HOST A
VOCABULARY PARADE!

A How-To Kit with Classroom Extensions

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

Created by Debra Frasier
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If you would like additional copies of this kit, please contact Debra Frasier at [www.debrafrasier.com](http://www.debrafrasier.com).

**Author Study Information**

Please visit [www.debrafrasier.com](http://www.debrafrasier.com) for more information about the author. This site includes a reprintable biography, more curriculum support for the classroom, a River Journal essay series, studio notes, and many other resources.

**Autographed Books**

If you would like to order autographed copies of *Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster* for awards, special recognition, or collectors’ shelves please visit the Children’s Literature Network at [www.childrensliteraturenetwork.org](http://www.childrensliteraturenetwork.org) and click on Signed Books.
## Bring the Vocabulary Parade to Your School!

**based on the book:**

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

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

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*italics indicate reproducibles*

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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 shares the common technique of cut paper collage, each story requires a very different interpretation. (Set out four 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!
A Short Biography of Debra Frasier

Debra Frasier writes and illustrates for children and her picture books have won many awards, including the Parent’s Choice Gold Award, a Minnesota Book Award for Illustration, a Hungry Mind Book of Distinction Award, Teacher and Children’s Choice Awards from the International Reading Association, and the Best Children’s Book Award from the Southeastern Booksellers’ Association. She worked as Director of Animation with the Minnesota 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. In 2001 this book, often called “a contemporary classic,” celebrated its tenth anniversary with over one million copies in print. Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster, was selected as an Oprah Summer Reading List title, and has inspired Vocabulary Parades in cities from coast to coast. The Incredible Water Show, a companion book to Miss Alaineus, was published in 2004.

Debra was born April 3, 1953, and 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. For more information and activity ideas, visit her website at: www.debrafrasier.com.

Bibliography: Written and Illustrated
Out of the Ocean, Harcourt 1998
Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster, Harcourt 2000
The Incredible Water Show, Harcourt 2004
A Birthday Cake is No Ordinary Cake, Harcourt 2006

Illustrated
We Got Here Together, by Kim Stafford, Harcourt, 1994
In the Space of the Sky, by Richard Lewis, Harcourt, 2002

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

(For complete award list, visit www.debrafrasier.com and follow the Books link.)
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: ____________________________
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 to the selection process. Make dictionaries available in unusual places—hallways, benches, cafeteria, recess. Cultivate the habit of wandering through the pages.

- 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 his 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.
100 Vocabulary Words to Spark Costume Ideas!

abdomen abundance accomplice adrift agitation agony air aircraft annihilate appendage arrow assemblage blizzard blockhead bookworm brilliant busybody cascade cavity celestial cheerful closefisted collision dangle decoy disguise divergent egghead elasticity error extravagant feast ferocious flexible fortification fruitless ghastly gigantic gyrate headstrong heroic horizontal identical illuminate inflame join killjoy king snake knothole knuckleball lackadaisical lightning litter luminous midnight monarch monstrous noteworthy nourishment obstacle outskirts pierce polestar ponderous proboscis protuberance quiver radiant regal rejoin retract rickety satellite scale separate shortsighted sinister tendril threefold throng tidy transparent tremendous tributary unearth unequal useless utterly vacant vain vaporize vigilant web workload writhe x-ray xylem yoke zany zigzag
More Words for Vocabulary Parade
Costume Consideration!

afternoon  everyone  juggle
ahead       eyes        jumpball
amiss       face         jungle
angel       fall         king snake
apart       fan          kingfish
apart       fat          lean
arise       feet         letter
ax           fence        line
backyard     firefly      lips
basketball   fix          little
bat          flag         long
behind      flash        lost
bite         flashlight   mail
blank        fleet        mean
bone         fleet        money
box          float        mop
branch       fly          muddy
bright       forest       neat
bus          friend       nest
call         full         newspaper
cash         furry        night
city         glad         no
clap         go           noise
claw         grow         old
clean        gumdrop      open
clock        haircut      outside
color        happy        paint
cook         hard         park
core         hat          pasta
crash        hide         patch
crooked      hot          pet
crowd        house        plunk
dark         hurry        popcorn
dates        ink          pound
day          inside       puzzle
dice         jagged       quake
dirty        jailed       quarter
draw         jam          queen
ears
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	wine
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
wilt
window
wings
wink
wonderful
x-ray
yak
yank
yarn
yawn
yolk
yo-yo
yurt
zany
zap
zero
zigzag
zilch
zipper
zoom
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.)

