

Book Focus: Contest Stories

This book is based on teaching children one way to write a contest story. A contest story is based on one of the following motives: man Vs. man, predator vs. prey, man vs. nature, man vs. god(s) or God, man vs. evil, man vs. death, man vs. machine, man vs. himself, and the "dare" stories. Contest stories usually end when the contest is won or lost. This type of plot is most often serious. In literature, contest stories begin as picture books, are used as sub-plots in chapter books and include full length novels. When teaching children to write contest stories it is beneficial to read them about ten contest stories before choosing one to write from. This helps children to see many ways that stories can be written using a contest for the plot.

Below are contest story examples for you to share with your class. When choosing a story to write from, it is best to work with something simple. 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 or a single chapter from a novel will work the best with children from the end of grade one through to grade six.

Contest Stories to Share with Your Class Prior to Writing:

1. The Wolf Who Cried Boy by B. Hartman ISBN 0-439-58417-58
2. The Perfect Pet by P. Coplans ISBN 0-86264-102-0
3. Axle Annie by R. Pulver ISBN 0-14-230014-4
4. Emma and the Coyote by M. Ruurs ISBN 0-7737-6205-1
5. Borreguita and the Coyote by V. Aardema ISBN 0-679-88936-1
6. Dazzle the Dinosaur by M. Pfister ISBN 0-7358-1370-1
7. The Princess Knight by C. Funke ISBN 0-439-53630-8
8. Trouble with Trolls by Jan Brett ISBN 0-698-11791-3
9. Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel ISBN 0-395-25939-8
10. John Henry by Brad Kessler ISBN 0-689-80190-4
11. Ziggy Piggy and the Three Little Pigs by F. Asch ISBN 1-55074-913-7
12. Rainbow Fish & the Sea Monster's Cave by M. Pfister ISBN 0-7358-1536-4
13. The Tortoise and the Hare Aesop Fable ISBN 0-8234-0510-9
14. Mice Twice by Joseph Low ISBN 0-689-71060-7

Page 1 of Teacher's Story Model:

Introduce protagonist and sport/important game being played using sensory imagery. Tell the score of the game.

Thunk! Thunk! Thunk! Josh drove the ball up the court, planted both feet and leaped. The basketball hung on the rim, rolled and finally sank. The crowd went wild. Rising to its feet it began to chant, "Go, Josh, go! Go, Josh, go!" The Cougars had made it to the championship game for the first time ever but their rivals the Bulldogs had already pulled ahead with a score of 32 to 20.

Show encounter between Protagonist and Antagonist Showing Bullying

Tweet! the referee's whistle blew and Josh sprinted down court towards the bench for the line change. Suddenly he felt a shoe on his back and was sent sprawling across the floor. He looked up and saw Cal Dinning, the Bulldogs' star player dusting off his hands.

"Gotcha!" grinned Cal.

"You jerk!" shouted Josh.

Show Protagonist's Motive (revenge) using speech/thoughts.

He narrowed his eyes, picked himself up and limped over to the bench. Tipping back his water bottle Josh took a long drink. His mind drifted back to the previous game when Cal had stuck out his foot and tripped him. Three games before that he had splashed water on the court and Josh clenched his fists and gritted his teeth "This time he's finally going to pay!" Just then his thoughts were interrupted by the Coach.

Show the main character's team is the underdog by describing what the coach says or the other players say.

Coach Johnson was pacing back and forth. His forehead was furrowed with lines and his hands clasped behind his back. "Well, boys! You've got to hem Cal in or he'll walk all over us again. Stay on him and I know we'll have a fighting chance to come back and win this game!"

Describe the crazy idea and show how it is put into the game.

Josh cupped his hand, and whispered in his friend, Tim's ear. "I think it's time justice was served to Cal along with the rest of the Bulldogs, don't you?" Tim grinned and gave Josh a high five. Josh pulled his gym bag out from under the bench and brought out a zip lock bag full of rings. "Pass 'em down!" he whispered to Tim.

Tim took a ring, snickered, and rolled his eyes. Then he helped Josh pass the rings down the bench and one by one the players placed them on their index fingers just as the buzzer went to declare half time. Josh studied his ring for a moment. There was a tiny square box with a button on it where the stone would have been in a traditional ring. It glowed mint green in the light.

Background Knowledge for Baseball:

Terms: Strike! Pop fly!

Swing and miss! Tick ball!

Foul ball! Batter up!

_____ 's on deck. (next player to bat)

You're out! Safe!

We want a pitcher, not a belly pitcher!

Batter, batter, batter! (to player at bat)

Baseball Rules:

*9 players to a team (pitcher, back catcher, *1st, 2nd, 3rd basemen, short stop, centre fielder, right fielder, left fielder)

*When three players strike out or are put out the inning is over

*Players must touch each of the three bases and home plate in order to make a complete run.

*Ball must be pitched between knees and shoulders and not too close to hitter's body.

*Ball must be hit between first and third base.

*Fielders can put a player out by catching the ball and touching a base before the player arrives.

*nine innings for a game

Background Knowledge for Soccer

a ball hitting your head is called a head ball

Referee points a flag left or right to indicate where the ball went out of bounds

corner kicks are for penalties when the ball goes out of bounds

subs (means line change)

Players:

Goalie is most important as he directs the players by calling out their numbers and telling them where to go.

Ten players in outdoor soccer:

one goalie

3 defence men

3 or 4 midfielders

2 or 3 forwards

Rules:

*Can't kick the ball past three lines or you'll be called off-side

*You can kick the ball past two lines

*only goalie can touch the ball with hands

✂️ [Photocopy this page & glue into each student's research notebook.]

Lesson 2: This Can't Be Happening at Macdonald Hall

Web protagonist's motive.

4. Show Protagonist's Motive (revenge) using speech/thoughts.
Hobbling/staggering/limping/dragging/marching

Moments later/Just then/Interrupting his thoughts/A few moments later/ Tweet! The whistle blared/The umpire/referee signalled the end of the inning/line change/half time

5. Show the main character's team is the underdog by having another player or the coach encourage the team to try harder to beat this top team.

*coach

*collected/huddled/gathered/brought/called team



*Well, boys, we still have a fighting chance if....

*Keep trying, just because they've always won doesn't mean this game has to be the same!

*If you could just shut down_____we just might be able to edge them out!

*If we're going down again, make sure we go down fighting!

*Give it your best shot! I know they're tough, but I believe in you!