

## Alignments to Language Arts Standards and Balanced Literacy

### Judith Caseley Works for Children and Young Adults

Judith Caseley is a trained, working illustrator and artist, who has authored over thirty eight published works for children and young adults. These works, as a consequence of her experiences as a mother who fosters her children's literacy, strongly resonate the values, goals and methodologies of the IRA/NCTE English Language Arts Standards.

Specifically, Ms. Caseley's published, out of print, and in press works, align with the 1998 literacy standards frameworks -

#### Philosophic Alignment:

Her works in their plots deliberately demonstrate children and teens experimenting "with literacy activities" including: library read aloud experiences and sleepovers (Sophie and Sammy's Library Sleepover), reader's theater performances (Praying to A.L.), personal letter writing (Dear Annie), celebration of writing workshop (Harry and Willy and Carrot Head), informational report writing (On the Town), observation writing (Mister Green Peas) and point of view (Sisters).

Through the use of her vibrant watercolor paints, colored pencil, and black pen, plus interactive layout inviting spatial readers to make their own literal color and design choices (In Style with Grandma Antoinette), Caseley provides ample opportunities for individual independent reader innovation or teacher /parent creativity in storytelling. This is essential to nurture literacy.

Most importantly, all of Caseley's plots, characters, and experiences, mirror those accessible to a broad spectrum of multicultural, multiethnic, rural, suburban, urban, and special needs (Harry and Willy and Carrot Head) audiences from a varied range of family/caregiver backgrounds.

Alignment to the twelve articulated standards (Referencing the available, in print Caseley works):

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of themselves . . . of the cultures of the United States and the world . . . to [learn how to] respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace.

Caseley's works are replete with multiethnic, multicultural illustrations and references that are inclusive and indicative of the diverse nature of our American society. In Style with Grandma Antoinette includes a diverse array of female and male characters representing Asian, African American, Italian, Latino, and other cultures with illustrations of various hairstyles and hair textures and colors that reflect multicultural

fashion. Characters also run the age and gender spectrum in this work, plus reflect various family and friend social connections.

In particular, *Praying to A. L.*, Caseley's work about a 13 year old dealing with the sudden loss of her Jewish father in the context of a strong mixed family including her Cuban mother's relatives as well, powerfully conveys both the Cuban and the Jewish traditions of mourning, family roles, and commemoration of the departed.

A key focus in almost all of Caseley's stories is the workplace. Although her stories involve fictive characters, all of them, connect in a very real way to the workplace. Among the workplaces and community job concerns Caseley powerfully details are: the salon, the library, the luncheonette, the movie theater, the funeral parlor (*Praying for A. L.*), the school, the post office, the restaurant, the bike shop, the supermarket, the pizzeria, and the gas station. Other workers who appear in Caseley stories include: postal workers, manicurists, luncheonette servers, ticket sellers at the movie theater, EMS workers, and doctor's office staff.

It should be noted that readers, teachers, tutors, librarians and caregivers can also engage in dialogue with Judith Caseley online at her authorized site ([www.judithcaseley.com](http://www.judithcaseley.com)) which includes a growing selection of features as non print texts. Among these texts are: her bio, inspiration explanations for each of her in print and out of print works, gallery, contact information, school visit opportunities, projects and more.

2. Students read a vast range of literature . . . in many genres. .

Even though the bulk of Caseley's works, currently in print, are for the K-3 reader, she offers a rich array of genres and references to various types of literature. *Harry and Willy and Carrothead* is almost reportorial and newspaper human interest story styled with a surprise first person commentary at the end. *Sisters* nicely introduces point of view writing. *Dear Annie* showcases personal letter writing. It harks back to the first novel formats. *Bully* includes memos and personal notes in its illustrations, plus is basically a dialogue driven book. *On the Town* is a wonderful introduction to the mandated informational report writing that is so much a part of today's 2-5 grade language arts and social studies curricula. *Praying for A.L.*, deftly uses and attributes Abraham Lincoln's speeches and writings in a young adult father and daughter, dealing with loss, fictive genre format.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and analyze texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with readers and knowledge of word meaning and of other texts. . .

Caseley's works are experientially based with the stories and the strategies needed for interacting with these experiences coming from the reader's active learning and everyday family routines, be they suburban, urban, or rural.

