Story Plot SMARTS
in *Language Arts*

by JoAnne Moore

www.books4results.com

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What are the challenges of creating a story plot?

Story Plot

- Choosing a <u>setting</u>
- Selecting and developing <u>characters</u>
- Creating and developing a <u>story plot</u>
- <u>Solving the problem</u> in the story plot
- <u>Ending</u> the story satisfactorily

Children have limited life experience and so drawing upon picture books, novels and the learning of adults is a powerful way to develop their writing skills. Through this process, children learn to make connections between the stories they read and to use these stories as a foundation for creating their own plots.

How do we create successful story writing experiences?

I first began classroom teaching at the grade six level and thought that story writing would be fun and rewarding for children. Although I had never been taught how to write a story in grade school or how to teach story writing in university, I bravely jumped in with an open-ended assignment—*write whatever you like*. This was a very eye-opening experience. Some children had great story language, but their stories made no sense. Others wrote a story which had a proper plot, but the writing was stilted and sounded like a book report. Still others had neither plot nor story language. There were usually between two and three intuitive writers who did well, but overall both the children and I were overwhelmed by how difficult it was. When I began teaching at the first grade level, children would write two or three sentences and in capital letters write THE END. Getting them to expand on their ideas at such a young age without frustrating them was puzzling.

Some very helpful understandings grew out of these experiences. One thing I learned was that open-ended assignments are only useful if children have skills to draw from. Contrary to what I had thought, structured assignments do not hamper creativity, but instead help children develop a platform of skills. Children need direct teaching and modelling because they have limited life experience. Creating a story plot and telling it with story language are two different skill sets which can be taught. Teaching children simple plot structures which apply excellent story language makes the writing process both fun and successful.

Children who are asked to plan and write a story in a single class period have been given a difficult task. Story writing assignments tend to work best when they are broken into sections. One class period should be devoted to sharing picture books, one for story planning and five or six for writing the story. Editing also works best when it is done in small sections. Having students share and edit one section prior to moving on to the next section is generally more successful than having them try to edit an entire story at once.

Why is Story Writing so Hard?

1. Reading stories is a processing activity requiring comprehension and analysis.
2. Writing stories is much harder because it is a creative activity requiring synthesis.
3. There is a normal gap between children's fictional reading levels and writing levels.
4. There are two different skill sets involved in writing a compelling story. The first is creating a story plot and the second is having written story language. Often children lack one or sometimes both skill sets. Just because a child is an avid reader does not guarantee that he can write a story.

Something to Ponder

As a teacher, put yourself inside your students' shoes and ask *what grade level do you write fiction at* ? To find your approximate writing level, think of a picture book or novel which you think you could write. The age of the characters is usually the age the book is geared for. For example, in the Magic Treehouse series Jack and Annie are seven and eight years old. The books are written for second and third graders. If this is you—your fictional writing level is the third grade!

If your writing is beyond the fourth grade level you likely have a penchant for dialogue. Publishers recommend novels at this grade level and those beyond are written as half dialogue. How many students can write a story that is half dialogue and which is engaging to read?

How many school-aged children have ever been published? Authors such as Gordon Korman, Christopher Paolini, and Kenneth Oppel come to mind, but there aren't many others. Writing fiction is hard to do and its even harder to do it well enough to get published.

Reproducible

Let's build some story background knowledge.
Did you know story plots are built around characters' motives?

What is Motive?

Who
What
Where
When
Why
How

Motive: is what a character

believes

wants

needs

*physical
*emotional
*psychological
*social

Motive is the "why" of story.
It is the reason for a character's actions and it drives story plot.
A story plan that includes the main character without his motive
is like trying to drive a car without a steering wheel.

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Three elements missing in many children's understanding of story are:
   *that the main character needs a motive
   *that a character's motive directs his actions
   *that story problems are created by blocking a character's motive

How are Story Problems Created?

Motive	Blocked by:
Want	*trick
Need	*disaster
	*act of god
	weather
	magic
	miracle
	*use of force
	physical
	political

Story problems are created when a character's motive is blocked.

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More on story problems: I wanted... but...

- Four categories used to block a character's motive are disasters, tricks acts of god and use of force (physical or political). Encouraging students to look for these events in picture books and novels and record them in a writer's idea notebook is one way children can begin to make the reading/ writing connection. The same disasters, tricks, acts of god and uses of force can be found in multiple books. For example in Roald Dahl's book The Enormous Crocodile, the reptile tries to trick the children through his disguises. In "Little Red Riding Hood", the big, bad wolf tries to trick the little girl by disguising himself as her grandmother.
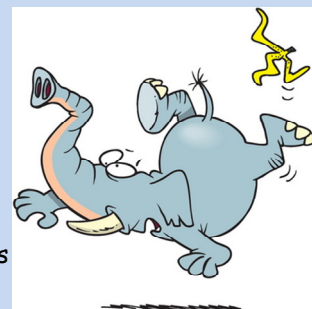
Examples of disasters, tricks, acts of god, uses of force

disasters

slip, trip or fall, break something, get stuck, be late, forget something, get lost, misunderstand or be misunderstood

tricks

detours, delays, disguises, riddles, booby traps, distractions, lies, pit one enemy against another, appeal to foe's pride, swap an original with a fake, poisoning

acts of god

weather (tornado, lightning, blizzard, hurricane, volcano, earthquake)
magic

use of force

physical force (restraining or injuring another, kidnapping, stealing etc.)
political force (contracts, elections, bribes, court orders)

NOTE: These four categories are referred to as story complications from grades 7 to 12.

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The Story Writing Growth Chart

The story writing growth chart shows how to scaffold story assignments from easiest to hardest. Young writers are given all the elements of a story and then gradually receive more planning responsibility as they get older and grow in their abilities.

| Suggested Grade Levels	Type of Assignment (in order of difficulty)	Setting	Character	Plot	Resolution
Kindergarten Grade 1	**1. Class book**	none	none	theme provided	none
Grades 1 & 2	**2. Sequence story**	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 2 & 3	**3. Retelling**	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 3 & up	**4. Pattern story**	not provided	not provided	provided	provided
Grades 4 & up	**5. Sequel**	sometimes	provided	general perimeters	not provided
varies	**6. Genres**	general perimeters	general perimeters	general perimeters	general perimeters
varies	**7. Free choice**	not provided	not provided	not provided	not provided

Assignment one is the class book. Children write one or two sentences on a themed topic the teacher provides. All the pages are then bound together to make a single book. It is a helpful way to begin writing with kindergarten and beginning grade one students because it provides lots of support and does not require a child to plan a full story.

Suggested Grade Levels	Type of Assignment (in order of difficulty)	Setting	Character	Plot	Resolution
Kindergarten Grade 1	1. Class book	none	none	theme provided	none
Grades 1 & 2	2. Sequence story	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 2 to 4	3. Retelling	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 3 & up	4. Pattern story	not provided	not provided	provided	provided
Grades 4 & up	5. Sequel	sometimes	provided	general perimeters	not provided
varies	6. Genres	general perimeters	general perimeters	general perimeters	general perimeters
varies	7. Free choice	not provided	not provided	not provided	not provided

Assignment One: Class Book Example
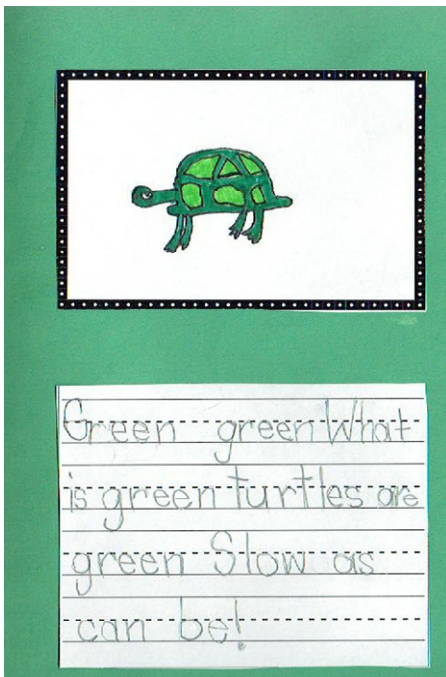
Students might make a class book for each color they learn about. Each child will write one page and the teacher will staple the pages together. This class book is on the color green. It uses patterned writing where students copy and then add their own ideas.

1. First students copy the pattern.
   Green, green,
   What is green?
2. Next, teacher brainstorms with the class things that are green.
   turtles   inchworms   frogs
3. Students fill in the blank and copy the pattern.
   _____**are green.**
4. Teacher brainstorms their different qualities.
   slow
   wiggly
   jumpy
5. Students select which word to put in the blank and then copy the rest of the pattern.
   _____**as can be!**

Assignment two is a sequence story. A sequence story is a creative writing project based on a series of pictures which tell a story. This assignment provides children with the setting, characters, plot and resolution. It can be taught step by step. Children are free to add in their own ideas or change out any picture and draw their own. Smart Start in Language Arts for Grades 1 & 2 teaches story writing through sequence stories.

Suggested Grade Levels	Type of Assignment (in order of difficulty)	Setting	Character	Plot	Resolution
Kindergarten	1. Class book	none	none	theme provided	none
Grades 1 & 2	2. Sequence story	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 2 to 4	3. Retelling	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 3 & up	4. Pattern story	not provided	not provided	provided	provided
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Assignment Two: Sequence Story Example

Sequence Story Writing Process

1. Students are given a sequence of pictures which tell a story. The pictures have lines for writing beside them. They are also given a single page sight word dictionary containing words they have learned.
2. Writing lessons are done in sections. Each picture generally indicates a single writing lesson.
3. Writing is guided through discussion and can be taught page by page or sentence by sentence. If students lack vocabulary, the teacher provides it.
4. Example of how to guide students in writing:

Picture One

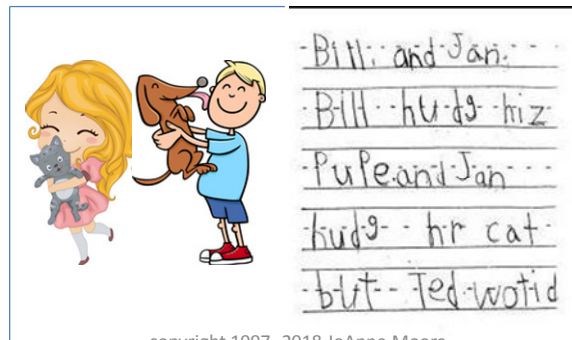**Teacher asks**: What did the girl do?
Teacher writes down student responses:
*girl   hugged, held, stroked   cat

Teacher asks: What did the boy do?
Teacher records suggestions:
*boy   squeezed, embraced, clasped   dog

Bill and Jan.
Bill hugg hiz
Pupe and Jan
hugg hr cat
but Ted wotid

Picture Two

Teacher asks: What does the second boy want?

