

Story Workshop Bridging to Writing; Retelling as Scaffolding

Overview

This series of lessons uses simple nature or season based stories for retelling during story play. The short, simple structure provides all students with access to success in retellings. Each storytelling and writing session usually spans two to four days and the lessons are repeated for 2 to 3 weeks with a different story each week.

To support all learners, the first writing experience involves partner writing. There is also no formal or separate editing in the first few writing opportunities. The rationale is that writing is for enjoyment and inspiration. After having written several pieces, learners will select the one story they want to polish up for publishing or sharing widely.

Learning Intentions

- I can retell a simple story orally with a partner.
- I can build play out my retelling with materials (loose parts & toys)
- I can write my retelling by collaborating and co-writing with my partner
- I can be creative with my retelling by adding my own adventures, details and changes.
- I can edit my classmate's written retelling using criteria we created (single point rubric)
- I can edit my own story using criteria and get it ready for publishing

Required Materials & Preparation

- BC based or local story about animals, the season or playing outdoors (focused on nature or our interaction with nature)
- A paper bag or container for pairs or small groups to collect a few loose items from the outdoors if the read aloud is followed by a nature walk
- Paper plates to hold the stories (1 per pair)
- Loose parts, nature materials, purchased toys like Canadian forest animals
- Paper that has fun decorations to fit the theme of the stories, season or simply has nature pictures as a border. Learners are much more inspired to record their stories when they have paper that aligns with their story adventures. A choice of a different styles also helps (mini-book, comic strip, borders).

Lesson Series

-For gr. 1-3 students, this series of lessons can follow the introductory set of lessons.

-For intermediate classes who do not need to spend three weeks involved in the introductory lessons, one session focused on the read-aloud, nature walk, story building and oral story telling might suffice as their introduction to Story Workshop.

<u>The Process</u>	<u>Assessment/Feedback</u>
<p><u>Inspire & Play Out a Retelling</u> <i>(This is the same process as in the introductory lesson series. Depending on learner readiness determined by how well they are able to retell the story, some pairs may be ready to write this first day)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read aloud a short, simple story with a focus on nature, our place, forest animals, etc. Remind learners to listen for important words, characters and events. <i>Emphasize listening to remember.</i> Read the story through once without stopping. Read a second time to reinforce remembering and pause to invite learners to share what they are noticing that will be important to remember for when they build and retell the story. Story examples for young learners: <i>Strong Nations Publishing (Strong Readers Series):</i> Are You Hungry Little Bear? Salmon To Share Come and Play <i>(choosing simple stories allows all learners to find success, from those who need support to remember and sequence, to those who will embellish and add great detail)</i> 2. Co-Create Criteria for the retelling. <i>You may encourage creativity involving changing the story, or you may wish to have them practice retelling the story accurately before allowing for changes to be made. Choose what will support your learners to be able to write their story successfully.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learners share vocabulary words we learned from the story and from our walk and teacher writes them on the board so learners can look and remind themselves as they build their stories. b. Retellings need to include the story characters c. Retellings need to have the events in order as much as possible. (learning sequencing) d. Partners must each have equal turns for talking. 3. Students use loose parts & provided materials to build and tell a story in partnerships or at most a group of three if there is an uneven number of learners. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If you have purchased materials, have learners come up to the display table a few pairs at a time with their paper plates to select items that will help them tell their stories. 	<p>Observation, descriptive oral feedback *name, notice & nurture vocabulary development, respect for the environment, expressing a sense of wonder and joy with the story details.</p> <p>-Observation, oral descriptive feedback, moving learning forward with questions & provocations -Developing student skills with descriptive oral feedback using co-created storytelling criteria</p> <p>Supporting specific descriptive feedback: <i>*Support peers speaking directly to the storytellers. Learners will often speak to the teacher and refer to the storytellers in the third</i></p>