In *Praying for A. L.*, Sierra is very much involved in correctly comprehending and interpreting Lincoln's papers. She is also concerned about evaluating quotes and themes of the Rosh Hashanah liturgy. In *Style with Grandma Antoinette* directly engages its readers in text (both graphic and linguistic) interpretation by asking them to choose hairstyles, nail polish colors, count change (for a tip), and select hand creams. Words that are challenging such as mannequin, intercom, and receptionist are nicely contextualized, so that students can use the clues to comprehend their use. *Mr. Green Peas* aptly integrates living things, animal and vegetarian vocabulary in a high interest story framework that motivates readers to incorporate these words into their own discussions and written language performances.

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes.

One of the key literacy learning features of the Caseley works is their mix of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate with a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes. For example, in *Mister Green Peas*, informational signs such as the Nursery School sign, name flower badges, signed children's art works, and permission slips are the documents of everyday literacy visual/written life that are included as part of the author's illustrations. The narrative of *Mister Green Peas* itself is told as a third person story. Many of the sentences in this compelling third person, pet story, mirror a nursery school child's thought and oral language process as he/she literally and deliberately "run on":

"When Toni asked if any of the children had pets, Arnie and Daniel and Erika has dogs, and Jenna and Stephanie had cats, and Sami had a gerbil."

Even in a story told about a nursery school child, the parents use language that parallels the diction of adults:

"We get the point, dear," said Mrs. Slope. "But no pets. The subject is closed."

In *Sophie's and Sammy's Library Sleepover*, the librarian, Mrs. Terry uses formal language to introduce the library sleepover concept that is appropriate for the parents and the young readers who have come to it:

"Welcome to my library sleepover. You won't really be spending the night here, but by reading books and using our imaginations, we can pretend all sorts of things. . . When this candle burns out, storytime is over."

In contrast, when Sophie and her little brother Sammy hold their own home library sleepover, they fear a night creature's (turns out to be their mother's) hand hiding something.

"It looks like a claw!" whispered Sammy.

"Holding a poison drink!" whispered Sophie.

“It’s the monster!” screamed Sammy.

Obviously these two sample passages from a single early childhood picture book demonstrate the adjustment of language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes.

5. Students employ a variety of strategies as they write and use different written elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

Judith Caseley’s works are very much derived from the ongoing experiences of her children and the written memorabilia and documents of her family members, including her father’s letters to his granddaughter.

Therefore her works, easily lend themselves to being used as a write aloud models for a variety of writing strategies, purposes, and audiences.

Bully, based on a famous (in her own family) quote Judith’s grandparent made to Judith’s father when he was a boy 9 (“Lester Goldberg, you used to be a mouse, and now you’ve turned into a great big rat!”) can and has been easily used by writing workshop teachers to teach: use of family proverbs as the starting point for family stories/memoirs/snapshots, use of quotes as dialog starters, use of a narrative story as a perfect format for conversion into a reader’s theater piece (actually Bully takes very little conversion), teaching of document based informational and functional writing scavenger and note taking skills, using the labels, memos, notes, posted assignments, and home work headings included throughout the book.

Dear Annie, with its unfolding story of how a grandfather bridges the geographic long distance between him and his grandchild through a series of letters is, of course, a prime example of how letter writing can be used to develop a narrative. It also models a greeting card informational and functional writing format with many lovely greeting cards with the letters folded in the card. It is not surprising to learn that Ms. Caseley has also worked professional as a graphic artist in the greeting card field. The modeling of a pen pal exchange and the concept of evolving an on site message board, which can also display and exhibit letter exchanges between relatives and friends, is powerfully developed in this book. The differences between postcard exchanges and letter writing are also introduced toward the end of this unexpectedly deep work.

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions, media techniques, figurative language and genre to create and critique print and non print texts.

On the Town is a wonderful resource for a varied array of students’ applications of writing and language conventions, as they create their own In Style of projects which mirror Caseley works. Indeed, On the Town can be used by almost every k-3 teacher who is charged with teaching about community and jobs in the social studies or

job/community informational language arts units. The work contains wonderful child authentic, grade and age appropriate note taking and observation journal models. The work also demonstrates how graphics, illustrations, drawings, sketches or even photographs can be grouped with interviews to teach various language conventions, media techniques and language structure.