Teacher writes down students responses:
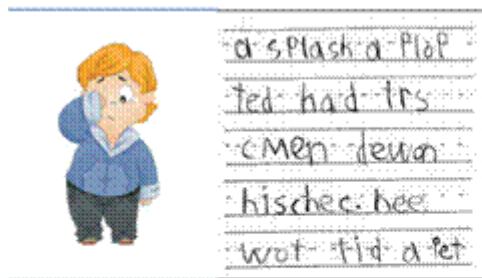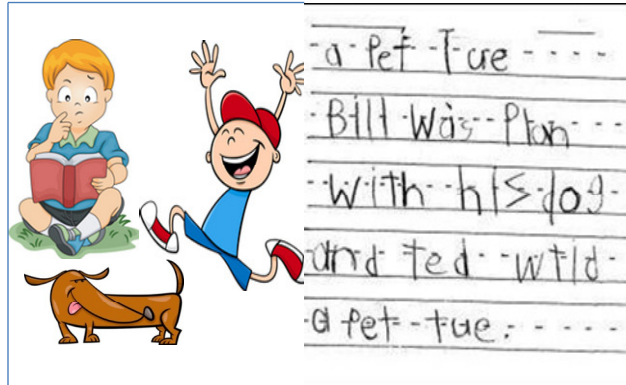2ⁿᵈ **boy**   *wanted, wished, desired, hoped for….
         a pet

Teacher asks: What did the first boy do next?
Students or Teacher suggest:
1ˢᵗ **boy was**   *playing, chasing, running **dog**

Teacher asks: How does this make the other boy feel? ***He wanted a pet even more.**

a Pet Tue
Bill was Plan
with his dog
and ted wild
a pet tue.

a splash a Plop
ted had trs
cmen down
hischec bee
wot tid a Pet

Picture Three

Teacher asks: How does the boy without a pet feel?
Students : Sad

Teacher asks: What does he do?
Students : Cries.

Teacher asks: Let's describe what crying looks like.
What do tears do?

Students or Teacher suggest:
Tears can:
splash, plop, well, pour, slide, drip, run

Teacher asks: Where do tears fall?

Students or Teacher answer:
Tears fall: face, cheeks, chin

Bee fur hee
could jrap a
nithr tr a
turtle popt
Wot from bee
hind a tree
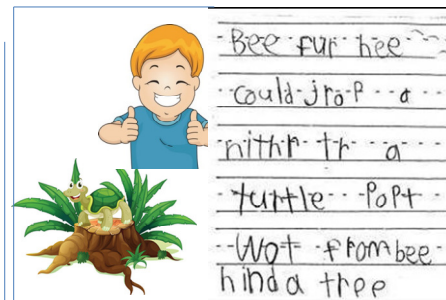
Have kids choose the ending:

What pet would you like the other boy to get?
Cut it out and glue his new pet beside him.

fish   bunny   turtle

dog   cat   lizard

parrot   hamster   frog

Picture Four

Teacher asks: How does the boy get his own pet?
Students or Teacher suggests:
Before he could blink
Just then…
Suddenly…
All of a sudden…

The pet   splashed, appeared, popped, peeked,
            chirped, leaped, hopped, purred,
            croaked,

        Reproducible

Assignment three is a retelling. Retellings also provide children with settings, characters, plots and resolutions. They are more difficult to write than sequence stories because instead of visual cues the child must remember the story events. To make this experience fun, start by reading aloud some picture books containing creative strategies authors use to retell familiar tales. Then students will write their own retelling using one of these strategies.

Note: A retelling is taught in 3rd Grade SMARTS in Language Arts.

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varies	7. Free choice	not provided	not provided	not provided	not provided

Retelling strategies used by authors in picture books:

1. Flip the protagonist with the antagonist
- Compare the story of *The Three Little Pigs* with Jon Scieszka's book The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs. In this version, the wolf explains that he was only trying to borrow a cup of sugar from the pigs but his cold caused him to sneeze and blew down their houses. He claims he was framed.

2. Switch the gender of the main character
- Compare the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* with Mary Pope Osborne's book Kate and the Beanstalk In this version, Jack becomes a girl named Kate. The story then holds closely to the original.

3. Change all the characters to animals
- Compare the story of *Cinderella* with Janet Perlman's book Cinderella Penguin. In this version, the characters are all turned into penguins. The story holds close to the original.

4. Change the setting
- Compare the story of the *Emperor's New Clothes* with Stephanie Calmenson's book The Principal's New Clothes. In this version, the setting is changed to an elementary school and emperor is a principal who enjoys dressing smartly. The story unfolds until the principal is revealed in his "new clothes" at the school assembly.

5. Combine two or more of these strategies
- Compare the story of Cinderella with Helen Ketteman's book Bubba the Cowboy Prince (new setting and gender switch) In this version, the main characters are turned into men and boys who are looking to marry the rich rancher lady . The story is set in Texas on a ranch. The fairy godmother is a cow and Bubba (Cinderella) leaves behind his cowboy boot at the dance.

The thumbnails used on this page were used for the purpose of criticism (analyzing different strategies authors use in retelling stories). The use of these thumbnails is covered under the Fair Dealing of Canadian Copyright law under section 29.1 (criticism or review) which states "Fair dealing for the purpose of criticism or review does not infringe the copyright if the following are mentioned:
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   b) if given the source, the name of the author, in the case of a work

Assignment four is a pattern story.

- Pattern stories are stories patterned after the plot and resolution found in a picture book or a single chapter from a novel. They are copycat, switch, contest, stuck, circle, physical transformation, and character transformation.
- Pattern stories give children planning responsibility for the setting and for the characters. The patterns provide plots and resolutions. Plot and resolution is the most difficult aspect of story writing for elementary children. Character driven stories usually do not emerge until after children enter junior high.

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What are the story plot patterns?

- There are at least seven story plot patterns which have many variations. These are copycat, switch, contest, stuck, circle, physical transformation, and character transformation. Many stories combine several patterns together.

- Pattern stories are stories patterned after the plot and resolution found in a picture book or a single chapter from a novel. Children select a new setting, different characters and then write a story which imitates the author's plot pattern and uses the main character's motive.

STORY PATTERNS

When a character's actions *match* his needs/wants (motives) in a story it creates story patterns.

Stand Alone Plot Patterns
1. Copycat
2. Contest
3. Stuck
4. Physical Transformation

Story Frame Plot Patterns
(require a subplot)
1. Switch
2. Circle
3. Character Transformation

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Pattern Story Teaching Method:

1. Select a plot pattern. Begin by reading and discussing several picture books which contain the pattern. Find the main character's motive in each story and show students that the motive determines the story pattern. *Remember, what the character wants directs the story action which in turn creates story patterns.*

2. Next, model through story mapping how to create a new story. This means using the plot pattern and adapting the motive of the main character to fit in a different setting with different characters.

3. Divide the story into sections. The main points in a story map are the best indicator of how many writing lessons are required. Each point is usually a new paragraph.

4. For each section create a word web. Model for students how to use the word web by writing your own section of the story lesson by lesson from beginning to end.

5. Have students use the word web to write this section of their stories and then read it aloud in partners and edit it.

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Assignment 4: Pattern Stories
Copycat is a Stand Alone Plot Pattern with Two Basic Forms

1st Copycat Pattern

1. Setting
2. Encounter
3. Motive: wants a friend
4. Copies with Success
5. Copies with Success
6. Copies with Disaster
7. Stops Copying

The Chick
and the Duckling
by Mirra Ginsburg
Pictures by José Aruego & Ariane Dewey
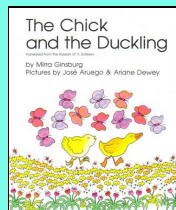
2nd Copycat Pattern

1. Setting
2. Encounter
3. Motive: wants to acquire a new skill
4. Copies with Disaster
5. Copies with Disaster
6. Copies with Success
7. Stops Copying because he has achieved new skill

Keeper
of the
Swamp

Ann Garrett
Illustrated by Karen Chandler

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     Reproducible

Make a story map to show children how the copycat pattern in the book <u>Chick and Duckling</u> can be used to create a new story by changing the setting and characters.
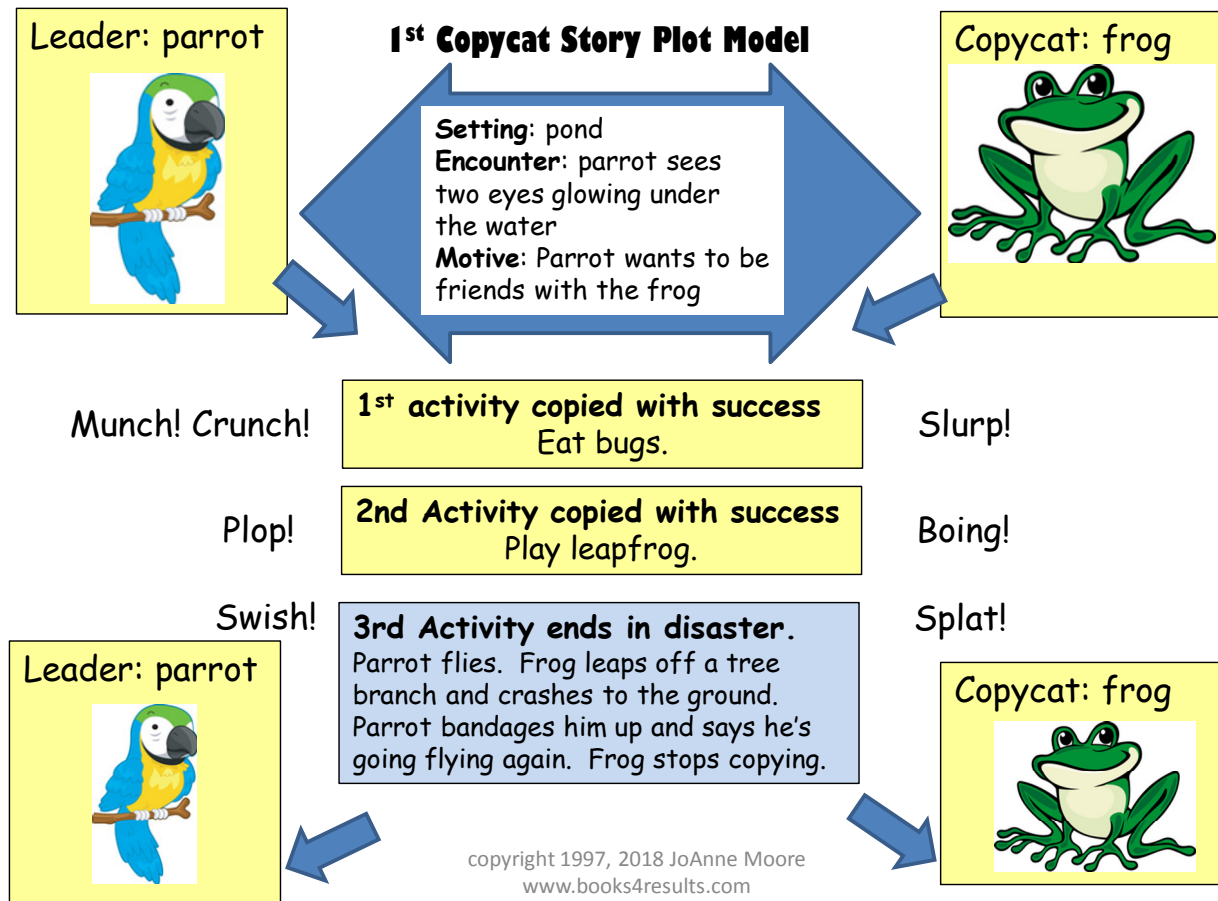
1ˢᵗ Copycat Story Plot Model