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<p>b. As learners work in pairs to build and tell their stories, adults circulate, supporting turn taking, story structure (beginning, middle, end) & use of new vocabulary. Often learners need support to have narration because some will simply act as if they are a character in the story and use sound effects and actions without words. Sometimes you may need to pause the entire class to redirect if many are only using sound effects and actions without narration.</p> <p>c. Identify a few pairs of learners who are beginning to meet the criteria well and have either completed a story or are close to it. Alternatively, you could simply notice pairs who are strong with the vocabulary use and narration. Ask if they would be willing to share their stories, pause the class and invite <i>'all our friends to come listen to a story!'</i> Gather around the pair and have the audience listen for the criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. New vocabulary, details ii. Turn taking iii. Beginning, middle, end <p>d. Encourage a round of applause and then choose learners to share one piece of descriptive verbal feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “_____ please tell our friends about what characters you noticed in their story.” • “What is one part that was either exciting or interesting?” • “Did they include most of the story events from the book?” • “Give them a thumbs up if you noticed them taking turns telling their story.” (especially when learners need support to share the storytelling) 	<p><i>person. Provide the sentence starter for those who need more support: “Can you look directly at your friend and say it like this: Casey, I noticed that you had an exciting beginning!”</i></p> <p>To support a wider range of learning needs, the teacher may need to scaffold by having them repeat parts of a modelled sentence to help them remember this slightly complex type of feedback.</p> <p>For example: <i>“Can you say repeat after me? ‘Casey, I noticed –student repeats - you used lots of nature words – student repeats – and you had a problem the characters had to solve – student repeats”</i></p>
<p><u>Writing Oral Retellings Down</u> <u>Partner Writing</u></p> <p>1. Each partner will use a coloured pencil to take a turn to write a sentence or a portion of the story while their partner supports them with spelling, remembering details, recalling the order of events, etc. Encourage the use of word lists or the word wall, using their knowledge of letter sounds and word patterns rather than providing the exact spelling of words (scaffold support according to</p>	<p>It is critical that the adults continuously circulate to support each partner to write their share, or as much as they are able, preventing one student</p>

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<p>each learner’s needs). <i>Using different coloured pencils will help the teacher know which learner wrote each sentence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher may work with another adult in the room or pick a student volunteer to model the partner writing process before releasing students to try it. • Co-create criteria for the partner expectations, the story writing elements they are learning (beginning with a catchy introduction, middle, end, using seasonal, nature based vocabulary, etc). Three strong & simple criteria are more appropriate than trying to focus on many items at this stage. ‘Keep it simple’ to foster the desire to write. <p>2. After about 8-10 minutes of writing, the teacher can begin the process of pausing the class to point out strong writing practices that they are noticing. <i>It is often supportive for all if individual students are not singled out at this point. Simply mention two or three aspects of criteria you are noticing around the room, or even mention the supportive way learners are working together. Attend to what your learners need in order to stretch their skills forward (social, writing skills, stamina, etc.).</i></p> <p>3. After resuming writing for a few more minutes, ask a pair or two if they would be willing to read aloud the part of the story they have completed. Choose students who are clearly using at least on aspect of the criteria. Pause the class so they can listen to the pair read the story, taking turns to read the parts they wrote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Depending on the amount of confidence building needed for a group of learners, partner writing can continue for another story session or two.</i> • <i>Provide time in subsequent days for students to finish writing if the initial session was not long enough and stamina was beginning to wane.</i> <p>4. Author’s Chair (informal): Near the end of the writing session, let students know that in a few minutes everyone will stop their writing (whether completely finished or not). Ask a few pairs if they would like to read their completed story to the class. Gather students in a circle at the carpet with a special spot for the authors.</p>	<p>from dominating. Coaching eager partners to help their friend stretch out words to hear the sounds as they spell rather than telling them the spelling lays the foundation for more independence in the future.</p> <p>Similar to having peers give feedback about oral stories, select individuals to say what they thought of the story that was just read aloud, referring to the criteria they met. Eg. “I noticed that you retold all the events in order.”</p> <p>Listeners use ‘I’ statements to provide descriptive feedback about the story,</p>

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<p>Author’s chair is a more formal opportunity for writers to provide and receive oral feedback and reinforcement about their writing from peers and the teacher. <i>*adaptation: provide a special chair in a prominent place in the room for the author to sit.</i></p> <p>The authors read their story aloud and ask for feedback from their peers. Model how to give feedback that includes mentioning two strong aspects of their writing and one way they could make the writing even stronger. Use the criteria as the foundation for the feedback. “I noticed you included all the characters from the story and you even used some of the nature words! Next time to make your story even more powerful, you could try to include more of the story events in order.”</p>	<p>referring to criteria and other elements or interesting things they noticed. Again, the teacher supports learners with sentence starters, modelling and practicing with them to ensure they begin to become more independent with speaking directly to the authors and using the language of writers.</p>
<p><u>Let’s Do it Again!</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Repeat this process over three or four weeks to strengthen writing stamina, a sense of success and accomplishment and the belief that they can all become writers. Always include story building and play with materials! Use a new story to retell each week and gradually adjust to have learners write their own stories instead of sharing the writing with a partner. Some learners with different needs may need an adult to be their partner if their classmate is ready to write independently before they are. 2. Once every learner has a story they have written themselves, it is time to introduce <u>peer editing using a single point rubric.</u> 	
<p><u>Peer Feedback: Single point rubric</u></p> <p>After one of the writing sessions (likely on day 2), introduce the idea of giving a friend feedback on paper instead of saying it out loud in front of the whole class. This version of a single point rubric uses the <u>‘Two Stars and a Wish’</u> approach.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide the example of the criteria written in a single point rubric with three columns (editable sample included in unit package) and model and co-edit one person’s as a class (project an electronic copy or use a document camera to show it as you fill in the form). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review the criteria the class developed for this story writing. b. Read the student’s story all the way through one time (aloud). 	<p>The assessment tool is focused on peers supporting each other to become even more powerful writers.</p> <p>It can later be used as a self assessment tool, and the criteria are often adjusted as learners become adept with some writing skills and are ready to focus on and develop new skills.</p>