As a consequence of Judith's background and work in the greeting card field, books like *Dear Annie* model media techniques and the creation of print and non print texts in that the whole narrative in that work revolves around the cards and the letters within them. The book naturally invites its young readers under the supportive mentoring of teachers, librarians or parents, to design their own media greeting cards with informational letters. Other forms of language conventions and media techniques showcased include, but are not limited to: pen pals, bulletin boards of messages, and post cards.

*Praying to A. L.*, Caseley's work which integrates the use of letters, reader's theater, reenactments based on letters, public speaking, playwriting, multimedia effects and other media techniques and spoken/written language convention use in the service of its dealing with loss of a parent theme: is replete with character activities that can inspire student transformation of letters and documents into various performance arts media presentations and small group discussion/collaborative writing opportunities.

Judith Caseley's web site also includes online opportunities that involve the use of photos and graphic arts media explorations as well as the text of an interview with her and a gallery of pictures of her efforts of sharing her book art with specific children's hospital wings.

7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources and non-print texts, artifacts, people to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit different purposes and audiences.

What distinguishes Judith Caseley's work from that of many other young children's trade book authors, is the way she has been able to infuse multiple options for research and investigation into her works for young learners and their teachers/family members.

*On the Town* is a totally research driven, community interview, observation, and documentation work, which models for the early childhood learner, how to research the neighborhood. This is a key focus for the early grades social studies and language arts content. The Caseley work demonstrates through deliberate illustrations and text references how to take notes, outline, sketch, and interview and survey a neighborhood. It also educates for proactive family and community life, as the child walks through the neighborhood stores and interviews various key workers and stakeholders, in the company of and with the support of his parent. Charlie, the key character in this work, gathers, synthesizes and evaluates data from a variety of print and human resources/experts to communicate his findings as part of a neighborhood

community study. This particular Caseley work is already being used in a significant number of New York State public and private schools as a superb fictional information research skills teaching resource for this mandated research topic.

Another key early childhood, science of loving things integrative topic that is beautifully modeled in a Caseley book is animal study/pet care. The Caseley work, *Mr. Green Peas*, deals with Norman and his dream of owning an outrageous pet. Through its delightful and engaging story line which also models family living (another key early childhood topic) plus school routines, Norman and the children in his nursery class research hamsters, gerbils, dogs, parakeets, and other animals with age appropriate picture and oral report research. Later in the story, Norman gets (for a month), an iguana. The work includes an accurately illustrated watercolor print and colored pencils illustration of the iguana and grade and age appropriate discussion of its vegetarian eating habits. In addition, the work models another key aspect of conducting research for classes as a whole and for individual student researchers—the class trip!! This concept of going to another site to investigate the issues or in this case the creature researched is a key component of the research process. The book also includes an illustration of the class members leaving the research site with their sketches of Mr. Green Peas (the iguana), demonstrating age and grade appropriate observational drawing research.

*In Style with Grandma Antoinette* is another work, highly accessible to kindergarten through third graders which models research on ideas and interests plus gathering of data. Interestingly, Caseley also presents this story of a little girl's going to spend the day with her grandmother, as an invitation that is offered through alluring questions: What could be better than watching a movie with grandma, jumping up and down at the scary parts and spelling their popcorn? What could be as exciting as going to the amusement park . . . ? The answer turns out to a day watching (researching) Grandma Antoinette's work at Haircraft (where Ms. Caseley actually works). Again the book nicely models action based research demonstrating gathering data, synthesizing information, and evaluating material from a variety of sources including persons, print and non print texts, artifacts, and people. The concept of Rosie, the child investigator serving as the hands-on assistant for her research is age and grade appropriate. It resonates in the ideas of inquiry driven, investigator center social sciences and career education research. Through use of her vibrant, colorful illustrations and engaging graphic layouts, Caseley offers up invaluable data about the key products, tools, services, and functions of a hair salon. Hair salon site investigations are key community research resource sites for a multiplicity of neighborhood K-3 social studies and language arts projects. Among the data shared effectively through text and illustrations in Caseley's work are: various nail polish color choices, hair color choices as artifacts used by the hair stylist, lip stick color choices, hair style choices, a variety of styling brush options, mannequin head wig artifacts, hand cream scent choices, and interior views of the color mixing room and the wig room. Best of all, the data is shared in a captivating story that uses the model of the close grandmother and granddaughter relationship as the narrative entry point for community business investigation. Children who wish to present their research

into the workings of hair salons can easily collect samples of nail polishes, hand lotions, brushes, hair style color choices and other used hair mix samples as part of their written and illustrated research reports. The work also wonderfully presents the varied jobs and workers within the salon including the stylist, colorist, receptionist, manicurist, and others, who work together as a team to make this community within the community effort, a success.