Leader: parrot

Copycat: frog

Setting: pond
Encounter: parrot sees two eyes glowing under the water
Motive: Parrot wants to be friends with the frog

Munch! Crunch!

1ˢᵗ activity copied with success
Eat bugs.

Slurp!

Plop!

2nd Activity copied with success
Play leapfrog.

Boing!

Swish!

3rd Activity ends in disaster.
Parrot flies. Frog leaps off a tree branch and crashes to the ground. Parrot bandages him up and says he's going flying again. Frog stops copying.

Splat!

Leader: parrot

Copycat: frog

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Character Research:
*hop on land
*dive and swim
*catch bugs
*croak

*swim and dive
*hide under rocks
*eat minnows

*walk on land
*catch fish
*swim
*climb trees
*eat honey, ants, fish, berries

*nocturnal
*eat insects
*hang upside down to sleep
*fly

*fly
*nocturnal
*catch mice, gophers, rabbits
*perch in trees

Disasters:
*forget
*sleep in
*wreck/break something
*slip/trip/fall
*get lost
*accident
*get hurt
*get stuck
*misunderstand

Teacher Models a Copycat Story Plan:
1. **Setting:** *Meadow*
Introduction of animal: *Wingnut, the bat*
who journeyed to: *old poplar tree*

2. **Where he met** *Oscar the owl*
 when he **hear**d, saw, felt or smelled... *Twit, twoo, who are you?*
3. **Motive:** *Bat wants to be friends with Owl.*

4. **First activity copied with success.**
Bat leads Owl in a game of follow-the-leader.
Onomatopoeia: *swish, swoosh*

5. **Second activity copied with success.**
Bat leads Owl in a hunt for moths.
Onomatopoeia: *crunch, munch*

6. **Third activity copied with disaster.**
Bat wants Owl to hang upside down and take a nap. Owl tries but crashes to the ground.
Onomatopoeia: *thunk*
7. **Leader rescues copycat by bandaging** *Bat helps Owl sit up and get back into his hole in the poplar tree to nap.*
Motive Changed: Show the copycat stop copying the leader. *Bat hangs upside down on a branch for his nap while Owl says not me —never again.*

Reproducible

Student Copycat Story Plan:

1. **Setting:**
   Introduction of first character:
   who journeyed to: _____

2. **Where he met** _____ .
   when he heard, saw, felt or smelled...

3. **Motive:** They both wanted to be friends.

4. **First activity copied with success.**

   Onomatopoeia: _____

5. **Second activity copied with success.**

   Onomatopoeia: _____

6. **Third activity copied with disaster.**

   Onomatopoeia: _____

7. **Leader rescues copycat by** _____

Motive Changed: Show the copycat stop copying the leader.

Character Research:

*hop on land
*dive and swim
*catch bugs
*croak

*swim and dive
*hide under rocks
*eat minnows

*walk on land
*catch fish
*swim
*climb trees
*eat honey, ants, fish, berries

*nocturnal
*eat insects
*hang upside down to sleep
*fly

*fly
*nocturnal
*catch mice, gophers, rabbits
*perch in trees

Disasters:
*forget
*sleep in
*wreck/break something
*slip/trip/fall
*get lost
*accident
*get hurt
*get stuck
*misunderstand

Teacher Models Sequencing the Story Problem

The place where many children have the most difficulty is in writing a powerful story problem. Many find it challenging to order the events which transpire. The second part of creating a story outline is sequencing the story problem.

Show students (grades 3 and up) how to list between four and five phrases that describe the order of events in the story problem. Next, add one or to excellent action words (verbs) beside each point. This helps the student learn how to elaborate on the story problem. Each phrase will be used later to create a sentence when writing the story problem. Secondly, it helps the student to implement a strong verb vocabulary during the writing process instead of having to fix it in the editing.

Story Problem: Owl tried to copy bat by taking a nap hanging upside.	
Order of Events	**Action Words**
1. landed on branch	alighted
2. turned upside down	swung
3. got dizzy	felt
4. fell to the ground	plunged

Student Sequences the Story Problem

Disaster:_____

Order of Story Problem Events	Action Words
1. _____	* _____
2. _____	* _____
3. _____	* _____
4. _____	* _____
5. _____	* _____

Reproducible

Dictionary of Action Words: Strong Verbs

1. Ate   bit, chomped, chewed, gulped, sucked, gnawed, licked, sipped, tasted tried, samples

2. Blew up   broke, burst, crushed, gushed, demolished, dismantled, exploded, erupted, flashed, jerked, ruptured, snapped

3. Bumped   hit, smacked, pounded smashed, knocked, slammed, swatted, banged, crashed, thudded

4. Choked   gasped, spluttered, sputtered, turned blue

5. Climbed   crawled, mounted, ascended, scrambled, clambered, inched, ascended, clutched, grabbed, squeezed

6. Collected   gathered, found, searched, located, amassed, mounded, piled, grabbed, clutched, snatched

7. Cried Tears: wept, sobbed, pouted, howled, yowled, wailed, rolled, trickled, dribbled, streamed, spilled, welled, poured, rained

8. Dug   shoveled, scratched, clawed, pawed, unearthed, delved, tunneled

9. Fell   plummeted, plunged, crashed, toppled, tumbled, tripped, spilled

10. Filled   covered, plastered, coated, blanketed, enveloped, flooded, burst, overflowed, surrounded

11. Flew   soared, sailed, glided, winged, floated, hovered, dipped, darted, leaped, drifted

12. Hung   dangled, swung, swayed, suspended, jutted, projected, beetled, rocked

13. Jumped   leaped, sprang, pounced, bounded, dove, hopped, plunged, sailed

14. Made a Noise   grunted, snorted, rasped, howled, squeaked, squealed, screeched, buzzed, hissed, roared, shrieked, spluttered, sputtered, squawked, thundered, boomed, yelled

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15. Pain *shot* exploded, raced, throbbed, ached, winced

16. Pulled tugged, yanked, grabbed, snatched, pried, jostled, wiggled, wriggled, stretched, rattled, shook, fished, hooked, jerked

17. Pushed shoved, thrust, forced, jammed, crammed, wedged

18. Raced hurried, stormed, rushed, darted, hustled, dashed, bolted, charged

19. Saw spotted, spied, noticed, stared, studied, observed, detected, watched

20. Slipped tripped, stumbled, faded, disappeared, melted

21. Sprayed squirted, splashed, splattered, clouded, doused, melted

22. Squished squashed, flattened, squeezed, crushed

23. Stuck jammed, clogged, plugged, caught, hooked, latched, snagged, wedged, blocked, crammed, glued, cemented

24. Swung dangled, hung, hovered, swung, suspended

25. Tried to swim thrashed, paddled, flopped, sank, sputtered

26. Wiggled squirmed, wriggled, jiggled, twisted, thrashed, tossed, turned

27. Suddenly just then, at that moment, instantly, moments later, hours later, a short time later

Make a story map to show children how the 2nd copycat pattern found in <u>Keeper of the Swamp</u> by Ann Garrett can be used to create a new story by changing the setting and characters.

Leader: farmer

2nd Copycat Story Plot Model

Copycat: Addie

Setting: farm
Encounter: Addie hears whistling inside the barn where she finds her dad
Motive: Addie wants to be a farmer like her Dad by learning how to take care of the chickens.

1st attempt to help ends in disaster
Addie tries to clean the hen house but slips in the muck

2nd attempt to help ends in disaster
She tries to collect eggs, gets pecked and drops the basket.

Leader: farmer

Copycat: Addie

3rd attempt to help ends in success.
Addie discovers the henhouse is overheating because the heater is broken. Addie rescues the chickens by letting them out of the barn and telling her Dad who is proud of Addie.

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Research

chicken care
*feed them
*clean the coop
*collect eggs
*climate control
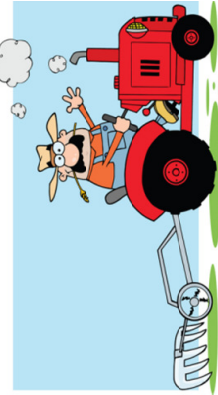
cow care
*milk cows
*brand cows
*clean stalls
*feed cows
*deliver calves

sheep care
*round up
*move to new pastures
*shear sheep
*brand sheep
*chase predators
*mend fences

field help
*plough land
*plant seeds
*spray weeds
*harvest crops
*irrigate
*drive tractor
*drive combine

Disasters:
*forget
*late
*wreck/break something
*slip/trip/fall
*get lost
*get hurt
*get stuck
*misunderstand
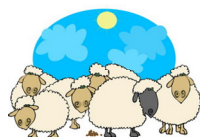
Teacher Models a Copycat Story Plan:

1. **Setting:** *Farm*
Introduction of first character: *Emma*
who journeyed from the *house to the barn*

2. **Where he/she met** *her father*
when he/she **hear**d, saw, felt or smelled... *whistling*

3. **Motive:** *Emma wants to learn what its like to be a farmer by helping her Dad for the day.*

4. **First attempt to help ends in disaster**
Emmas Dad asks her to clean out the chicken coop, but she gets pecked by the rooster.