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

- **CIRCLE**
- **benevolent**
- **POROUS**

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

**Create puppets based on words.**

- **BLOOM**
- **POLE STAR**
- **ARISE**

**Build Vocabulary hats over existing hats.**

**Make paper crowns.**

- **WATER LOG**

**Double over white fabric, then draw or paint.**

**Younger students fit into paper bags.**

**Peninsula**

**Use poster sheets for sandwich board costumes.**

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**Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster**

written and illustrated by Debra Frasier • www.debrafrasier.com

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Grade:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WORD:**

---

**DEFINITION:**

---

**USE IN A SENTENCE:**

---

**Costume Due:**

---

**Vocabulary Parade Date:**

---

**Costume Design Materials Needed:**

---
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. Tape 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.
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)
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

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).

- 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. (See information in this kit or select other books that highlight vocabulary.)
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, Author & Illustrator
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—Do you have a camera? 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
- shoot 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 camera, cords, batteries, film, 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!

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.
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. For the Word Find key check the “For Teachers” section at www.debrafrasier.com.

**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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*Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*

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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.

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**EXTRA CREDIT REPORT**

Open the dictionary to the **A** section and write a sentence using three words that begin with the letter *A.* Try to select words that are different, unusual, or surprising to you. When you have completed your A sentence, move on to the **B** section. Continue writing one sentence using three words from each letter until you complete the alphabet. I'd like your sentences to tell me what you are doing, thinking, or feeling.

All twenty-six sentences are due two weeks from today.

Good luck and have fun!
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?

**4 Word Finds**

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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. 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.
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…*

Send or fax 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 description 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:
Press Release Sample

For Immediate Release                                Contact: Mr. Bell
Date: May 1, 2006                                          Telephone: 617-XXX-XOXO

Students Make Words Walk and Talk in Webster School’s First Vocabulary Parade!
(OR)

Words Get All Dressed Up in Webster School’s Vocabulary Parade!

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, 2006. 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 $3.00. A refreshment sale will follow the parade and award ceremony.

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 confuse 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.

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.

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.

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*Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster*
written and illustrated by Debra Frasier • [www.debrafrasier.com](http://www.debrafrasier.com)
Parade Kit © 2005 Debra Frasier
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:

- Sell tickets to the Vocabulary 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
written and illustrated by Debra Frasier • www.debrafrasier.com
Parade Kit © 2005 Debra Frasier
Photo Permission Form

All schools benefit from seeing the work of other students. Debra Frasier’s website, www.debrafrasier.com, hosts a School Gallery where schools can post outstanding student Vocabulary Parade costumes, or offer a link to their own school website. If your school would like to participate in the School Gallery please submit any pictures via CD by mail, or electronically through the website contact at www.debrafrasier.com. The following permission should accompany all submissions.

If you would like to share pictures with Debra Frasier without including reprint permission, please feel free to do so. Contact her through her website for the best method.

If sending pictures that may be shared with other teachers and on the website, please reprint the following and send a hard copy to Debra Frasier, 45 Barton Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Authorized Signer: __________________________

School & Address: _______________________________________________________

E-mail Address: _______________________________________________________

Would you like to post a link to your school website?  Yes  No

Website Address: _______________________________________________________

Date: __________________________

Debra Frasier, 45 Barton Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414,
email: www.debrafrasier.com, click contact

Permission Granted to Debra Frasier for Use of Photographs

The enclosed pictures may be used for print or electronic media postings for educational purposes only, and only by Debra Frasier, author and illustrator. It is understood that the school will be credited, but the pictured student will never be named. It is understood that these photographs will not be sold and will be reproduced only in an educational context.

Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster
written and illustrated by Debra Frasier * www.debrafrasier.com
Parade Kit © 2005 Debra Frasier
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 round-robin 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.
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.
5. Announce award categories, if using any.
7. Select a Master of Ceremony 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 the parade.
3. Select person who will document the event.
4. Send Press Release to newspaper and TV stations. Schedule meeting with media representatives to invite participation.
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.

*(continued on next page)*
A Vocabulary Parade Timeline

(continued from previous page)

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.
8. Print 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?) Check invitation carefully before printing.

One week before
1. Monday: Send home Vocabulary Parade invitation. (Send to classrooms for coloring, first?)
2. Call 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 or participants in the Vocabulary Parade.
5. Does the MC have a costume?
6. Arrange awards in visible place, to stimulate excitement.
7. 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 marvelous words!

If you have pictures you would like to share with Debra Frasier, send print or digital pictures to:

45 Barton Avenue SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414,

or, send via www.debrafrasier.com

If images may be posted on her website, in the School Gallery section, please fill out the permission form in this kit.