8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (libraries, computer networks and video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and to present knowledge.

Judith Caseley's personal online use and understanding of the centrality of online communications through observing her teens, has led her to develop her own web resource for learning about her published and ongoing projects. Readers of various ages, teachers, parents, tutors and librarians can use the photos, texts, and activities of this evolving Caseley resource, to explore her inspirations, perspectives on her work as an illustrator and an author, her constructive action outreach to various children's wards and projects she has created to complement her work.

There is a direct link to her on this resource, which will also include more teacher developed and student sample balanced literacy projects inspired by her works and classroom/school site visits.

Judith is currently working on an upcoming young adult work about blogging per se.

Beyond this web resource, in *Praying to A. L.* the key character, a thirteen year old named Sierra who is dealing with the untimely loss of her dad, is very involved with technology use and information resources. She regularly conducts research into her exploration of Lincoln's work and speeches through use of computer networks and communicates extensively with her best friend online. Furthermore, Sierra has heard the Gettysburg address read online as a two minute audio clip. Eli, the best friend in this work wants to have a career in technology. Finally the ultimate reenactment and reader's theater presentation based on the speeches of Abraham Lincoln, which is the center piece healing writing workshop and oral language performance of this narrative, is developed as a result of extensive research in the children's library.

Throughout the book, it is emphasized that Sierra, has frequented this library since she was a young child. In fact, the book presents the positive, child friendly and sensitive, librarian role model of Anthony Petruzzi. His brainstorming of creative projects which grow out of student library research such as reenacting Emily Dickinson by wearing white and carrying a white flower or Mr. Petruzzi's own style sense of fashion; perfectly align with the standard which fosters the development of creative expressions of the library synthesized data.

Beyond these explicit references to the joys and uses of library and online research for specific projects, almost all of Judith Caseley's works positively model the integrative library literacy experience.

Annie, in *Dear Annie*, receives letters from her grandfather about how he loved going to the library when he was a boy. She writes back to him to let him know that she likes books on witches and babies.

Certainly the crux of *Sophie and Sammy's Library Sleepover* is a celebration of the library experience. The work opens with a dedication in the illustration of a stamped out library book pocket: "To children's librarians everywhere. . ." From this auspicious, valentine to library as the center of literacy learning, Ms. Caseley goes on to share young Sophie's, a definitive young reader, fascination with reading her books each evening at home. The story is focused on the evening special excursion, Sophie's mother arranges for her to the library for an early evening sleepover. The illustrations of the audience, all attired in their pajamas stretched out in the reading room presided over by a theatrically dressed Mrs. Terry, the librarian in a long nightgown and bunny slippers. The illustrations of an actual parent and child, seated on the floor with Mrs. Terry at the center, sharing stories; serves as a visual motivator for classroom and family library sleepovers. This story's text models and informs children's read aloud and interactive responses, through not only the printed word, but also evocative illustrations. The storyline also emphasizes the use of the library as the forum for shared family literacy experiences with the closeness of both mothers and daughters and fathers and children illustrated as well as stated. As part of the storyline, the mother encourages and supports Sophie, the older sibling's sharing the library sleepover, bedtime story read aloud experience with her younger brother Sammy. The very last lines of this work which is the quintessence of this standard voice Sophie's desire to be a librarian when she grows up and Sammy's resolution to go to her very first library sleepover!!

9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use. . . across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

Judith Caseley's works are rich in their visual and textual depiction of various cultural groups, regions, and social roles. Since Ms. Caseley is also the illustrator of her picture book efforts, she has also made certain that the characters depicted in the illustrations for the varied story lines and geographic settings, she shares from contemporary America, reflect the American scene in its full ethnically diverse spectrum.

