Lesson 3: Step Into Your Story

UNIT: Constellation Stories

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi, writers. It's Margaret. Once, I got to try these special glasses for a video game. The game was a rafting adventure. When I put them on, it felt like I was stepping into a whole new world, like this.

I wanted to tell my friends about my experience using these special glasses, but I didn't have the actual glasses with me to show them what I saw.

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: How could I describe what I experienced in the video game?

HOOK 2

Maybe you said I could talk about the colors, like the bright blue waves or the glittery sun shining down on the water. Or maybe I could describe the sounds, like the rushing river or the paddles splashing the water. All of these things, like what I saw, what I heard, and what was happening, made it feel like I was in the video game.

This makes me think—maybe I can use these same ideas in my writing to bring my reader into the world of my writing. Writers use their words to bring readers into the world of the story right away, just like these special glasses.

Before we put on our special glasses to describe the world of our story, let's review what we've done so far. You've been working on constellation stories based on this star pattern. Some of you might have planned a story about a hilarious duck or a curious chipmunk or some other interesting creature.

When I looked at these stars, I saw a bear, Cosmo. It's been a while since I made my story plan. Let's review what I planned last time:

> Cosmo the bear lived in the forest. He wanted some berries, but he needed to cross the river to get them. He tried to cross the river, but he came across some slippery rocks that made it impossible to get across. So he decided to be brave and journey deep into the forest. He found a fallen tree trunk and brought it to the river to use as a bridge to get across. He finally got to his delicious berries and learned that when you're brave, you can do amazing things.

This whole story takes place in a forest, so that's the world I need to build for my reader. Here's what my beginning sounds like so far: “There once was a forest and a bear named Cosmo.” This does tell my readers where the story is happening and who it's about, but it's not very exciting.

Remember, I want the beginning of my story to pull my reader into the world of my story, just like how these sights and sounds pulled me into the video game. Maybe it will help if I use my imagination to pretend I have special glasses that make me feel like I'm in the forest for Cosmos story, like this.

DISCUSSION 2

Discuss: How would you describe the forest?

HOOK 3

I'm not sure how you answered, but I noticed the tall trees, and orange and brown leaves falling. I also heard lots of sounds, like the wind blowing and a bird chirping. I can use these descriptions of what I saw and heard to start building a world for readers to imagine.

The beginning of my story started like this. But now, by using some descriptions, I can help my readers see and hear the forest in my story. Here's how it sounds so far:

> "It was a cloudy day in the forest. The wind blew through the tall trees and the orange and brown leaves were starting to fall. A bird was chirping in the distance."

These parts will let my reader know what sights and sounds are happening in the forest. I can even add sound words that actually sound like the wind blowing or a bird chirping to make my writing even more exciting, like this: "Whoosh!" and "Tweet tweet!"

Now that my reader can imagine the world I've created for my story, it's time to introduce my character, Cosmo. I can't just say, "Ta da, here's Cosmo, the brown fluffy bear."

I want him to be doing something when the story starts. I wonder what he could be doing at the beginning of the story before he even saw the berries.

DISCUSSION 3

Discuss: What is something Cosmo could be doing when the story begins?

HOOK 4

There are so many choices for what he could be doing in the forest. Maybe he was fishing in the river, or maybe he just woke up from a cozy nap ready for some food, or

maybe he was dancing and humming a song. In my story plan, I wrote that Cosmo wants berries. So, Cosmo waking up from a nap and being hungry would make sense to come before what my character will eventually want.

Here's what I added:

> "Cosmo, the brown fluffy bear, scratched his head as he woke up from a cozy nap. His stomach was growling. He was starving and ready to look for some lunch."

Now I have a world built for my reader to experience. They won't even need special glasses because I've described so much about the world inside my story, like what it looked like, what it sounded like, my character, and what they were doing when the story started.

Wow! Now my reader can imagine the world of my story exactly how I see it!

Today, you'll write a beginning for your story. You'll use descriptions and sounds to bring your reader into the world of your story.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 1

Get your supplies.

STEP 2

In today's lesson, you'll need someone to share ideas with. This could be a partner or someone you sit near. When everyone knows who their talk partner is, move on to the next step.

STEP 3

Get your Story Plan worksheet.

Read through all of the parts of your story.

When you're done, give a silent thumbs up.

STEP 4

Now get your Story Beginning worksheet.

It's time to imagine what the world of your story looks like. Since our stories take place in a forest, here are some ideas you can use.

Close your eyes and imagine what your forest looks like

STEP 5

Here's how my forest looks—tall trees, orange and brown leaves, a bird, and wind.

Draw the forest that you imagine for your story here. If you're not sure what to include in your forest, you can use some of these examples.

Your teacher will tell you how long you have to draw.

STEP 6

These were the sounds I used: "Whoosh" and "Tweet tweet."

Write in some words to show what sounds are happening at the beginning of your story, like this. If you're not sure what sounds to include, you can use some of these examples.

STEP 7

In the beginning of my story, my character, Cosmo, was waking up from a nap with his stomach growling because he was hungry.

Now it's time to imagine what your character is doing at the beginning of your story.

When you have your idea, draw it here in the character circle.

If you need help remembering details about what your character looks like or their personality traits, you can use your Constellation worksheet.

STEP 8

Your drawing for the world of your story should have what it looks like, what it sounds like, your character, and what your character is doing.

It's time to take your drawing and use it to help write the beginning of your story. As a reminder, here's how I describe the forest in the beginning of my story.

Start your story by describing what you see and hear in your forest. Here are some ways to start:

- Once upon a time...
- The sounds of...
- The forest had…

STEP 9

Now use your drawing of your character to introduce them to your readers.

Remember to give details about what your character looks like and what they are doing when the story starts.

As a reminder, here's how I introduce my character.

STEP 10

Read over the beginning of your story to yourself. As you read, make sure that you describe the sights, the sounds, the character, and what your character is doing.

You can check each one off as you read it, like this.

If you need to make changes to your writing, you can do so now.

STEP 11

Take turns sharing what you wrote with your partner.er.

WRAP UP

Wow! You just finished the beginning of your constellation story. You did a great job creating a world with your writing. Now your readers won't need special glasses to imagine they are in the forest that you created.

In the next lesson, you'll start drafting the rest of your story.

Before you go, the papers shown on the screen are V.I.P.s—very important papers. Your teacher will tell you where to put them so you'll have them for the next lesson.

That's all for now. I'll see you next time.