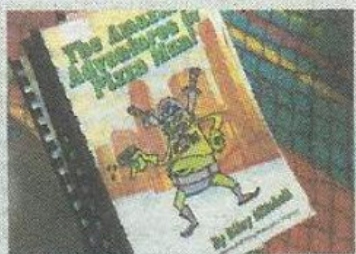


PHOTOS BY **ROBERTO GONZALEZ**/ORLANDO SENTINEL

**First you say,  
'Once upon  
a time ...'**



**A** group of youngsters got to exercise their literary muscles at a Young Writers Camp at Urban Think! bookstore in Orlando last week. The adventure in storytelling, drawing, songwriting and poetry is helping about 60 public-school students unleash their creativity.

Steve Czerniejewski (top, left) teaches fourth- and fifth-graders, while Tonique Lorick, 9, (above) draws a superhero.

"A lot of these kids have never gone through the process of storytelling. They don't know about characters and plot and conflict," said Julia Bessire, the 29-year-old executive director of a burgeoning nonprofit literacy-arts program called Page 15, which runs the camp. Each week through July 25, the camp will target a different age group, from first-graders through middle-schoolers. *The Adventures of Pizza Man* (left) was the final work product of Riley Mitchell, 9.

The effort comes from Bessire, who is volunteering, and the Urban Think! Foundation — the charitable branch of the independent bookstore near Lake Eola where the camp takes place. Teachers nominated the kids. Business sponsors covered tuition.