*Praying for A. L.* deftly demonstrates this diversity angle with its focus on thirteen year old Sierra, who is the scion of a marriage between a proud Latina from Cuban background and a Jewish father from the United States. Beyond the key characters, the supporting extended family roles are accurately depicted down to Spanish language "no tem etas, por favor!" and the Yiddish language "meshuggener" phrase introduced, as a natural part of the this young adult novel discourse. Tia Claudia is balanced by Aunt Rose. The librarian wears an earring through his eyebrow, while one of the other key

characters has a father who is a recovering alcoholic. Not only do the characters and expressions , represent a broad spectrum of mixed cultural backgrounds so increasingly reflective of the American scene, but the book symbolically ends with the mother waltzing around her living room to the “sonorous rhythms of the Spanish guitar.” The Latina mother invites Sierra to “baila comingo”-dance with her. This is a wonderful blending of Spanish cultural traditions as the young and half Jewish teen affirms the continuation of family life, despite her father’s untimely demise.

It should be noted that as an illustrator and author with many books published for classroom library and emergent reader use, Ms. Caseley is careful to depict in her illustrations characters, which run the gamut of special needs and diversity in cultural/ethnic backgrounds. For example, *Harry and Willy and Carrot Head* is focused on a so-called special needs child, who although born with only one arm, most successfully and positively excels with his prosthesis in both academics and social and emotional relationships with peers. The participants at the Library Sleepover attended by Sophie and Sammy represent a spectrum of ethnic and cultural types including Asian, African American and Latino children. All the classroom communities and class compositions are diverse in nature with a mix of Caucasian, African American, Latino, and Asian class members.

Similarly, when Ms. Caseley shares community experiences and observations with her emergent readers the personalities portrayed in the workplace and in various roles represent various ethnicities and cultures. For example in *In Style With Grandma Antoinette*, the employees at the Haircraft include ones with Italian, Latino, and other surnames . In addition, the customers represent a broad range of ages and community roles.

It should also be noted that Caseley fiction for all her readers is very much focused on intergenerational relationships between related and unrelated seniors and young children (*Letters to Annie*, *In Style with Grandma Antoinette*, and *Praying to A.L.*). Finally the social role of teacher and librarian is always positively portrayed in Caseley fiction for emergent readers.

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language competency in English language arts and to develop understanding of the content curriculum.

While Caseley’s stories for readers are not directed specifically to English Language learners, but are inclusive of their needs and cultures implicitly; *Praying to A.L.* is very much a work which resonates use of first language competency as a means of understanding the content of curriculum and facilitating second language mastery.

Throughout the story, which deftly details how with the support of both extended families-the Cuban one on her mother’s side and the Jewish American one on her father’s side-a thirteen year old comes to terms with the death of her beloved American Jewish father; Spanish expressions and cultural traditions in terms of dealing with both life and

death are affirmed. In a parallel fashion, Jewish and Yiddish expressions, family roles, family nicknames and traditions are voiced as well. This story offers an effective entry point, integrating two first languages other than English through which learners can mediate the young adult novel genre format. Using these two aptly depicted and foreign language represented cultural entry points toward loss and grieving, young adult learners from many first language backgrounds, can mediate mandated rite of passage novel formats.

The novel also offers a template for the authoring of individual, English Language learner, memoirs of family funerals, memorials and special occasions as well as suggesting ways to use letters and speeches to react key historical figures lives. Therefore the work's successful mediation of two foreign languages and multiple religious and cultural backgrounds supports English language learners in dealing with necessary document based essay and creative writing tasks.

11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative and critical members of literacy communities.

One of the principal ways in which the fiction work already published by Judith Caseley and the work in development by her resonates the Standards for English Language Arts is that her child and teen characters in the works, their adult caregivers and the community Members who figure in her narratives: all actively participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative and critical members of literacy communities.

In *Bully*, Mickey's dad advises him to use powerful "brave" words to defeat the bully, not violence or retaliation. Mother reflects on the fact that Jack, the bully, has just had a new baby sister born in his family. Perhaps Mother suggests to Mickey, he is reacting with this bully behavior to others, because he is no longer the only adored child in his own family circle. Mrs. Pringle stops class members who make fun of Jack the bully's new blue braces by calling him "track mouth." She tells them that the braces are a pretty blue. While all of the above represent knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical literacy community participation, it is Mickey, himself, who comes up with the ultimately effective literacy method for dealing with Jack the bully. Surprisingly, it turns out to be making Jack laugh!!