5. **Second attempt to help ends in disaster.**
Next, Emma tries to milk a cow, but the cow kicks over the milk pail.

6. **Third attempt to help ends in success or discovering a problem on the farm and solving it.**
Emma discovers a coyote chasing the sheep because the fence is broken.

7. **Motive Achieved**: Show the child is successful in learning to help on the farm. *Emma chases off the coyote and with her Dads help fixes the fence.*

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Student Copycat Story Plan:

1. Setting:
Introduction of first character: _____
who journeyed from the house to the _____

2. Where he/she met her father/mother
when he/she <u>heard</u>, saw, felt or smelled... _____

3. Motive: _____ wants to learn what its like to be a
farmer by helping her Dad or Mom for the day.

4. First attempt to help ends in disaster _____

5. Second attempt to help ends in disaster. _____

6. Third attempt to help ends in success or
discovering a problem on the farm and solving it. _____

7. Motive Achieved: Show the child is successful in
learning to help on the farm _____

Research

chicken care
*feed
*clean the coop
*collect eggs
*climate control

cow care
*milk cows
*brand cows
*clean stalls
*feed
*deliver calves

sheep care
*round up
*move to new pastures
*shear sheep
*brand sheep
*chase predators
*mend fences

field help
*plough land
*plant seeds
*spray weeds
*harvest crops
*irrigate
*drive tractor
*drive combine

Disasters:
*forget
*late
*wreck/break
    something
*slip/trip/fall
*get lost
*get hurt
*get stuck
*misunderstand

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Teacher Models Sequencing the Story Problem

Emma's 's 1st Disaster: Emma tries to clean chicken coop, but rooster pecks her.

Order of Events	Action Words
1. Emma gets a shovel and a pail.	*grabbed, clutched, grasped
2. She enters the coop and starts shoveling	*stooped, stepped, scooped, shovelled
3. Emma meets the rooster.	*heard whirring, saw eyes glinting
4. Emma gets pecked and drops the shovel and pail.	*pain shot/coursed flung, pitched
5. Emma leaves coop, sits down and cries.	*stumbled, plunked tears welled/slid
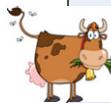
Emma's 2nd Disaster: Emma tries to milk a cow, but the cow kicks over pail.

Order of Events	Action Words
1. Emma gets a pail and a milking stool.	*grabbed, fetched
2. Emma sits down and begins milking.	*plunked, sat, started, milked
3. Cow kicked over pail.	*kicked, whacked, smacked
4. Emma got wet.	*drenched, soaked, sprayed
5. Emma was discouraged.	*head hung, shoulders drooped, rubber boots dragged

Student Sequences the Story Problem

Students use the Action Word Dictionary for help with this section.

Child's 1st Disaster:_____

Order of Story Problem Events	Action Words
1. _____ _____	* _____ _____
2. _____ _____	* _____ _____
3. _____ _____	* _____ _____
4. _____ _____	* _____ _____

Child's 2nd Disaster:_____

Order of Story Problem Events	Action Words
1. _____ _____	* _____ _____
2. _____ _____	* _____ _____
3. _____ _____	* _____ _____
4. _____ _____	* _____ _____

Reproducible
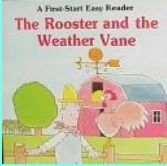
Assignment 4: Pattern Stories

Switch is a Story Frame Plot Requiring a Subplot

Job Switch Pattern

1. Setting
2. Encounter
3. **Motive:** Two characters meet each believing they have a job more important than the other. They switch jobs to find out.
4. **Subplot: Copycat Disaster**
1st character tries to perform new job and has a disaster.
5. **Copycat Subplot Disaster**
2nd character tries to perform new job and has a disaster.
6. **Characters Meet Again**

and decide to switch back jobs. Both agree their jobs are equally important.

Character Switch Pattern

1. Setting
2. Encounter
3. **Motive:** Two mother animals meet each believing they have a more difficult baby than the other. They switch babies to find out.
4. **Subplot: Copycat Disaster**
1st mother tries to get her new baby to behave like her animal species which results in a disaster.
5. **Subplot: Copycat Disaster**
2nd mother tries to get her new baby to behave like her animal species which results in a disaster.
6. **Characters Meet Again**

and decide to switch back babies. Both agree their babies are much less difficult than each others'.

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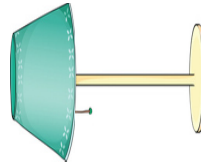
Character Research:

*bird that sings

*watchdog to chase away thieves

*cat to chase mice away

Disasters:
*to forget
*be late
*wreck/break Something
*slip/trip/fall
*get lost
*accident
*get hurt
*misunderstand
*get stuck
*to fail

*clock to tell the time

*lamp to light up the house at night

*washing machine to wash clothes

Teacher Models a Switch Story Plan:

1. Setting: *house*
Introduction of first character: *Whiskers the cat*
who journeyed to: *the laundry room in the basement*

2. Where he met *the washing machine.*
when he <u>heard</u>, <u>saw</u>, felt or smelled... *Splish, splosh! and saw a big metal box rocking*

3. Motives: *The washing machine brags that getting clothes clean is the most important job in the house. The cat brags that catching mice is the most important job in the house. They agree to swap jobs to find out whose job is more important.*

4. Disaster object has trying to do animal's job. *That night a mouse shows up. The washing machine slams its door, spins it dials, and flashes off and on. This frightens the mouse which runs straight upstairs to the kitchen.*

5. Disaster animal has trying to do object's job. *The next day the housewife tries to put towels in the washing machine but can't when the door won't open. She drops the towels on the floor. The cat poured soap all over the towels and marched back and forth leaving dirty paw prints all over them. When the cat tried to scrub them her sharp claws caught and tore one towel.*

6. Motives Changed: *Characters decide to trade jobs back because they agree that both of them have important jobs and neither is able to do the other's.*

Student's Switch Story Plan:

1. Setting:
Introduction of first character: _____
who journeyed to: _____

2. Where he met: _____
when he heard, saw, felt or smelled _____

3. Motives: The object brags that _____

The animal brags that _____

They agree to switch and find out whose job is more important.

4. Disaster object has trying to do animal's job. _____

Onomatopoeia: _____

5. Disaster animal has trying to do object's job. _____

Onomatopoeia: _____

6. Motives Changed: Characters decide to trade jobs back because they agree that both of them have important jobs and neither is able to do the other's.

Character Research:

Disasters:
*to forget
*be late
*wreck/break Something
*slip/trip/fall
*get lost
*accident
*get hurt
*misunderstand
*get stuck
*to fail

*bird that sings

*watchdog to chase away thieves

*cat to chase mice away

*clock to tell the time

*lamp to light up the house at night

*washing machine to wash clothes

Character Research:
*collects nectar with proboscis
*makes honey and wax
*guards hive *pollinates flowers

*nocturnal
*eats ants, insects, eggs, garbage
*moves slowly
*sprays scent when upset

*nocturnal
*collects shiny things
*washes food
*eats garbage, ants, eggs
*climbs trees

*nocturnal
*flies by echo location
*sleeps hanging upside down
*eats insects or fruit

*spins silky strings into webs
*catches other insects in web &
Wraps them up by spinning more silk

Disasters:
*forget	*get lost	*fail
*wreck/break something	*get stuck	
*slip/trip/fall	*accident	
*get hurt	*misunderstand	

Teacher Models a Character Switch Story Plan:

1. **Setting:** *forest*
Introduce 1ˢᵗ Mother & Baby: *Mother Skunk and baby*
Journey to: *pond for a drink one evening*

2. **Encounter** between two mother animals.
Mother Skunk sits down beside Mother Bat and sighs. Mother Bat asks what the matter is.
3. **Motive:** Mother *Skunk* wants to swap babies because *baby skunk won't eat ants.*
Mother *Bat* wants to swap babies because *baby bat won't sleep hanging upside down.*

4. **Copycat subplot:** *Describe disaster that happens when 1ˢᵗ mother tries to get new baby to behave like her species. *Mother Skunk takes home baby bat and gives him a rotten egg for a bedtime snack. Baby bat takes one bite, gags and sprays it all over the den. Mother Skunk and baby bat have to sleep outside on the hard ground.*

5. **Copycat Subplot:** Describe disaster that happens when 2ⁿᵈ Mother tries to get new baby to behave like her species.
Mother Bat tries to get baby skunk to sleep hanging upside down by his tail in the tree. Baby skunk falls out and sprays Mother Bat with his scent.

6. **Motive Changed:** Mothers decide to trade back babies because they miss their own babies.
The next night Mother Bat informs Mother Skunk that spraying scent is much worse than spraying food and she wants her baby back. Mother Skunk disagrees and the two mothers happily trade back babies.

Teacher Models Sequencing the Story Problem

1ˢᵗ Mother Animal's Problem: Mother Skunk tries to feed baby bat a rotten egg.

Order of Events	Action Words
1. Mother skunk tells baby bat to open his mouth.	*open wide
2. She puts a rotten egg into his mouth.	*shoves, stuffs
3. Baby bat bites down and spits it out all over the den.	*chomps, gags, sprays
4. Mother skunk and baby bat have to sleep outside.	*shiver, curl up

2ⁿᵈ Mother Animal's Problem: Mother Bat tries to get baby skunk to sleep upside down.

| Order of Events	Action Words
1. Mother Bat gets baby skunk to crawl up on the lowest branch.	*edged, scrambled, clung clutched, grabbed
2. Mother Bat curls his tail over the branch.	*curled, grasped, gripped
3. Baby skunk hangs his head down.	*hung, dangled, swung
4. Baby skunk falls to the ground and sprays his scent all over Mother Bat.	*plunged, plummeted hosed, doused, coated
5. Mother Bat cried.	*tears poured/rained/ran

Student's Character Switch Story Plan:

1. **Setting:** _____

Introduce 1st Mother & Baby: _____

Journey to: _____

2. **Encounter** between two mother animals.

3. **Motive:** Mother _____ wants to swap babies
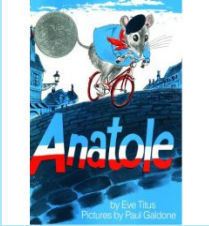
because _____

Mother _____ wants to swap babies because

4. **Copycat subplot:** Describe disaster that happens when the
1st mother tries to get new baby to behave like her species.

_____

_____

_____

5. **Copycat Subplot:** Describe disaster that happens when the
2nd Mother tries to get new baby to behave like her species.

_____

_____

6. **Motive Changed:** Mothers decide to trade back babies
because they miss their own babies.

