

Book Focus: Switch Stories

This book is based on teaching children one way to write a switch story. A switch story occurs when a deliberate or accidental switch of objects, characters, jobs, locations, homes, or identities occurs. Switch stories usually end when things are switched back to the the way they started. This type of plot often results in humorous situations. The humour in a switch story plot can be a great drawing card for reluctant writers. In literature, switch stories begin as picture books, are used as sub-plots in chapter books and include full length novels. When teaching children to write switch stories it is beneficial to read them about ten switch stories before choosing one to write from. This helps children to see many ways that stories can be written using a switch plot for a frame.

Below are switch story examples for you to share with your class. When choosing one to write from it is best to work with a very simple pattern. Most children write about three grade levels below what they can read. Even Gordon Korman, a child prodigy, who published his first novel at thirteen wrote his book for ten year old children. Therefore, picture books will work the best with children from the end of grade one through to grade six.

Switch Stories to Share with Your Class Prior to Writing:

1. Aesop & Company: The Lion and the Mouse by B. Bader ISBN 0395-97496-8
2. The Princess and the Dragon by A. Wood ISBN 0-85953-716-1
3. The Magic Hockey Stick by Maloney & Zekauskas ISBN 0-14-230015-2
4. The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse by E. Schechter ISBN 0-553-37572-5
5. What Newt Could Do for Turtle by J. London ISBN 076360580-8
6. Little Polar Bear and the Brave Little Hare by Hans de Beer ISBN 0-7358-1332-9
7. Blueberries for Sal by R. McCloskey ISBN 014-050169-X
8. Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock by E. Kimmel ISBN 0-8234-0798-9.
- The Prince and the Pauper by Mark Twain ISBN 0-679-89213-3
10. The Adventures of Sparrowboy by B. Pinkney ISBN 0-689-83534-5
11. Sheila Rae the Brave by K. Henkes ISBN 0-688-14738-0
12. Mrs. Potter's Pig by P. Root ISBN 0-7636-0160-8

Page one of Teacher's Story Model: The Swap

Lesson One:

Introduce the setting and evening using sensory imagery

The sun's last rays splashed shades of pink and purple across the sky as a crescent moon slowly emerged. Shadows of the eucalyptus trees began to stretch across the winding path.

Have first mom take her baby to the meeting spot

"Slow down!" called Mother Kangaroo to her baby joey as he sped down the path, bounced over a hollow log and straight toward the watering hole. *Boing! Boing! Boing! Kersplash!* Baby Joey hit the water at full speed sending droplets splashing everywhere.

Show exhaustion of first mother through her facial expressions, body language or actions.

Mrs. Kangaroo sighed and rubbed her aching back.

Have first mother sit down beside second mother.

Plop! Then she sank down into the grass beside Mrs. Snake.

Have mothers use conversation to complain about how terrible their babies are and why they decide to switch.

"Is that your precious little one?" asked Mrs. Snake.

"Precious?" groaned Mrs. Kangaroo sinking down into the grass. "That child is driving me up a eucalyptus tree! He just won't quit bouncing—even in my pouch. All night long it's boing, boing, boing! I can't get a wink of sleep!"

"Bouncing, eh?" rasped Mrs. Snake. "That doesn't sound too bad. Ever since my little one discovered he has a built in rattle it's been *shake, rattle, shake* twenty-four hours a day. My nerves are so shot I can't even get to sleep!"

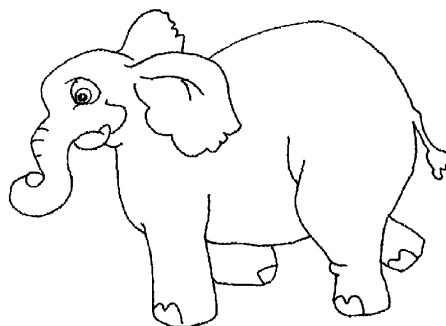
"Really," said Mrs. Kangaroo as she rolled her eyes, "Well, I would be happy to take your baby off your hands for the night if you would be willing to give me a break from mine."

"Excellent idea!" agreed Mrs. Snake.

✂ Photocopy this page and glue it into the first page of each student's research notebook or have students copy down the Table of Contents one step at a time.

Table of Contents for Research Notebook:

Character Research for Chosen Setting	1
Character Switch Story Outline	2
Mother's Complaints	3
Possible Disasters with New Parent	4
Synonyms for "Suddenly"	4
Sequencing the Disasters	5 & 6
Dictionary of Action Words to Help Describe Disaster	7 & 8
Synonyms for "Went"	9
Synonyms for "Said"	10
Onomatopoeia (Sound Effects Dictionary)	11
Evening/Morning Sensory Imagery Setting	12
Farm/Jungle/Forest/Ocean Sensory Imagery Setting	13
Prepositional Phrase Chart for Chosen Setting	14
Stress Parents Experience	15
Switch Dialogue Between Mothers	16
Showing Emotion of Frustration/Shock	17
Connectors	18
Switching Back Babies	19



Teacher Modelling and the Research/Writing Process:

1. Introduce Target Sentence (see next two pages).

*target sentences are the sequential steps or instructions for writing the story

2. Web/Brainstorm with students on overhead/chalkboard) the story language required for the target sentence.

*the story language for each target sentence is located in the section starting on page 72.

3. Model (3 different ways if possible)

*Model how to use the brainstormed story language to write this section of the story on the overhead transparencies on page 89.

4. Students Write (1-5 sentences)

*Students receive photocopy of the story language/word web (found on pages 72 to 88), glue it into their research notebooks and then circle or add their own words to word web. Next, they write this section of their own story using their own setting and characters which were planned on their outlines.

5. Share

*Students share with a friend or the class what was written in this section of the story. Often when students read their work aloud mistakes are discovered and fixed in the moment of enthusiasm.

6. Edit

*Students edit the one to five sentences they wrote for the target sentence and the process repeats itself beginning with step number one above.