*Sophie and Sammy's Library Sleepover* is the ultimate- real Caseley life experience- experience of a literacy community. The story engagingly details an actual public library early evening sleep over which is a model for not only young learner, but multi-age literacy communities. Even better for those readers, whose public or school libraries do not have the resources or staff to conduct library sleepovers, the story models how a caring family can have nightly bedtime sleepovers within the comfort of the family routine and with the support of caring family members or caregivers. Mrs. Terry, the librarian, is showcased as a role model, Sophie the emerging reader wants to emulate when she grows up.

Dear Annie is basically Ms. Caseley's valentine to letter writing as an easily accessible and successful way of fostering strong family ties between a distanced grandparent and his cherished grand daughter. The work dramatizes how readily available cards and enclosed letters can become a regular literacy format for maintaining ongoing communication and expressing deep feelings, while sharing details from daily lives. As the story continues, Annie grows and accumulates the letters and cards in a box. By the end of the work, she is sharing them with her class as part of show and tell- another instance of a literacy community. Due to Annie's successful and inspiring presentation, the class sets up a bulletin board of Mail from Everyone with postcards and Annie encourages her classmates to get pen pals.

Praying To A.L. can also be read as a story of how a literacy community and literacy tasks help a teenager come to terms with the death of her father and move forward. Intense reading about Abraham Lincoln, exploration of his speeches, authoring of his works into a staged presentation, hearing an audio clip of the Gettysburg address, a school performance and the support of caring English and library professionals: all help Sierra use literacy activity to commemorate her father's love of literacy, history and life.

Even Mr. Green Peas, which on the surface appears to be a story about a child's quest for a pet turns out to be a story about how illustrations can be used to demonstrate a wish for a pet and as wonderful introductory science observation sketches and documents detailing a real life iguana's habits.

On the Town is replete with Charlie's notebook comments about his community and sketches of the various key stores and roles he finds in his family stroll. He captures quotes and snatches of signs, posters and functional documents that tell a caring literacy community's story.

While In Style with Grandma Antoinette appears to be anything but a story about a literacy connected community, it is also a testimony to how members of literacy communities function as knowledgeable, reflective and creative participants of society. Mama uses questions to engage and motivate her reluctant daughter Rosie to spend a day at Haircraft, Grandma Antoinette's salon workplace. Much is made of the receptionist use of the intercom for everyday literacy communications including a public announcement about the arrival of Antoinette's assistant, her granddaughter Rosie. Questions about hair, nail color, and lotion type are used to attract the reader to the book and to build in an interactive reading dimension to the story that young female readers will love (as may their adult companions and adult/tutor readers). Signs, functional and informational documents of real life-waxing room, color room – are shown. The alliteration of William in the waxing room wearing a wig is stressed!! The use of cartoon bubble graphics highlights the connecting power of the intercom as a departing Rosie has the receptionist use it to provide the information to everyone in the salon that she loves her Grandmother Antoinette.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes for learning, enjoyment, persuasion and the exchange of information.

As just noted, in *In Style with Grandma Antoinette*, Rosie gets her Grandma to know how much she loves her by having the receptionist announce it and the receptionist also uses the intercom for key search for William and the wig announcements. In addition the intercom announces customers at the salon and the ultimate sighting of William in the waxing room. Sales signs for lemonades and painted rocks are used by Rosie to persuade customers outside her house to support her entrepreneurial efforts.

In *Mister Green Peas*, Norman dictates a functional document, a class trip permission form to his mother. At home, Norman uses posters to persuade his family to get him a pet. Ultimately the drawings of the iguana, Mr. Green Peas, express the family's delight in that pet and the children's enjoyment of their visit with this outrageous pet for the month!!

*Praying to A.L.* is all about how the speeches and works of Abraham Lincoln demonstrate the power to persuade, teach, inform, inspire, and comfort two young teens in need of a historical father figure and leader who can help them fill the emptiness of their real life father figures. Each learns from Lincoln. Each uses his words as part of an enjoyable public performance and personal restorative therapy for dealing with loss and parent alcoholism.

The joy of the Read Aloud is fully embraced in the community as part of Sophie's and Sammy's Library Sleepover, while this model also becomes part of the ongoing literacy learning in the home of Sophie and Sammy each night, as a bedtime reading ritual.

In *Harry and Willy and Carrot Head*, the once ridiculed character defies the conventions of this story about tolerance and special needs strengths, by revealing at the end that he is the author of the story and NO LONGER ridiculed as Carrot Head.