Character Research:

*collects nectar with proboscis
*makes honey and wax
*guards hive *pollinates flowers

*nocturnal
*eats ants, insects, eggs, garbage
*moves slowly
*sprays scent when upset
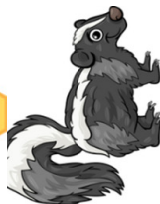
*nocturnal
*collects shiny things
*washes food
*eats garbage, ants, eggs
*climbs trees

*nocturnal
*flies by echo location
*sleeps hanging upside down
*eats insects or fruit

*spins silky strings into webs
*catches other insects in web &
Wraps them up by spinning more silk
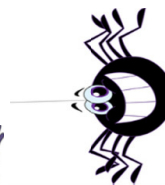
Disasters:

*forget
*wreck/break something
*slip/trip/fall
*get hurt

*get lost
*get stuck
*accident
*misunderstand

*fail

Assignment 4: Pattern Stories
Contest is a Stand Alone Story Plot

Predator & Prey Contest

1. Setting
2. Encounter
3. Motive: Predator wants to eat prey.
   Prey wants to escape predator.
4. Trick
   Prey tricks Predator, but Predator returns.
5. Trick
   Prey tricks Predator, but Predator returns.
6. Trick with a final escape.
   Prey tricks Predator in a way that finally makes him safe.

Sports Contest

1. Setting
2. Encounter: Protagonist has been bullied by a player from the opposite soccer/baseball team.
3. Motive: Protagonist wants to get even with the bully from the other team. He decides to play a trick.
4. Distraction: The protagonist gets his friends to cause a distraction and inserts a trick into the game.
5. Bully's Disaster: The trick works and causes the bully to_____.
6. Protagonist Wins the Game by:
7. Is the Protagonist caught?

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Character Research:
*nocturnal
*climbs, runs and swims
*keen sense of smell
*can squeeze into small places
*loves cheese

*nocturnal
*loves milk, catnip
*eats mice
*keen eyesight and smell
*leaps and climbs
*walks on land

Possible Tricks:
*bring a lady cat
*cover floor in marbles to trip the cat
*bring a dog to chase the cat
*cover the floor in glue to make the cat stuck
*use catnip to put the cat to sleep
*lure the cat outside and lock him out by slamming the door
*bring a wind-up mouse

Teacher Models a Predator & Prey Story Plan:

1. **Setting**: Night in a City.

Mouse journeyed to the Cheese Factory and got to work tasting cheese and putting up signs.
went synonym: *scampered*
prepositional phrase: *through the streets, down a back alley and squeezed under the back door of the cheese factory*

2. **Encounter** between Mouse and Cat.
Mouse heard cmeowing and saw a dark shadow creep across the floor.

3. **Motive:** Mouse thinks about how to trick Cat into leaving the factory forever.

4. **Plan:** Mouse goes home and makes a plan for getting rid of the Cat.

5. **Trick:** Mouse returns the next night to trick the Cat. *Mouse paints the entrance to the cheese tasting room with glue. He teases the cat and when it tries to enter the cheese tasting room gets stuck to the floor. The next day the factory owner discovers that cat and takes it home to be his pet.*

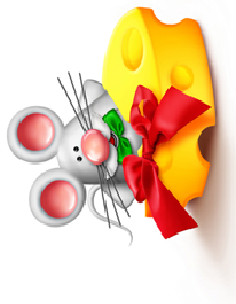6. **Resolution:** Cat leaves forever and Mouse is free to work.

Student's Predator & Prey Contest Story Plan:

1. Setting: night in a city

Mouse journeyed to the cheese factory.

Choose *went* word:
scampered, scurried, hurried, darted, scrambled

Mouse begins tasting cheese and putting up signs.

2. Encounter between Cat and Mouse.

Saw — two gleaming eyes, shadow, sharp teeth
Heard — clicking, meowing, purring, snarling
Felt — furry tail, sharp claws
Smelled — stinky cat breath

3. Motive: Mouse thinks about how to trick Cat into leaving the factory forever.

4. Plan: Mouse goes home to make a plan for getting rid of Cat.

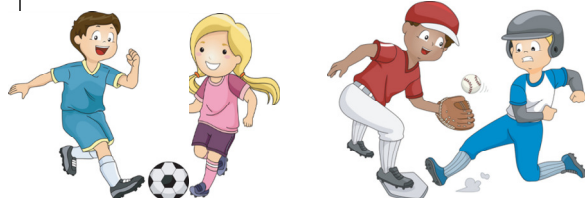**5. Trick:** Mouse returns the next night and tricks the Cat.
_____
_____
_____

6. Resolution: Cat leaves forever and Mouse is free to work.

Character Research:

*nocturnal
*climbs, runs and swims
*keen sense of smell
*can squeeze into small places
*loves cheese

*nocturnal
*loves milk, catnip
*eats mice
*keen eyesight and smell
*leaps and climbs
*walks on land

Possible Tricks:

*bring a lady cat
*cover floor in marbles to trip the cat
*bring a dog to chase the cat
*cover the floor in glue to make the cat stuck
*use catnip to put the cat to sleep
*lure the cat outside and lock him out by slamming the door
*bring a wind-up mouse

Character Research:

Protagonist's Strengths	Antagonist's Strengths
for baseball: pitching, stealing bases **for soccer:** dribbling, shooting	**for baseball:** hitting, catching **for soccer:** blocking, shooting
Protagonist's Weaknesses taunting complaining	**Antagonist's weaknesses** losing temper bullying

Possible Tricks:
*itching powder
*remote controlled bases
*remote controlled soccer ball
*sleeping powder
*trick bat
*trick soccer net
*disruptive mascot
*disruptive food stand

Teacher Models Sports Contest Plan

1. **Setting:** *baseball*
2. **Encounter:** How is Protagonist harassed by the antagonist (bully) from the opposite team? *The bully spits on Melissa.*
3. **Motive:** *Melissa* wants to get even with the bully from the other team by playing a trick. The bully has harassed her at every game for the last three years.
4. **Distraction:** The protagonist gets her friends to cause a distraction and inserts a trick into the game. **What is the distraction?** *Melissas friend Amy pretends to faint on home plate when she is up to bat.* **What is the trick?** *Melissa offers the other team free lemonade while both sides wait for her to recover. The lemonade has sleeping powder in it.*
5. **Bully's Disaster:** The trick works and causes the bully and his team mates to *yawn, stumble, and struggle to hit the ball and run.*
6. **Protagonist Wins** the Game by: *Hitting a home run with bases loaded because the pitcher can't throw the ball very hard.*
7. **Is the Protagonist caught? If so, how?** *The bully guesses the reason, confronts Melissa, but the bully falls down snoring before anyone else can hear the truth.*

Teacher Models Sequencing the Story Problem

Story Trick: Melissa gets even with the bully by giving him and the rest of his team mates lemonade spiked with sleeping powder.

Order of Events	Action Words
1. Todd downs a glass of lemonade.	*chugged, drained, slurped
2. He returns to the pitcher's mound. Amy is unable to play after fainting and so Melissa steps up to bat with the bases loaded.	*swaggered, strode, walked *stepped, leaned over, wound up
3. Todd starts yawning and rubbing his eyes. He tosses the ball while yawning and it rolls over home plate. The umpire calls, "Ball!"	*yawned, rubbed tossed, let go, chucked *rocked, teetered, wobbled
4. Todd rocks back and forth on the plate and opens and shuts his eyes. His next pitch is so slow that Melissa hits a home run.	blinked, fluttered, stared lobbed, launched, sent slammed, hammered,
5. Four players round the bases and arrive safely at home plate.	knocked, walloped *sprinted, rounded, dashed, streaked, darted, whizzed

Student's Sports Contest Plan

1. **Setting:**

   _____

2. **Encounter:** _How is Protagonist harassed by the antagonist (bully) from the opposing team?_

   _____

3. **Motive:** _Protagonist wants to get even with the bully from the other team who has harassed him/her every game for the last three years. He decides to play a trick._

4. **Distraction:** The protagonist gets his friends to cause a distraction and inserts a trick into the game. **What is the distraction?**

   _____
   _____

   What is the trick? _____

5. **Bully's Disaster:** The trick works and causes the bully to _____
   _____
   _____

6. **Protagonist Wins** the Game by:
   _____
   _____

7. **Is the Protagonist caught?** If so, how?
   _____

   If not, describe the final encounter between the Protagonist and the Bully.
   _____

Character Research:
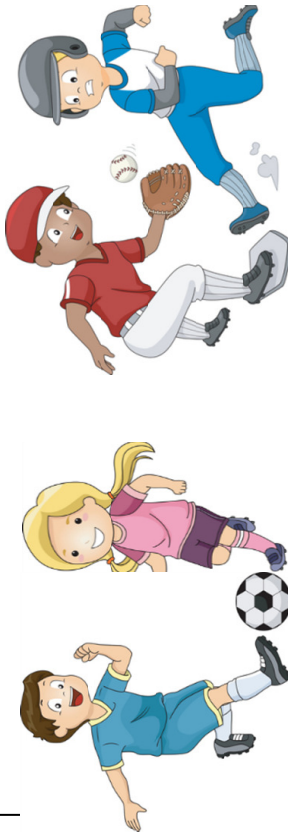
Antagonist's Strengths
for baseball:
hitting
catching
for soccer:
blocking
shooting

Antagonist's weaknesses
losing temper
bullying

Protagonist's Strengths
for baseball:
pitching
stealing bases
for soccer:
dribbling
shooting

Protagonist's Weaknesses
taunting
complaining

Possible Tricks:
*itching powder
*remote controlled bases
*remote controlled soccer ball
*sleeping powder
*trick bat
*trick soccer net
*disruptive mascot
*disruptive food stand

Assignment 4:
Pattern Stories
Stuck is a Stand Alone Story Plot
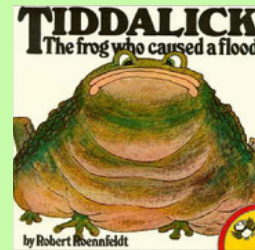*Stuck can be also be used as the disaster in any story pattern.

Stuck by Accident

1. Setting, Main Character & his Motive: needs/wants to_____

2. Character/Object gets stuck due to:
   *disaster   *weather

3. 2nd Motive: Character wants to free:
_____

4. 1st Attempt to free stuck_____ which fails.

5. 2nd attempt to free stuck_____ which fails.

