

Identifying and Describing Story Elements — Grade One

Ohio Standards Connections

Reading Applications: Literary Text

Benchmark A

Compare and contrast plot across literary works.
(Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 3)

Indicator 3

Retell the beginning, middle and ending of a story, including its important events.
(Grade 1)

Benchmark B

Use supporting details to identify and describe main ideas, characters and setting.
(Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 3)

Indicator 2

Identify characters, setting and events in a story.
(Grade 1)

Lesson Summary:

Students will identify and describe characters, setting and events in a story.

Estimated Duration: *One hour*

Commentary:

Children from a very young age are attracted to stories and storytelling. It comes naturally to them because stories support their innate need to communicate often unexpressed emotions and thoughts. The language of stories told through puppets, folktales, fairytales, fables, poetry and drama is language that gives voice to what children have had limited practice expressing, less experience reading and the least experience writing. The instruction modeled in this lesson reveals the fabric of what makes stories work and helps children develop storytelling skills. As children enjoy more opportunities to practice their skills as consumers and producers of stories, they correspondingly become better readers and writers. As each child increases his or her exposure to oral traditions, advances are made toward a greater understanding of his or her own inner voice and the meaning of perspective and point of view. These skills are indispensable to reading and writing and help children establish a confident course into the world of non-fiction and literary text.

Pre-Assessment:

After reading a picture book to the class, randomly place six small strips of paper on a table. Each strip describes an event from the picture book. Have students read the sentence strips, arrange them in sequential order, read them again and tell something about the setting and characters of the story.

Scoring Guidelines:

3 = Puts all six sentence strips in order and tells something about the characters and setting of the story.

2 = Puts four or five sentence strips in order and tells something about the characters and setting of the story.

1 = Puts two or three sentence strips in order and tells something about the characters or setting of the story.

0 = Demonstrates little or no understanding of these concepts.

Post-Assessment:

After reading a picture book to the class, randomly place six strips of paper on a table. Each strip describes an event from the picture book. Have students read the sentence strips, arrange them in sequential order, read them again and tell something about the setting and characters of the story.

Scoring Guidelines:

3 = Puts all six sentence strips in order and tells something about the characters and setting of the story.



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Other Related Ohio Standards

Reading Process: Concepts of Print, Comprehension Strategies and Self-Monitoring Strategies

Benchmark D

Apply reading skills and strategies to summarize and compare and contrast information in text, between text and across subject areas. (Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 3)

Indicator 5

Compare information (e.g., recognize similarities) in texts with prior knowledge and experience. (Grade 1)

Benchmark F

Apply and adjust self-monitoring strategies to assess understanding of text. (Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 3)

Indicator 9

Monitor comprehension of independently - or group-read texts by asking and answering questions (Grade 1)

Communications: Oral and Visual

Benchmark E

Deliver a variety of presentations that include relevant information and a clear sense of purpose. (Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 2)

Indicator 7

Deliver simple dramatic presentations (e.g., recite poems, rhymes, songs and stories). (Grade 1)

2 = Puts four or five sentence strips in order and tells something about the characters and setting of the story.

1 = Puts two or three sentence strips in order and tells something about the characters or setting of the story.

0 = Demonstrates little or no understanding of these concepts.

Instructional Procedures:

1. Before introducing a seasonal picture book, assess students' experiential knowledge of the season by asking them to tell about the favorite things they like to do during the current season of the year. Have students share their experiences.
2. Introduce the book. Review what an author and an illustrator does and that sometimes the same person does both.
3. Preview the book by slowly turning pages and asking students what they think is happening. Ask students to describe the setting and who or what the story is about and tell what they think is happening to the character(s) based on the illustrations. Say, "Let's see if we are correct," and read the story aloud followed by a discussion about the setting, character(s) and events of the story.
4. Tell students that they are going to play a game called "Paper Bag Charades" in which someone will act out one part of the story they just heard. Present the paper bag and tell the students it contains strips of paper on which a part of the story is written. Also mention the strips are out of order. Tell the students you will "whisper read" what is written on the strip of paper each student picks from the bag. Each student selected draws a strip from the bag and acts out the scene described on the strip. As a student acts out the scene, the rest of the class tries to guess which part of the story the student is depicting.
5. Repeat with other students until all the slips have been drawn from the bag.
6. Display six large sentence strips in random order in a pocket chart. Explain to the students that these are some of the things that happened to the character(s) in the book, but they are all mixed-up and out of order. Have students read the sentences aloud with you.
7. Select six students to hold up the strips. Have the other students help you arrange the strips so they are in the proper sequence. Have students read the sentences aloud with you. Do this as many times as is necessary in order for all the students to have a turn acting out or holding a sentence strip.

Differentiated Instructional Support:

Instruction is differentiated according to learner needs, to help all learners either meet the intent of the specified indicator(s) or, if the indicator is already met, to advance beyond the specified indicator(s).

- Provide three interlocking puzzle pieces depicting the beginning, middle and ending of a story or children's rhyme that is well known to students who struggle with the lesson. Ask them to recite the rhyme or tell the story. As

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they recite or tell the story, show them the picture that corresponds to that part and place it on the table. When finished, mix up the pieces and ask the students to put them in the right order. Have students put the puzzle pieces together to check their work.

- Gather a collection of children's books with the word three in the title. Photocopy and reduce three illustrations from each book, mount them on cardstock and cut them into puzzle pieces. Read one of the books to the student and have the student retell the story or rhyme. Repeat this intervention activity with each story or rhyme.
- Have students, who demonstrate an understanding of the lesson, compare and contrast the character(s), setting and events of three stories that take place in a particular season of the year.
- Have the students compare and contrast the character(s), setting and events of three stories, each of which takes place in a different season of the year.

