

Framework: Story

Sentences may be combined to form stories. Narrative refers to scenarios or stories formulated by describing a sequence of events. These stories may be true or fabricated of realistic or fantasy events. Standard story structure is utilized. A rich narrative repertoire is critical for learning, reading/writing, and academic success. These stories contain the thoughts and feelings that reflect what we think about the world around us. Common scenarios bind us to the culture we live in and allow us to succeed and survive.

Temporal Aspects, Story Structure, Recall, Inference, Types, Media

- Stories bind the events of our lives into a temporal sequence. A complete story has a beginning, middle, and end. Language conventions are used to label these starts and endings. Events are labeled as well according to the order in which they occur. This temporal order reflects cause and effect aspects in the story.
- Story structure refers to necessary aspects that make it complete. Characters must be identified along with setting (context). Events follow with action by the characters. The story concludes with a resolution to what is happening.
- Stories in our repertoire may be real scenarios that we have experienced. They may be real scenarios that others have experienced and are told to us. They may also be fabricated from real events or fantasy but plausible. Part or all of this repertoire is available for recall. We refer to the characters and events to make sense of new events and new stories that are told to us. Recall of this rich body of information allows us to rapidly process new information when engaged in dialogue and activity with others, reading, and watching movies.
- Inference is an important aspect of a story. We analyze events early in the sequence to anticipate those that will follow. We speculate from events what an unnamed cause might have been to answer important "why" questions. Predicting what will follow at the close of the story and beyond identifies what might have been set in motion. Emotions and feelings often are hinted at and often suggest motive.
- Stories can be common sequences of events that all in a culture experience and recognize. They can also be personal with variations that take the form of a journal or personal history. Many stories are novel in the sense that they are contrived from realistic events or fantasy and are plausible. Fairytales, fables, and childrens' and adults' fiction are examples.
- A variety of media may be used to tell a story. It can be told orally and perhaps dramatized with actors, props, costume, or puppets. It can be depicted in a picture book with text. More sophisticated, complex text will be used in poetry, short stories and novels. Stories are also dramatized in cartoons and movies.

Strategies for Activities, Lessons, and Materials:

- Children can be given frequent opportunity to hear and view oral presentations of nursery rhymes, fairytales, and stories.
- Children can be provided with props, costumes, and puppets to encourage dramatization of stories.
- Frequent reading and rereading of picture books is essential. Discussion, recall and retelling enhance the experience.

- Name and discuss story structure elements when reading. Use wh-questions to check for understanding.
- Children can read to other children.
- Childrens' cartoons and movies are great multimedia presentations of classic and new stories.
- Common sequences involving daily activities such as cooking and hygiene can be pictured and manipulated to demonstrate temporal order. Text can be written to describe each picture. The sequence can then be retold.
- Chapter books and novels can be analyzed for story structure.
- View movies and plays and then discuss story structure.
- Movies can be made using the planning tool of a story board.

A person with autism or other developmental delay might:

- have difficulty connecting one event with another.
- be unable to identify the elements of story structure.
- have difficulty perceiving a cause and effect relationship.
- not understand completely the text or language used to describe an event or comprehend connected speech and text that is not literal (figurative language: idiom, metaphor, simile, irony).
- notice lots of details in an event but be unable to put them into context and see the whole picture.
- not be able to listen, focus, or recall events told in a story.
- remember a movie as a whole but not be able to break it down into specific events.
- not perceive the emotions/feelings described in a story.
- not be able to determine cause and effect relationships inferred in a story or make predictions of events to follow.
- struggle with wh- question forms and either not understand what is asked or not know the answer.
- not be able to recall a story that might be similar to an idea or event being discussed or presented in text.
- not be able to comprehend what is being read in extended text in order to percieve the sequence and story structure.
- be preoccupied with sensory sensitivities.
- lack assumed skill levels in related areas.

User Friendly Strategies for Activities, Lessons, and Materials:

- Use manipulatives that depict important story elements.
- Use clear graphics that depict important story elements.
- Use graphics to manipulate story sequence.
- Simplify and constrain text that is used.
- With the exception of fairytales, choose stories that have realistic characters, settings, and events that the child can relate to in real life. (animals do not talk or have other human characteristics, cars do not talk)
- Intersperse wh- questions throughout all activities when possible. Pose multiple queries about one type of wh- question with multiple answers. Teach one before testing several types.
- Read, review, and reread stories many many times.
- Take photos of a child dramatizing a story, then use text to label each photo. Photos can then be manipulated and sequenced or made into a book.
- When dramatizing stories, peers can be chosen that are accommodating and understanding of the help that might be needed.
- Use graphic organizers to analyze stories.
- Read graphic novels.
- Take photos of a child engaged in a game, then use text to label each photo using pronouns that describe the actions.
- Monitor text for instances of figurative speech and use graphics when possible to demonstrate meaning.
- When reading text ask for inferential information about cause and effect and prediction.
- Observe and detect sensory sensitivities to materials and environment and alter as necessary.
- Observe carefully to detect competencies in order to know what they don't know.

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