6. 3rd attempt to free stuck_____ succeeds through:
*trick   *luck
*someone helps   *tool
*hard work
*use of force
*change of weather

Stuck by Another's Design

1. Setting, Main Character & his Motive: needs/wants to_____

2. Encounter with:_____

3. Character/Object gets stuck due to another character's:
*trick   *magic   *use of force

4. 2nd Motive: New Character tries to keep object/person.
*Main Character tries to free himself/object/ or other character.

5. 1st Attempt to free stuck_____ which fails.

6. 2nd attempt to free stuck_____ which fails.

7. 3rd attempt to free stuck_____ succeeds through:
*trick
*someone helps
*luck
*hard work
*changed mind
*tool
*use of force

TIDDALICK
The frog who caused a flood

by Robert Roennfeldt

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Character Research:

Character gets stuck:

*up in a tree
*sticks head inside a food pail and get stuck
*down a hole in the ground
*head stuck in the rail of a fence
*gets tail tied in a knot
*gets something stuck inside trunk/nose
*tongue gets stuck on anything metal
*in the mud

Teacher Models a Stuck Story Plan:

1. Setting: *First snowfall at the Zoo*
Introduction of Mother and baby *Giraffe*
The baby goes exploring one morning and finds: *a layer of snow all over his enclosure.*
2. Baby animal gets stuck due to:
   *disaster   *weather
Baby Giraffe tries to lick snow off the chain link fence and gets his tongue stuck.
3. 2nd Motive: Character wants to free:
Baby Giraffe wants to get his tongue free.
4. 1st attempt to free *Baby Giraffe's tongue* **which fails is when** *the baby tries to wiggle his tongue which only makes him cry.*
5. 2nd attempt to free *Baby Giraffe's tongue* **which fails is when** *Mother Giraffe discovers the problem. She wraps her long neck around Baby Giraffe to pull him free. This hurts so much that Baby Giraffe kicks her.*
6. 3rd attempt to free *Baby Giraffe's tongue* **succeeds through:**
*trick
*luck
*someone helps- *the Zookeeper hears all the commotion and comes running. Soon he brings a pail of warm water and pours it over the place where Baby Giraffe's tongue is stuck to the fence. The tongue loosens and Baby Giraffe is free at last.*
*tool
*hard work
*use of force
*change of weather
*change of mind

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Student Stuck Story Plan:

1. **Setting:** Zoo in the winter/spring/summer/fall
   Introduction of Mother and baby_____
   The baby goes exploring one morning and finds:
   _____

2. **Baby animal gets stuck due to:**
   *disaster   *weather
   _____

3. **2nd Motive:** Character wants to free:
   _____

4. **1st attempt to free** _____
   which fails is when _____
   _____

5. **2nd attempt to free** _____
   which fails is when _____

6. **3rd attempt to free** _____
   succeeds through:
   *trick
   *luck
   *someone helps
   *tool
   *hard work
   *use of force
   *change of weather
   *change of mind

Character Research:

Character gets stuck:

*up in a tree
*sticks head inside a food pail and get stuck
*down a hole in the ground
*head stuck in the rail of a fence
*gets tail tied in a knot
*gets something stuck inside trunk/nose
*tongue gets stuck inside anything metal
*in the mud

Research:

Animal goes exploring at the:
*zoo
*circus
*pet store
*veterinary clinic
*school

Animal is caught by:
*child
*vet
*circus performer
*zoo keeper
*teacher
*pet store owner

Teacher Models a Stuck Story Plan:

1.   Setting: *city*
Introduction of animal: *a talking parrot*
who journeyed to: *the pet store* **because he wanted to** *meet other animals*

2.   Animal gets stuck due to:
          *__trick__   *use of force
When the parrot flies through the pet store door he flies from one cage to the next greeting the animals. The clerk notices the loose parrot and entices it with food. The parrot flies into the bird cage and the clerk locks the cage door.
3. Motive: Animal wants to get free from:
the cage and go home.

4. 1st attempt to free himself which fails is when *the parrot tries to bite the latch, but this only hurts his beak.*

5. 2nd attempt to free himself which fails is when *the talking parrot tries convincing the clerk that he is not a pet from the pet store, but the clerk doesnt believe him.*

6. 3rd attempt to free animal succeeds when:
*trick
*luck
__someone helps__- *the parrot's owner, a young boy, enters the pet store looking for his missing bird and convinces the clerk that the parrot is his*
*tool
*hard work
*use of force
*change of weather
*change of mind

Teacher Models Sequencing the Story Problem

1st attempt animal made to get free: parrot bites the latch

Order of Events	Action Words
1. Parrot bit the latch.	*chomped, clamped, gnawed
2. Parrot cried.	*tears: welled, dribbled, dripped
3. Parrot pulled on it.	*rattled, jostled, yanked
4. Latch didn't break.	*didn't budge, didn't open, held

2nd attempt animal made to get free: parrot tries to convince the store clerk to let him

Order of Events	Action Words
1. Parrot introduced himself to store clerk.	*announced, called, beckoned
2. Parrot asked nicely to be let go.	*requested, explained
3. Parrot started jumping up and down and began yelling.	*hopped, flapped, hollered, roared
4. Clerk refused to let him free.	*shook his head, wagged his finger
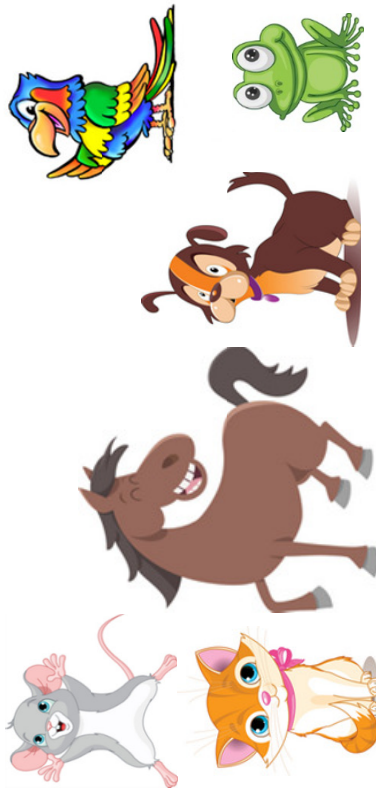
Student's Stuck Story Plan:

1. **Setting**: _____
Introduction of animal: _____
who journeyed to _____ because he wanted to:
   *meet other animals
   *meet children
   *go to school/watch a circus
   *_____

2. **Animal gets stuck due to:**
   *trick   *use of force
   _____
   _____

3. **Motive**: animal wants to get free from:
   _____
   _____

4. **1st attempt to free himself which fails is when:**
   _____
   _____

5. **2nd attempt to free himself which fails is when:**
   _____
   _____

6. **3rd attempt to free animal succeeds when:**
   * trick
   * luck
   * someone helps
   * tool
   * hard work
   * use of force
   * change of weather
   * change of mind

Research:

Animal goes exploring at the:
*zoo
*circus
*pet store
*veterinary clinic
*school

Animal is caught by:
*child
*vet
*circus performer
*zoo keeper
*teacher
*pet store owner

Circle is a Story Frame Plot Requiring a Subplot
Subplots are: copycat, contest, stuck, physical transformation

Journey Circle

1. Setting, Character, Motive
tired of being a _____ and wants to live with a new type of animal.

2. Journeys to:

3. Encounter: meets news animal family

4. Disaster New animal family wants him to help_____. Main character has a disaster and journeys on to find another animal family. Repeat steps 3 & 4 twice.

5. Motive Changes: after the third disaster the main character misses his own home and animal family. He returns home happy to be himself.
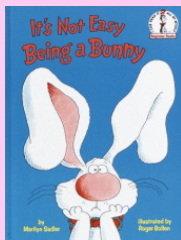
Lost and Found Circle

1. Setting, Main Character, Crime

2. Motive: Main character has had his_____ stolen and wants to get it back.

3. Main Character Calls Detectives.

4. Clue 1: Leads to identity of thief.

5. Clue 2: Leads to location of thief.

6. Suspenseful Encounter: Detectives meet and catch the thief.

7. Item is returned by Detectives to Main Character.
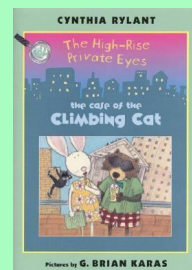
Thumbnail shown for the purpose of criticism (analyzing how this picture book uses the stuck plot structure and how it can become the basis for teaching students how to write a stuck plot structure). The use of these is covered under the Fair Dealing of Canadian Copyright law under section 29.1 (criticism or review) which states "Fair dealing for the purpose of *criticism* or *review* does not infringe the copyright if the following are mentioned:
a) the source; and
b) if given the source, the name of the author

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	Research:
	*lives in a beehive in the hollow of a tree *collect nectar with proboscis *feed babies *make wax and honey *fly *guard hive
	*live in a colony underground *guard colony *dig tunnels *clean nest *protect aphids and eat their honeydew
	*lives on bushes and trees *spin silk to make webs *catch bugs *eat bugs *swing from place to place on silk strings *lay an egg sac full of eggs
	*live on flowering plants and bushes *eat aphids *crawl & fly *are beetles not insects *play dead to escape predators *leak yellow blood which stinks to escape predators
	*live near ponds, lakes, streams, rivers *can fly forwards, sideways, backwards or stay in one spot for up to a minute *catch insects on the fly by scooping them up in arms formed like a basket *have sharp teeth *like to eat mosquitos *can see in every direction except directly behind them

Teacher Models Journey Circle Story Plan:

1. Setting: flower garden
Introduction of main character: Wiggles the ant
Motive: Wiggles was tired of eating honeydew. He left to see what it was like to be a different insect.
He journeyed to: a beehive in the hollow of a tree

2. Where he met: a bee
When he heard, saw, felt or smelled....a buzzing noise
Motive: The bee wanted the ant to collect nectar.
Disaster: Wiggles bit off a dandelion and jumped on it. Petals flew everywhere, but no nectar came out. The bee laughed and laughed. The ant decided to leave.
He journeyed to: a pond

3. Where he met: a dragonfly
When he heard, saw, felt or smelled... a pair of wings sparkling like blue jewels
Motive: the dragonfly wanted him to eat a mosquito.
Disaster: The dragonfly popped a mosquito in Wiggle's mouth and he bit down. It tasted so terrible that he turned green and spit it out. The dragonfly laughed until he wheezed. The ant decided dragonfly food wasn't for him and left.
He journeyed to: a bright red geranium

4. Where he met: a ladybug
When he heard, saw, felt, or smelled...something stinky
Motive: the ladybug wanted Wiggles to practice playing dead so he would be able to escape the crows that kept trying to eat him
Disaster: When a crow swooped down and the ant tried to play dead, he fell off the geranium and got a bump on his head. This was the last straw. The little ant went straight home.

