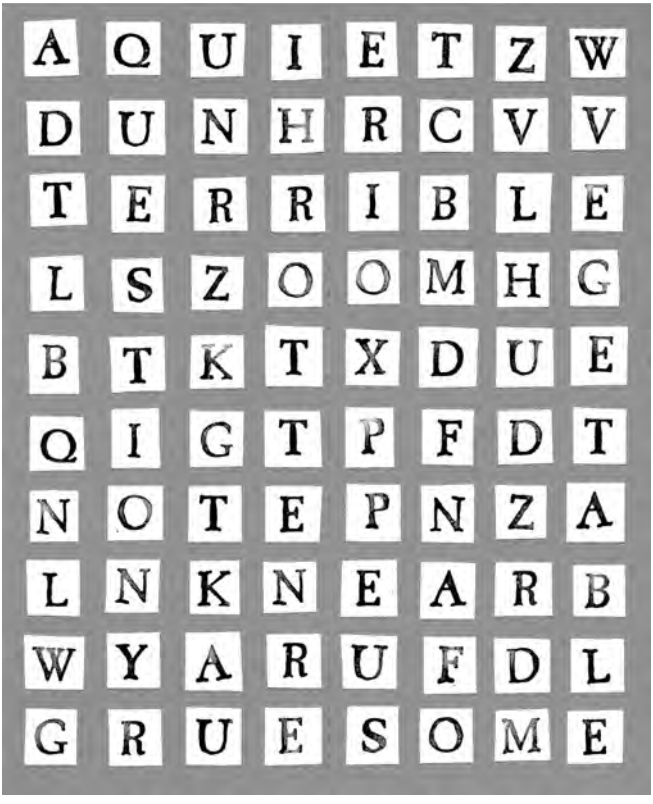
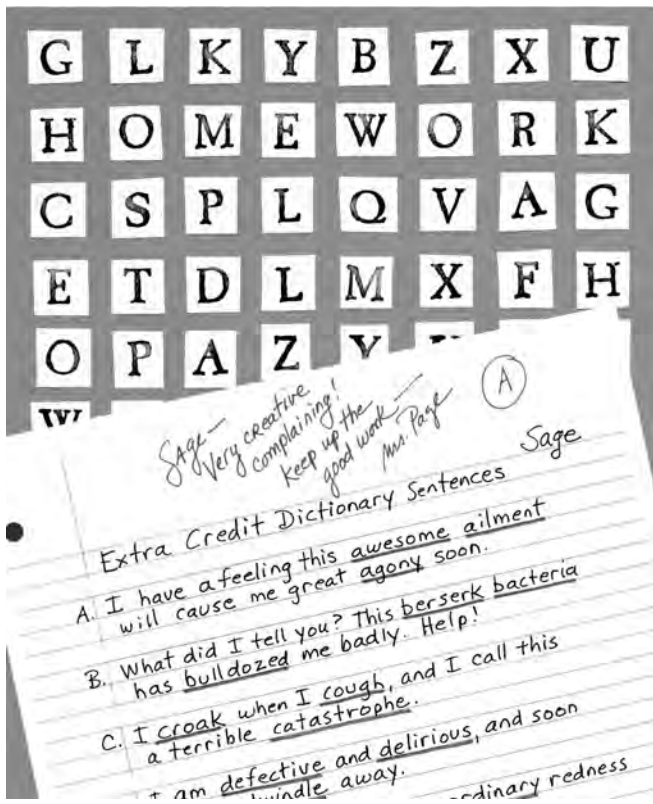
Complain or celebrate to your heart's delight! Use big words, little words, easy words, mysterious words—any words that will help you tell the story of your day.





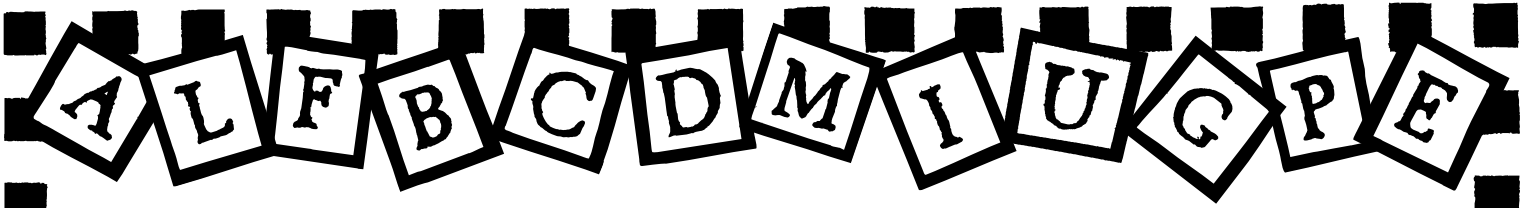
4 Word Finds

Look closely at this reprint of the endpapers in *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*. The author and illustrator, Debra Frasier, has hidden twenty-five of the words Sage uses in her Extra Credit Dictionary Sentences assignment. Look forward, backward, and diagonally. Can you find them all?





Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster

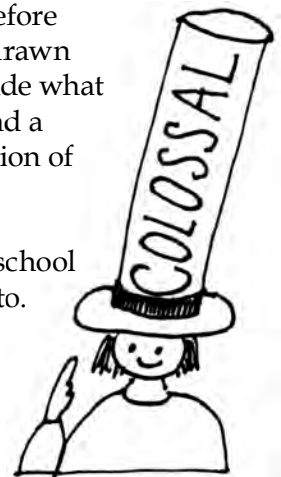


Vocabulary Parade Community Outreach

A Vocabulary Parade is a very visual, amusing, *and* inspiring event. While it entertains it also increases vocabulary recognition in the participants and the audience. Invite the wider community to participate and give your school's profile a lively boost.

Consider the following:

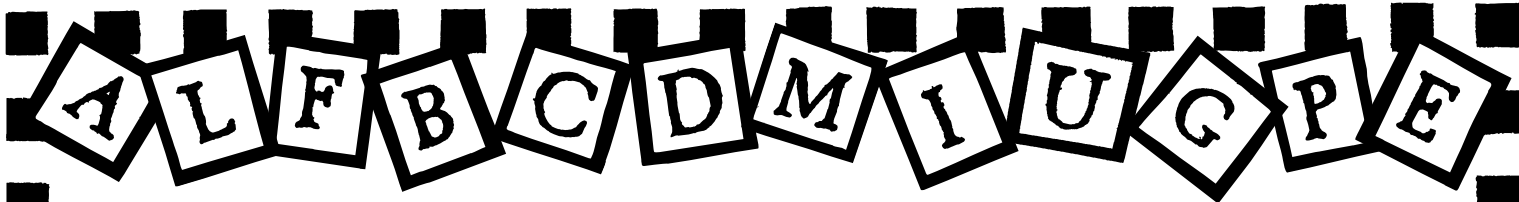
- Two weeks before your Parade send out a version of the enclosed Press Release online. Check each media outlet's submission policy: date, prior e-mail information, or print? Often the news outlets do not cover our finest school events because they do not learn about the details before the event. Designate a Public Relations volunteer to keep the community updated on the project.
- Invite local celebrities to select a word. Students can then design a costume for these selected words. You might also consider selecting words to intrigue local celebrities and invite them to come see the results (or offer to send photos). The honored guests could be principals from surrounding schools, the superintendent, business leaders, the mayor, local high school athletes, the editor of the newspaper, etc., or even national figures.
- Involve the newspaper in your early planning efforts. Contact the Community Editor. Explain this vocabulary-building project. Ask to run a design for a word-costume each week for the month running up to the Parade. All newspapers have a vested interest in building vocabulary. Cultivate the local papers as an early team member.
- Contact the TV station or community cable unit two weeks before the event. Explain the larger goal of building community-wide "Vocabulary Awareness." Ask them to help! Perhaps a week before the Parade newscasters could offer a Word of the Day, with a drawn costume sample. Remember that TV is a visual medium. Provide what they need to make your project look lively and interesting. Send a Press Release with the details of time, place, and brief description of the parade, or schedule a preview for the media.
- Following the Vocabulary Parade event, send the link to your school electronic newsletter article to all media outlets. Include a photo.