Extension:

These are ideas for all students to continue learning on this topic – in class or outside of class.

- **Compare and Contrast.** Using the book from the previous lesson, draw three columns on the chalkboard and write: "Things About _____ (write in the character's name)," "Things About Me" and "Things the Same About _____ (write in the character's name) and Me". Show one illustration at a time from the book. Ask students if they do the same things that the character in the story does or is there something about themselves that is the same or different from that of the character in the story. Have the students draw a picture of the main character and a picture of themselves. Have students write three sentences to accompany their picture:

I _____

The character _____

We both _____
- Using story writing paper, each student creates an illustration depicting what he/she likes to do during the current season, writes something about the illustration and signs his or her name. Depending on the number of students in the class, create four or five class picture books each containing five students' illustrations. Print, for example, "Fall Fun," "Winter Fun" or "Spring Fun" on the front cover. The five students work together to decorate the cover and write their first and last names on it. Each group is given a time to share their book with the class. Each student, in turn, tells the class about his or her illustration, the character (himself or herself) and the setting (place and season) and reads what is written. Books are then placed in the classroom library.

Homework Options and Home Connections:

- Give each student a chance to take his or her group's seasonal picture book home. Students are to read the book to their parents and tell them about the character (classmate) and the setting (place and season).

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- Encourage parents to tell personal and family stories to their child. Let parents know that when they tell such narrative stories they are helping their child learn to read. When they listen attentively to their child tell personal stories and ask questions that help the child express his or her thoughts more clearly, they also are helping their child learn to read.
- Provide parents with a list of Web sites where they can find information about the child's favorite author or the author of a book used in the classroom. The parent and child could use the Internet at home or at the public library with the option of help of the library staff.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

When conducting a unit of study about the season(s), there are many cross-curricular connections that can be made. For instance, as part of a Winter Unit, the following connections can be made:

- Language Arts - poems about snow and winter.
- Science - what causes snow.
- Mathematics - measure the depth of snow outside in different areas around the school building.
- Art - create collages with torn paper to depict a scene from the story.
- Social Studies - learn about the seasons in different parts of the world.
- Music and Physical Education - listen to "Winter" from Vivaldi's, *The Four Seasons* and create movements.

Technology Connections:

Create a multimedia slideshow of the seasonal picture book used in this lesson that provides new ways for students to experiment with concepts involved in storytelling. Students provide their own interpretation of this picture book as they create slides that depict story events using illustrations, voiced narration, text and background sound. As students decide on the order of their slides within the slideshow, they sequence the story into its beginning, middle and end.

Creating a multimedia slideshow is an extended project. Below is one example of how this project could take place using children's drawing software.

- Divide students into pairs. Each pair will together create one slide for the slideshow that depicts a particular event from the seasonal picture book.
- Provide students time to discuss the details of their story event. The following questions may help stimulate or frame such a discussion: What took place? What characters were involved? and Where did the event take place?
- Ask each pair to draw the illustration for their slide. Pairs can do so by using the computer graphics provided in the multimedia program, taking turns using the mouse. Encourage the pairs to consider the framing questions above as they plan their drawing. (Students can also draw off the computer and then scan their images into the program. Rather than sharing the responsibilities for drawing illustrations and recording narrations, assign one member of the pair to draw the illustration for their slide and the other to provide the narration.)
- Instruct students to save their slides with their completed illustrations.
- Display illustrations on the computer screen. Ask each pair to plan what they are going to say in their narration as they look at their displayed illustration.

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Ask questions to help students form their narrations. Attach a microphone to the computer. When ready, each member of the pair can contribute to the recording of their narration.

- Instruct students to save their recorded narrations.
- Type in text that corresponds to the narration or, if they are able, have students do so using invented spelling. This text will appear on the slide.
- Instruct students to save their slides with the completed text.
- Ask each pair to review its slides, looking at the illustrations and listening to their accompanying narration. Is there anything they would like to change? Guide students in making the desired changes. At this point, students can also decide what, if any, background sounds they would like to include with their slides. Remind students that these sounds should help communicate what is taking place in their slides.
- Load all slides onto one computer. Attach the computer to a projector to allow the entire class to view the computer screen.
- Load all the slides into one slideshow. Display the slideshow in storyboard fashion. Here, students can see all of the slides in the slideshow displayed at one time in the order in which they will appear during the slideshow. They can change the order of these slides by moving individual slides to different places within the slideshow.
- Review the contents of each slide. Ask students to suggest the sequence of the slides within the slideshow. Move the slides to the suggested positions. Run the slideshow. Ask students if the story makes sense. Do they need to change the order of any of the slides? Continue to experiment with the sequencing of the slides until the story is accurate.
- If time allows, ask the students to consider the transition that will occur between each slide during the slideshow (e.g., fade out, dissolve). Experiment with different transitions and have students select the transition(s) to use for their slideshow.
- Save the completed slideshow.

Students may need extra help when saving their work, recording narrations, typing in text and scanning images. It is helpful to have an extra person on hand at these times, such as a parent volunteer, technology specialist or teacher's aide.

Materials/Resources Needed:

For the teacher: A large-print version of a picture book that takes place in the current season of the year; a paper bag and six small sentence strips.

For the students: None

Key Vocabulary:

- character
- setting
- out-of-order
- sequence of events