5. All the ants welcomed him and Wiggles was very happy to have a supper of honeydew and fall asleep in his ant nest.

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Reproducible

Student's Journey Circle Story Plan:

1. Setting: flower garden

Introduction of main character: _____

Motive: He was tired of _____

He left to see what it was like to be a different insect.

He journeyed to: _____

2. Where he met: _____

When he heard, saw, felt or smelled.....

_____

Motive: _____

Disaster: _____

He journeyed to: _____

3. Where he met: _____

When he heard, saw, felt or smelled.....

_____

Motive: _____

Disaster: _____

4. Where he met: _____

When he heard, saw, felt or smelled.....

_____

Motive: _____

Disaster: _____

5. He/she returned home: _____

Changed motive: He/she was now happy to be a... _____

Research:

*lives in a beehive in the hollow of a tree
*collect nectar with proboscis
*feed babies
*make wax and honey
*fly
*guard hive

*live in a colony underground
*guard colony
*dig tunnels
*clean nest
*protect aphids and eat their honeydew

*lives on bushes and trees
*spin silk to make webs
*catch bugs
*eat bugs
*swing from place to place on silk strings
*lay an egg sac full of eggs

*live on flowering plants and bushes
*eat aphids
*crawl & fly
*are beetles not insects
*play dead to escape predators
*leak yellow blood which stinks to escape predators

*live near ponds, lakes, streams, rivers
*can fly forwards, sideways, backwards or stay in one spot for up to a minute
*catch insects on the fly by scooping them up in arms formed like a basket
*have sharp teeth
*like to eat mosquitos
*can see in every direction except directly behind them

Teacher's Lost and Found Mystery Circle Story Plot Model

2. Detectives discover the first clue which reveals the identity of the suspect.

First Clue: *The detectives find some long hairs and a pool of drool beside the spot where the pail of fish was.*

spotted

3. Detectives discover the second clue which reveals where the suspect might have gone with the item. They head off to this location.

Second Clue: *There were large muddy paw prints leading from the Cat's house into the woods. Along the trail of paw prints there were also a few fish heads and tails. The trail ends in front of a den.*

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searched

Serious Detective: Max
Choose Quality:
<u>clever</u>, brave, strong
_____
★

Goofy Detective: Gilbert
Choose Quality:
<u>clumsy</u>, fearful, silly
_____
★

followed

1. Setting: *Cat's house*

Cat discovered he/she is missing the pail of fish he caught.
Motive: *He/she wants the fish back and calls the detectives to the crime scene.*

5. Detectives return the pail to the owner. *The wolf promises to catch the cat another pail of fish.*
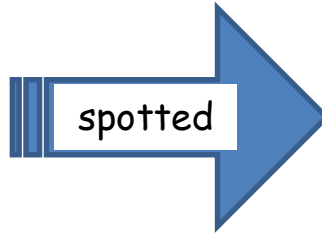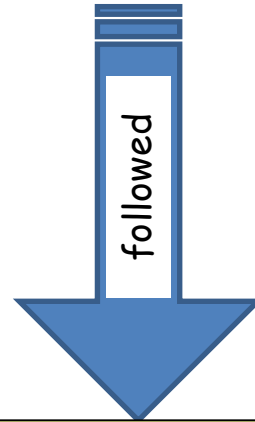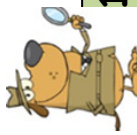
returned

4. Detectives hide out at the location and wait for the suspect. *What do they **see, hear, feel, smell or taste?** The detectives hear yipping and see four wolf cubs eating fish out of a pail.*
How do they catch the suspect?
The detectives grab the pail of fish which makes the cubs howl. The father wolf comes out of the den. He admits to having taken the fish to feed his cubs because he had been unable to catch food for them.

Reproducible

Teacher Models Sequencing the Story Problem

1st clue: Detective finds long hairs and a pool of drool beside the spot where the pail was.

Order of Events
1. Max the dog detective finds the place where the pail was.
2. Max used his magnifying glass to look for clues.
3. He found long hairs and a pool of drool.
4. He thought they came from a wolf.

Action Words
*located, discovered
*searched, examined
*uncovered, spotted
*deduced, concluded

2nd clue: Goofy Detective finds muddy paw prints leading into the woods.

Order of Events
1. Gilbert, the goofy detective trips over a rock and lands in the mud.
2. He sees the paw prints of a wolf in the mud.
3. Two detectives follow the paw prints into the woods.
4. They found the wolf`s den.

Action Words
*stumbled, crashed
fell, landed, Splat!
*spied, noticed
*followed, pursued
*spotted, discovered

Catch the thief: Detective takes the pail of fish away from the cubs.

Order of Events
1. Max takes the pail away from the cubs.
2. The cubs are upset.
3. Father wolf comes out of the den to see what the noise is about.
4. The detectives ask him why he took the Cat`s fish.

Action Words
*seized, snatched, grabbed
*yowled, howled, whined
*emerged, appeared
*questioned, demanded

Choose insects or animals for characters:

Insect Research:

*collects nectar with proboscis
*sometimes drink from mud puddles
*can't fly if they're cold
*are nearsighted but see colours

*grasshoppers have ears on their tummies
*grasshoppers rub their hind legs on their forewings to make music
*jump and have wings so they can fly, too
*spit a brown liquid to defend themselves
*eat plants

*collect nectar with proboscis
*feed babies
*make wax and honey
*fly
*guard hive
*leave a trail of pheromones (scent)

*eat aphids
*crawl & fly
*attract other ladybugs with pheromones
*play dead to escape predators
*leak yellow blood which stinks to escape predators

*can fly forwards, sideways, backwards or stay in one spot for up to a minute
*catch insects on the fly by scooping them up in arms formed like a basket
*have sharp teeth
*like to eat mosquitos
*can see in every direction except directly behind them

Animal Research:

*catch and eat fish and mice
*like milk and catnip
*hunt at night
*purr and meow

*wolves hunt & eat deer, mice, fish, birds
*live in dens with their pups
*hunt in packs
*howl to communicate with other wolves
*are excellent swimmers
*can smell other animals up to a mile away

*like to chew on bones; eat meat
*dogs use their whiskers to help them find their way in the dark
*have sweat glands in their paws
*have excellent hearing and smell

*eat fish, mice
*slither to move
*shed their skin two or three times a year
*swallow their food whole
*don't have eyelids and sleep with eyes open

*live near water in a den
*like to wash their food
*eat berries, nuts, fish, crayfish, mice, eggs
*are nocturnal
*excellent climbers, swimmers, runners
*have hands similar to people
*are very smart
*communicate through making sounds

Reproducible

Student Lost and Found Mystery Circle Story Plot Model

2. Detectives discover the first clue which reveals the identity of the suspect.

First Clue: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Detectives discover the second clue which reveals where the suspect might have gone with the item.

Second Clue: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Serious Detective:
Choose Quality:
clever, brave, strong
* _____

Goofy Detective:
Choose Quality:
clumsy, fearful, silly
* _____

1. Setting: _____ discovers he/she _____ is missing
Motive: *He/she wants to get it back and calls detectives to crime scene.*

5. Detectives return the _____ **to the owner.** _____
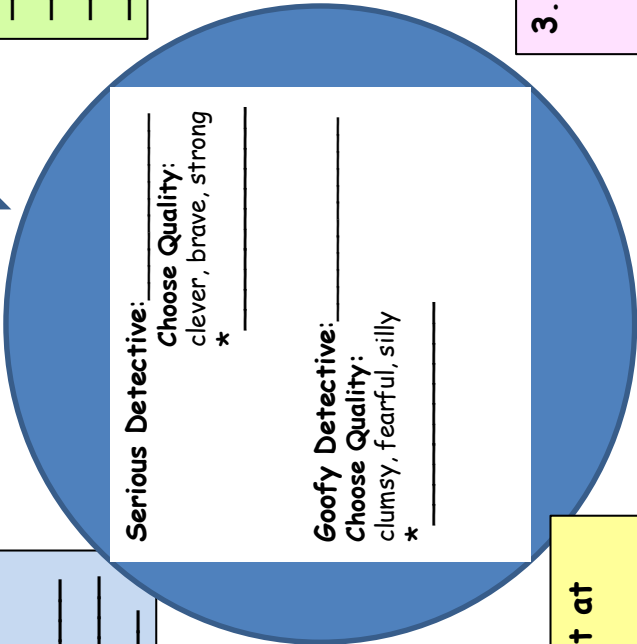
4. Detectives travel/hide out at this location and wait for suspect to show up with the item. *What do they see, hear, feel, smell or taste?*
_____
_____
_____

How do they catch the suspect?
_____
_____
_____
_____

Assignment 4: Pattern Stories

Physical Transformation (Stages of Growth & Development)
Character Transformation (Requires Subplot)

Physical Transformation

1. **Encounter:** interesting way Character(s) finds a new season/setting. Examples:
*looks out window to see snow or_____
*time travels to_____
*picture of_____comes alive

2. **Motive:** Character wants to explore: choose a season/setting_____

3. **First attribute** of season/setting explored or encounter with:_____

4. **Second attribute** of season/setting explored or encounter with: _____

5. **Character is satisfied and returns home by:**_____

EZRA JACK KEATS
THE SNOWY DAY
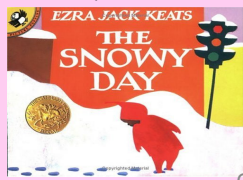
Character Transformation

Contest Subplot: Predator and Prey

1. Setting and Prey
2. **Encounter:** Prey meets Predator
3. **Motive:** Predator wants to eat Prey. Prey wants to trick predator and escape.

4. 1st trick Prey plays on Predator.
5. 2nd trick Prey plays on Predator.
6. Predator gets stuck when_____

7. **Transformation:** Prey frees predator and the two become friends.

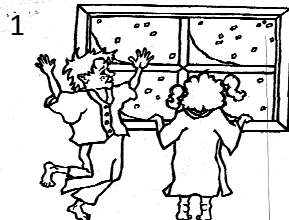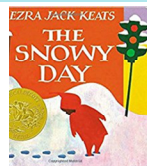The KNIGHT and the DRAGON
STORY AND PICTURES BY TOMIE dePAOLA
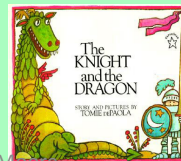
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Student Example of a physical transformation story plot

This story project is based on The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats. Students will write from a sequence of pictures showing a fun snow day. Share this book with your students prior to completing the writing project.