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Press Release Sample

A Press Release follows a pre-described form, always double-spaced, 12 point type:

Headline

Head: (begins Body with a catchy lead sentence) who, what, when, where, how

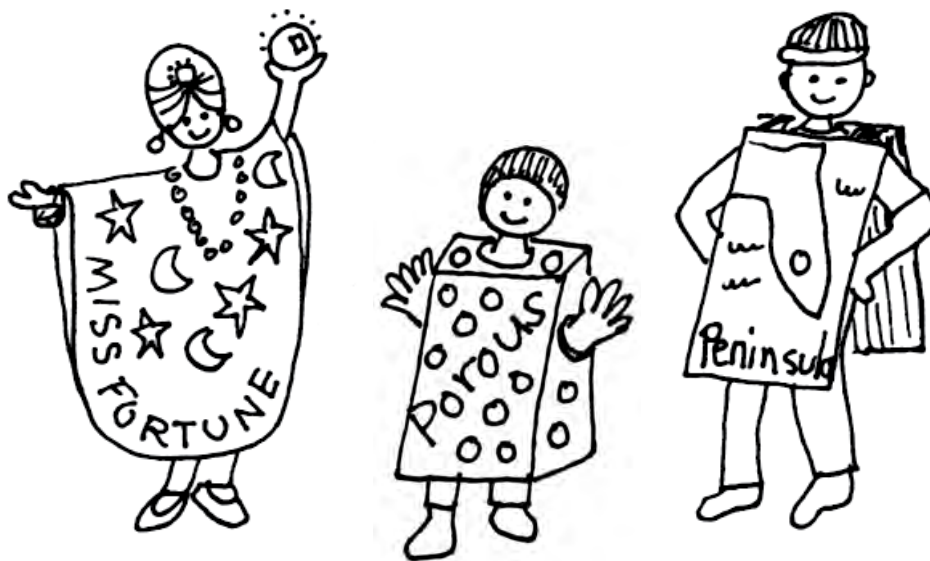
Body: two paragraphs: expands on why and how, with optional:
third paragraph: expands underlying theme
fourth paragraph: presents statistics

Final Paragraph: gives background

Closing Stand-Alone Sentence is always the same: *For more information...*

Email your press release to your local newspaper, morning news show (attention: segment producer), cable community news channel (att: public affairs, or segment producers), district school office (att: superintendent), local radio shows (consider developing a list of questions and answers for student interviews). If possible, attach a photograph of a costumed student or faculty member with a name and descriptive caption on the back.

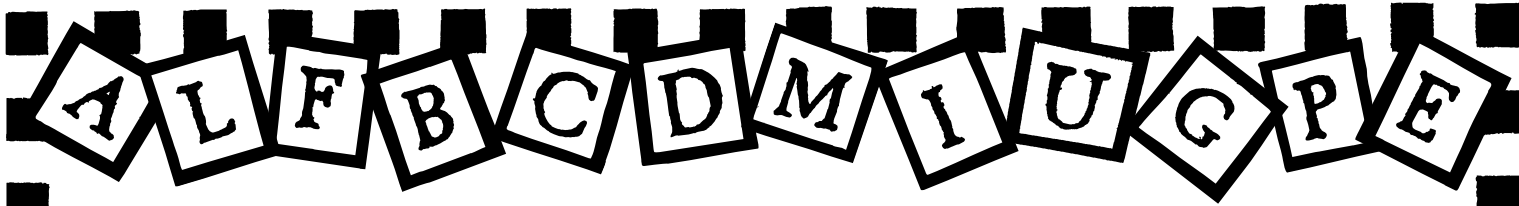
Adapt this sample press release for a Vocabulary Parade to your school. Consider assigning it to a budding writer or volunteer committee member. Remember to double-space, set in 12 point type, and change all particulars to your school's parade information:



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Press Release Sample

For Immediate Release
Date: May 1, 20XX

Contact: Mr. Bell
Telephone: 617-XXX-XOXO

HEAD-
LINE

Students Make Words Come Alive in Webster School’s First Vocabulary Parade!
or
Words Get All Dressed Up in Webster School’s Vocabulary Parade!

HEAD

The fifth grade students at Webster School have been creating costumes that will send a host of words marching across our stage at 7 pm on May 15, 2025. Come laugh, applaud, and be amazed by our students’ ingenuity. Be surprised by our celebrity guests and their costumed words. Watch three boys forge an ALLIANCE, three girls sail in as FRIENDSHIP, or witness a branch-covered student portray CONIFEROUS. We promise to make our parade of words memorable. Tickets are free. A refreshment sale will follow the parade and award ceremony.

BODY

The Vocabulary Parade is part of Webster School’s ongoing effort to increase word recognition among our students. The parade concept is based on Debra Frasier’s book, *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*, where a student confuses the word “miscellaneous” for the person, Miss Alaineus. In this hilarious story, great embarrassment is assuaged by turning this mortifying mistake into a winning costume at the Vocabulary Parade.