Balanced Literacy-

How the Caseley works can be used in conjunction with this approach to teaching and infusing the reading and writing workshop.

Teachers, librarians, and tutors who need to organize potential curriculum experiences, strategies and materials to support the balanced literacy approach, can easily and beneficially integrate the works of Judith Caseley as an author study or as a part of a balanced literacy writing, reading or word work model.

Caseley's works can easily be aligned with the various strands of the Literacy Workshop

In the Learning Language Strand:

Read-aloud- Not only are many of the Caseley books perfect for Read-alouds, but several including Sophie and Sammy's Library Sleepover and Dear Annie focus on the importance of read alouds in the characters' lives. These works model library use and reading aloud as part of the fabric of family literacy.

In addition with their vibrant Caseley drawn illustrations, the books easily lend themselves to the use of predicting and think aloud strategies that can also engage spatial, special needs, and English language learners.

Shared Reading/interactive writing:

Many of the Caseley works are almost scripted as reader's theater pieces, literally ready for use as part of the partner-reading strategy.

In particular, Bully is structured as a set of conversations between Mickey, his dad, his mother, his sister, and Jack. These can easily be distributed as parts among small collaborative reading groups during the small group work part of the lesson and then performed as part of the Share.

In Style with Grandma Antoinette with its potential scenery tie in to the hair salon or On the Town with its connection to the community, can easily serve as the scripts for vibrant, engaging and social science curricula complementary, presentations in the classroom or auditorium. These texts also invite productions that can feature the actual adult community members from the neighborhood to their shared delight.

Independent reading and writing:

Each of the Caseley books which distill her and her family's personal experiences are focused on the capturing of ideas and development of independent reader thinking. Indeed, she purposely includes a notebook for Charlie in On the Town to jot down his ideas and Norman in Mr. Green Peas works hard to convince his class mates that he does indeed have an outrageous pet. Dear Annie is all about the developing of a close relationship through the use of letters and cards, while even in Bully, the mother keeps loving touch with her son through notes slipped into his lunch box. Praying to A. L. is nicely poised to enhance teen independent reading and writing as this work details how Sierra and Eli use the internet, printed speeches and writings about Lincoln and secondary sources to craft a reenactment of his assassination scene. This work even includes email use and audio clips as part of independent reading and writing.

Learning about Language

Strategy Instruction-Demonstrations-Focused Mini Lessons

Since the Caseley books are also exquisitely designed, graphically developed and visually engaging, they easily lend themselves to memorable mini lessons.

Examples:

The two page spread of the iguana in *Mr. Green Peas* can be part of a lesson focused on involving the children in formulating hypotheses about what the iguana eats, does during the day and even how it feels about its environment. They can also use this spread or the term “outrageous pet” to develop their own creative writings or drawings about outrageous pets. This can also be start of a focused poetry lesson as well.

*In Style with Grandma Antoinette* can be the focus of a mini lesson which will introduce an informational brochure project that can be targeted to the local business establishments close to the school. Of course, the *On the Town* book can also serve as the model for the ways in which students with notebooks in hand can tour their neighborhoods to develop their own guides to the particular neighborhood or walking tour of the neighborhood.

*Praying to A.L.* can be effectively used with a 5-8 grade study of a key historic figure or contemporary personality, since it aptly models the ways in which students can effectively weave secondary, primary, and visual documents into a literacy embedded product, be it a costume or a performance.

*Bully* can be integrated with lessons in Conflict Resolution or friendship or community to model how to deal with social issues. It also showcases word based approaches for managing challenging family, playground and school concerns.

*Dear Annie* can powerfully convey how a letter and a card can foster a relationship among necessarily distanced family members.

Judith Caseley takes pride in the fact that her published works and those in press, can be powerful tools to be used in developing the critical skills that students need to become lifelong, successful readers. These works resonate scientifically based, balanced literacy aligned instruction which also dovetails with mandated Social Studies curricula themes. The works can be used effectively to explicitly teach the five skills that the Report of the National Reading Panel (2000) identifies as essential are: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Most importantly through the vibrant art and the modeling of supportive home, neighborhood, library and school environments, Caseley works can help teachers, parents, caregivers, librarians and tutors make certain that no child or teen is left behind or left out of the lifelong literacy circle.