EZRA JACK KEATS
THE SNOWY DAY

1. Seth and Hanna peeked out the window. Snowflakes softly floated down to the ground. Yippy! It's snowing! Let's go play!

2. Yelled Hanna. It's going to be fun, said seth as they zipped up their jackets. Hopping into their boots, they dashed out the door.

3. Hanna grabbed one end of the sled and seth grabbed the other end of the sled. Trudging up the hill they leaped onto the sled. Wheel they wizzed down the hill. Suddenly they smacked a tree stump. Aaaaa! Thump! they flew off!
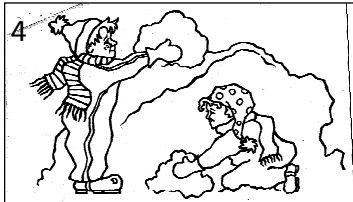
4. Hey said Hanna. Do you know where we are? No said Seth Im scared and hungry. I have an idea! shouted Hanna. Let's build a snow

5. fort. Packing snow blocks they built a fort. They rested inside and crunched some snow. Suddenly Hanna heard voices calling MOM! DAD! We're here! shouted the children. Dashing out of the fort they hugged their parents and raced all the way home. The End

1. Early one morning
   One day
   One bright morning   children   peeked   window
                                      gazed
                                      peered
                                      stared

2. snowflakes   twirled   ground
                 danced   earth
                 floated   fields
                 swirled
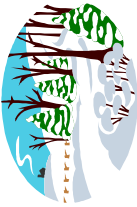
3. eyes   sparkled   bounced
           twinkled   hopped
           glowed   leaped

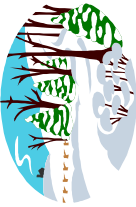MOTIVE: What do the children want?

4.   hollered   boy
   Yippee! Let's go play!   shouted   girl
   Hooray! Let's go outside!   cried
   Whoopee! Let's go!

5. children   plopped   boots
               hopped
                           zipped   coat
               buttoned   jacket
               snapped

6. They   raced   door
           tore   outside
           hurried   out

1. Grabbing / sled / climbed / hill
   Pulling / / trudged
   Tugging / / plodded
   Yanking

2. Children / piled on / zoomed / down
   / scrambled on / zipped / bottom
   / sat down / raced
   / / whizzed

3. Wind / whipped / faces
   / nipped / cheeks
   / bit / noses
   / stung

4. Yelling / they / skidded / Thud!
   Shouting / / tumbled / Thunk!
   Whooping / / slowed / Plop!
   / / crashed

5. A short time later / they / decided
   A little while after / / wanted
   Next, / / thought

   ☆ build / snowfort
   construct
   create

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1.

rolling	snowballs	fort	done
packing			accomplished
stacking			finished
piling			

2.

children	tossed	snowballs
Whiz!	whipped	
Plop!	shot	
Smack!	flung	

3.

Let's go home!	cried	boy
I'm hungry!	shouted	girl
I'm tired!	hollered	
I'm thirsty!		

4.

Me, too!	agreed	boy
So am I!	sighed	girl
Let's go!	said	

5.

Plodding	home	children	slurped
Running	inside		gulped
Racing			
sipped			
Trudging			

hot chocolate

Character Choices:

Tricks:

*disguise	*boast
*flattery	*trap
*riddle	*lie
*pit one foe against another	*dare

Predator gets stuck…

*mouse trap	*fish hook
*live trap	*barbed fence
*gopher hole	*pail of water
*pig trough	*barn
*on a roof	*in a vine

Teacher Models Character Transformation
Story Plan (Subplot: Predator and Prey Contest)

1. Setting: *lake surrounded in forest*
Prey: *Fish*   **Predator:** *Owl*

2. Encounter: Prey meets Predator when *he is awakened one night by Owls hooting*

3. Motive: Predator wants to eat Prey.
Prey wants to trick predator and escape.

4. 1st trick Prey plays on Predator. *Fish tells Owl that the reflection of the moon in the water is the egg of a giant fish. Owl dives into the water, gets sopping wet and can't fly away for hours until his feathers dry. Fish escapes.*

5. 2nd trick Prey plays on Predator. *Fish boasts he can find and eat more insects in a single night than Owl can find and eat mice. Fish eats thirty insects, while Owl only catches and eats four mice. Owl is so full he forgets about trying to catch and eat Fish.*

6. Predator gets stuck when *he dives into the water's edge to catch Fish and gets his talons caught in an old fishing hook and line*

7. Transformation: Prey frees predator by *chewing the fishing line in half and disentangling the Owls talons from the hook.*

After that, Owl and Fish are friends.

Animal Research:

*cats catch and eat mice, voles, fish
*nocturnal
*purr and meow

*owls eat mice, squirrels, rabbits, snakes
*nocturnal
*nest in tree cavities, abandoned buildings, or a shallow indent in the ground
*can turn their necks up to 270°
*have special feathers which allow them to fly almost silently

*snakes eat fish, mice
*slither to move
*shed their skin two or three times a year
*swallow their food whole
*don't have eyelids and sleep with eyes open

*mice live on prairies and in woodlands
*make nests in trees, logs, old stumps, burrows
*eat nuts, plants, seeds, flowers, fruit
*nocturnal
*enemies are snakes, coyotes, owls, cats

*trout live in freshwater streams and rivers
*have excellent eyesight and are strong swimmers
*eat insects, worms
*enemies are snakes, owls and cats

Teacher Planning Instructions:

Students will write their own character transformation story which shows how a predator and his prey become friends when the prey helps the predator out of a predicament.

Class Discussion

1. For your story choose a predator and his prey.

2. Select two tricks the prey plays on the predator to prevent from getting eaten.

3. Decide how and where the predator gets stuck.

4. How does the prey rescue the predator?

5. Show the predator and prey become friends.

Student's Character Transformation Story Plan:
Contest Subplot: Predator and Prey

1. Setting: _____

Prey: _____ Predator: _____

2. Encounter: Prey meets Predator when _____

3. Motive: Predator wants to eat Prey.
Prey wants to trick predator and escape.

4. 1st trick Prey plays on Predator. _____

5. 2nd trick Prey plays on Predator. _____

6. Predator gets stuck when _____

7. Transformation: Prey frees predator by _____

and the two become friends.

Character Choices:
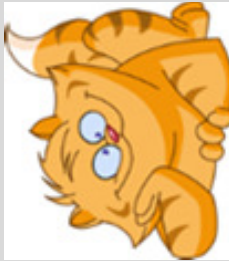
Tricks:

*disguise
*flattery
*riddle
*pit one foe against another *dare

*boast
*trap
*lie

Predator gets stuck...

*mouse trap
*live trap
*gopher hole
*pig trough
*on a roof

*fish hook
*barbed fence
*pail of water
*barn
*in a vine

Sequels

A sequel takes characters from an existing story and places them in a new adventure/plot. Sequels are harder to write than pattern stories because they don't provide plot and resolution. Once children understand the seven story plot patterns, they can choose one as the basis for their story plot. This makes writing sequels much easier.

Suggested Grade Levels	Type of Assignment (in order of difficulty)	Setting	Character	Plot	Resolution
Kindergarten	1. Class book	none	none	theme provided	none
Grades 1 & 2	2. Sequence story	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 2 to 4	3. Retelling	provided	provided	provided	provided
Grades 3 & up	4. Pattern story	not provided	not provided	provided	provided
varies	5. Sequel	sometimes	provided	general perimeters	not provided
varies	6. Genres	general perimeters	general perimeters	general perimeters	general perimeters
varies	7. Free choice	not provided	not provided	not provided	not provided

What About the Story Patterns and Genres?

1. Story patterns provide the problems and resolutions for genre stories. There is no conflict between the two, they work together. Understanding story patterns allows one to write in any genre. Often times particular genres utilize particular story patterns. For example, in some mystery stories a person has something, it is taken from them and there is a journey to get it back; this is an example of a lost and found circle story pattern.

2. All people share similar motives. For example, all people need food, water, and shelter. Therefore, motive is the center of all stories including pattern stories and genre stories. Motive is what a character wants or needs. When it is linked to corresponding story action (characters attempting to get what they want or need) it creates story plot patterns. These same seven story patterns are found in every genre from stories around the world. Some examples include:

*copycat story   - Greek Myth of Daedalus and Icarus
*stuck story   - Greek myth of King Midas
*contest story   - Greek myth Arachne and Athena

3. The seven story patterns do not conflict with genre stories, because the two work together. Genre stories rely on motive and story pattern to supply story problems and resolutions.

4. Children struggle the most with finding a story problem and corresponding resolution. The beauty of the seven plot patterns is that anyone can learn basic story problems and resolutions which can be used repeatedly with new settings and characters to create stories in any genre.

Summary of Story Elements

Encounters

Main Character:
*meets new character
or
*enters new setting

What does he…
*see (two eyes glowing)
*smell (delicious aroma wafting)
*hear (voice hissing)
*feel (something tickling his neck)

Setting

Character & His Motive
*He wants/needs…
so he…

Dialogue is used for:
*expressing strong emotion
*telling what the character wants/ doesn't want/needs
*expressing a plan for how to get what the character: wants/doesn't want/needs
*requesting help from another character
*first meetings between characters
*conversations overheard to inform the main character of the plans of others
*expressing events from one character to another that the writer does not wish to write in length about such as past history
*deceiving/intimidating/manipulating another to get what character wants/needs
*giving directions   *giving advice
*giving instructions
*showing character's personality traits/age/gender etc.

Story Parts Page

The order of these parts vary from one story to the next and each part can be used many times in a single story.

Story Problems are created when a Character's Motive is blocked by an obstacle.

1. **Character's Motive:** What does your character want or need? What action(s) does he take to get it?
2. **Story Problem:** What tries to stop him from getting it?

Obstacles which block a character's motives include: tricks, disasters, acts of god or use of force.

3. Does he overcome the obstacle and fulfill his motive or fail? How is he transformed as a result of facing this obstacle?

Character's Action
*Tries to get what he wants/needs so he…
*attempts/trades/copies…
*journeys…
*uses skill, ability or talent
*plays a trick
*sets a trap
*uses magic
*uses physical or political force
*gets help from…character/object
*loves, believes, hopes or stands for truth
*changes his mind
*prays and waits for God to act
*gives up or accepts futility and changes
*takes advantage of a lucky break

but…creates story problem by BLOCKING MOTIVE with an OBSTACLE

Obstacles are:
*tricks
*disasters
*acts of god (weather, magic, miracle)
*use of force (physical or political)

To overcome obstacle character either takes action , talks to/gets advice or encounters…