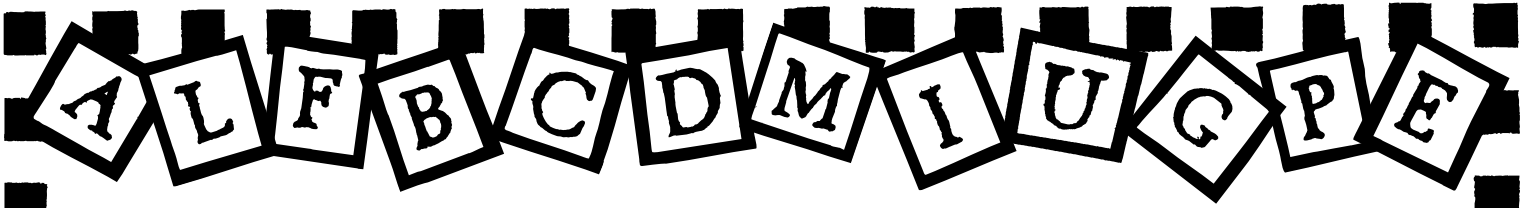
Ninety students will be participating in the Webster Vocabulary Parade. One of the surprising costumes will be honored with the *Miss Alaineus Award For The Most Original Use of a Word*. Mr. Bell, principal, and Ms. Page, fifth grade teacher, are the project coordinators for the Webster School Parade. All funds raised by the Vocabulary Parade will support the purchase of new books for the Webster School library.

FINAL

Webster School is an elementary school serving six hundred students in the Southeast neighborhood. Established in 1988, this school places a strong emphasis on strengthening reading and writing skills.

CLOSING

For more information, or to arrange tickets or a photography session, please contact: Mr. Bell at 617-XXX-XOXO or Mrs. Page at 617-XXX-XOXO, EX 123.



Fundraising and Your Vocabulary Parade

Fundraising? If your Vocabulary Parade needs to generate funds to pay for itself (paper, building supplies, documentation, etc.), or could help raise funds for the library or other reading-related projects, consider the following:

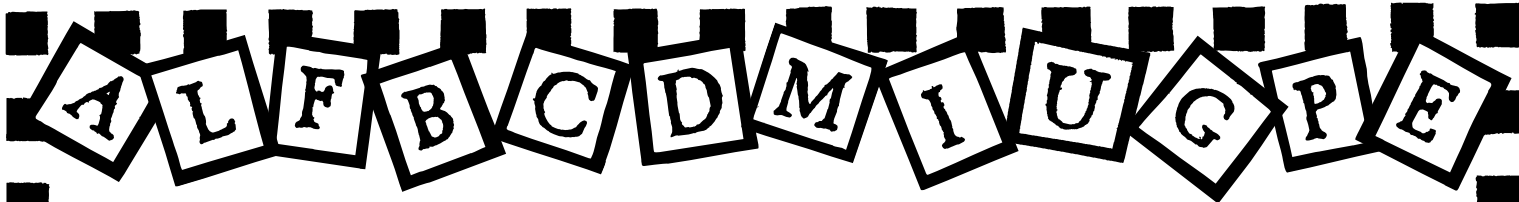
- Offer baked goods to parents following the parade.
- Invite businesses to sponsor a letter of the alphabet.
- In a library, town hall, grocery store, or other public place, hold a display of Vocabulary Word Costume photos or drawings. Place a coffee can below each picture. Invite visitors to “vote” for their favorites with quarters or dollar bills.
- Follow the Pledge Model. Solicit pledges toward individual costumes.
- Sell autographed copies of *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster* or other vocabulary-strengthening books.
- Sell ads in the Vocabulary Parade program.
- Use the Photo Booth idea to raise funds—charge for pictures, offer frames or cardboard sleeves.
- Offer raffle tickets for a basket or colander of *Miss Alaineus* things: pasta, spork, bread, spaghetti sauce, a copy of the book. Make other “book baskets” with items that complement a particular book.



Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster

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A Vocabulary Parade Timeline

Goal: To create a lively schoolwide “Vocabulary Culture” where the study of words is creative, interactive, memorable, ongoing, and fun.

The following considerations are just that—things to consider, not mandatory tasks. Every school will have their own unfolding plan. Some Vocabulary Parades will be simple, others more elaborate. Use this guide to help you create your own timeline.