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<p>c. Talk together about what the class noticed the writer did well in terms of the criteria (Stars).</p> <p>d. Check off the criteria that was met and write a compliment about two of the criteria in the column on the right.</p> <p>e. Talk together about one thing they could do next time that might make their story even stronger. <i>Use strength based, positive language.</i></p> <p>f. Write out the 'wish' or suggestion in the left column.</p> <p>2. Assign pairs to provide the same type of feedback using their own feedback forms. The authors write their name, story title and date at the top of the page. The feedback partner can write their own name.</p> <p>3. Gather as a class after most students have completed their feedback process. Choose a few students to read the feedback they gave to their partners aloud.</p> <p><i>This process of feedback will need to occur at least once more before introducing the idea of using the feedback to edit stories. Just let the feedback sit in their minds for the first couple times.</i></p> <p><i>*Learners store feedback forms in their writing folders.</i></p>	<p>As students share their written feedback with the class, it will be important for the teacher to notice, name and nurture wording that was kind and supportive for the authors and accurate use of the form. If learners are unfamiliar with using forms like this, guided support as they complete the task is important. It may take several iterations of this process to solidify the skills required.</p>
<p><u>Editing Using Peer Feedback</u></p> <p>After each learner has at least two stories with feedback forms, ask them to choose one of the stories to make the changes that were suggested.</p> <p>They need to choose the story they want to either re-write, or edit in the original draft so it can be prepared for publishing (bulletin board, sharing with family, reading to a buddy from another class)</p> <p>This is the story they will spend time adding more illustrations to, colouring, adding special effects. Encourage them to decide which story they are most proud of so they are inspired enough to spend the time and effort to polish it up.</p>	<p>The edited stories are often the ones used for showing growth compared to the earlier phases of writing. They can be used for report card evaluations and the criteria provides language to use when sharing student growth with parents.</p>

Assessment

This unit and lesson series embeds formative assessment rather than emphasizing summative assessment, but after a few weeks, learners can choose one story they wrote (or started) to bring it to publication stage (edits for spelling, narrative flow, etc)

The single point rubric can provide some summative information about:

- how well students can apply their knowledge of writing aspects when giving others feedback
- student writing skills when assessed by the teacher
- student understanding of the concept of using this strategy to provide feedback (some will need longer periods of time to learn how to use the form)

Extensions & Inspiration

Learners who are ready for a challenge can change the retellings once they begin writing on their own (after partner writing). Many delight in this challenge and the alterations range from a change of characters, to adding new and fun adventures in the story events. Some are ready to do this right away...we offer three choices:

- To retell as closely as possible to the original story
- To make up a completely different story
- To make a 'combo' story that has some changed elements.

Resources

- Single Point Rubric sample (below)
- Strong Nations publishing has a reader series called 'Strong Readers' that are particularly suitable for retelling. Choose from early readers or higher more complex readers depending on the learning needs of your class (eg. [Come and Play](#) or [Let's Go For a Paddle](#)). Even simple stories work for learners who need to be challenged are appropriate because through play, they elaborate and extend the story with their own creative ideas.

Retelling is a complex skill.

It takes knowledge of text structure, understanding of vocabulary, and the ability to recall and summarize.

Research has found that retelling promotes comprehension and vocabulary development.

https://www.understood.org/en/schoollearning/for-educators/teachingstrategies/how-to-teach-retelling#Understand:_Why_this_strategy_works



What we are noticing:

- *If a learner is at a loss to create their own story, retelling is accessible to them.*
- *Children are learning the structure of story by retelling & replaying a variety of stories.*

The Power & Purpose of Retelling



Author's Name: _____

Story Title: _____

Editing Friend's Name: _____

<u>Wishes</u> Ideas for making your writing stronger	Criteria	<u>Stars</u> A compliment! What I noticed you did well.
	✓ You included all the events in order.	You had all the events in the right order!
	✓ You had all the characters in the story.	All the characters from the book were in your story!
You used one nature words. Please use a few more next time.	<input type="checkbox"/> You used many nature words from the story.	