Prep Time: one day, one month, or as long as you wish!

Months before

1. Present idea to faculty (If planning to replace Halloween, present idea at the close of the preceding academic year.) Select date for Vocabulary Parade.

Six Weeks before

1. Order *Miss Alaineus* books to circulate among staff.
2. Decide if event will be used as a fundraiser. Make timeline based on type of fundraising. (Print tickets? Sell books? Look for sponsors?)

Four weeks before

1. Read *Miss Alaineus* to all participating classes.
2. Give parents an early warning—send home a brief “Save this Date” note.
3. Begin author study. Visit www.debrafrasier.com. (Create bulletin boards, media center display of books, assign research projects.)
4. Discuss awards. Decide how participants will be recognized. (Print Award reproducible in this kit? Assign art classes to build trophies? Involve parents in creating awards? Decide categories to be awarded. Order awards, if using outside source.)
5. Will you need judges? Decide, and invite to event.
6. Discuss judging criteria. Select method. Send notes to judges.
7. Approach sponsors. Inquire about interest in sponsorship, or support of a letter of the alphabet, or prize donation.

Three weeks before

1. Present Vocabulary Parade concept and dates to students and parents. At the start of the week send home reproducible introducing the project. By week’s end send home Costume Design reproducible.
2. Start a Costume Word Bank in a highly visible area.
3. Start posting weekly sample word costume ideas.
4. Post drawings. Announce weekly word contest.
5. Announce award categories, if using any.
6. Find Public Relations volunteer. Adapt sample press release to your school’s specifics.
7. Select a Master of Ceremony (MC) for the Parade. Begin costume for MC.
8. Find a parent volunteer to commit to staff a Costume Help Room after school or during recess for a few days of the upcoming weeks.

Two weeks before

1. Select method for viewing. Walking parade? Using a stage?
2. Decide form documentation will take. PowerPoint? Video? Scrapbook? Bulletin board? Individual classroom booklets?
3. Select person(s) who will document the event.
4. Send Press Release to newspaper and TV stations. Schedule meeting with media representatives to invite participation.

(continued on next page)

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A Vocabulary Parade Timeline

(continued from previous page)

5. Open the Costume Help Room to provide space and materials for students who are not being helped at home. Post a schedule. Offer design help.
6. Will you be offering refreshments? Establish a committee to bring treats to follow the Parade.
7. Are you going to offer a Photo Booth on Parade day? Plan the background. Keep it very simple! Make sure there is a parent to staff this area. Make a camera charging station.
8. Print the Vocabulary Parade invitation in this kit. Add specific information. (Date, time, place. Refreshments? Bring camera for photo booth? Books for sale? State time participants should report to the staging area?)

One week before

1. Monday: Send home Vocabulary Parade invitation. (Send to classrooms for coloring, first?)
2. Call or email media to remind them of the date, time, and place.
3. Request all word costume 3x5 cards to be turned in to the MC.
4. Plan the order of participants in the Vocabulary Parade.
5. Does the Master of Ceremony (MC) have a costume?
6. Will you have parade music?
7. Arrange awards in visible place, to stimulate excitement.
8. Make certain all students who are participating have a costume nearly ready. Anyone need help?

Day of Parade!

1. Will you need a rehearsal? (Most schools do not, but teachers may need a dry run of schedule and method.)
2. Make certain judges, if using any, are reminded of duties. Set up judges' table.
3. Set up microphone for MC.
4. Organize refreshments.
5. Check that documentation plan and equipment is in place. (Photograph everything. Edit later!)
6. Set up Photo Booth on Parade Day.
7. Have a marvelous time!

After the Parade

1. Organize documentation. This may require a committee if participation has been high.
2. Announce to students how they can view their fellow classmates' efforts. (Scrapbooks? Computer parade? Video? Bulletin board display?) Repeat the costumed words somewhere within the school.
3. Send thank you notes to all sponsors, judges, volunteers, and faculty who have worked on the event. (Have students create notecards from their costume designs? Use enclosed illustrated stationery reproducible?)
4. Thank the media. If they have not covered the Vocabulary Parade, send along a visual summation of the event or have a student write the story and submit their text. Coverage may come AFTER the event. Emphasize the inventiveness of your students and highlight the marvelous words! Invite them to next year's parade!

If you have pictures you would like to share with Debra Frasier, send digital pictures via: debrafrasier.com/contact.

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