Lesson 4: Thought-full Characters

UNIT: Constellation Stories

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi, writers. It's Margaret. When I look at all of the stars in the sky, sometimes it's hard to tell which ones connect to form constellations. But luckily, I have something called a star map. It helps me see how the stars connect to form a big picture.

Your writing sort of works the same way. You already have a plan for how your story will go. All the parts of your plan are like separate stars in the sky. Your writing will connect all the parts together to make a complete story.

Before you start writing your story, you can help me finish my story about Cosmo. Last time I created a world for my reader to experience right at the beginning. Here's what I wrote:

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

Let me check my story plan to see what happens next. Cosmo wants berries. That isn't really connected to my beginning. It makes it sound like the berries just appeared and he wanted them.

A great way to connect parts of a story is to write what a character did or the character's action. I wonder what Cosmo did to find those berries.

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: How do you think Cosmo found the berries?

HOOK 2

There are so many ways to write about how Cosmo found the berries. Like, maybe he was skateboarding through the forest and saw them. Or maybe he sniffed them out. Here's what I decided to write:

> - Cosmo started walking and heard a sound. SHHHHH! It was a river! Cosmo ran to the river and saw the big red berries on the other side.

Now my reader will be able to imagine Cosmo's actions. But now it makes me wonder—what is Cosmo thinking?

Imagine you are Cosmo, the hungry bear. You just ran over to the river. Now you see those big red berries on the other side. Yum!

DISCUSSION 2

Discuss: What do you think Cosmo was thinking right after he saw the berries on the other side of the river?

HOOK 3

I'm not sure how you answered, but I think cosmos saw the berries and thought, "Mmmm, those berries look delicious!"

I'll put this thought here because it's what he's thinking after this happened. I added two things here to help the reader: quotation marks and a comma. The quotation marks go around what the character thinks, and the comma helps show who is thinking.

Now I can look back at my story plan to see what happens next. It looks like it's time for Cosmo to encounter his problem—slippery rocks. I can connect the next part of my story by letting the reader know Cosmo's actions when this problem comes up. Like this:

> - Cosmo started to cross the river. He put one paw in the water and slipped on a rock covered with moss. He tried to catch himself but it was too late. PLOP! He fell into the water and made a big splash!

Now I can add what Cosmo was thinking after he made a big splash. "Hmm this river is too hard to cross with these slippery rocks! There has to be another way," he thought.

Now I can put both the part about what Cosmo wants and this part about the problem he encounters together. The middle of my story looks awesome!

Now it's your turn to use your story plan to draft the middle and end of your constellation story. You'll write about your character's actions and what your character is thinking so all the parts of your story will be connected.

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 Beginning worksheet.

Whisper-read the introduction of your story.

When you're done, put it to the side and give a silent thumbs up

STEP 4

Now get your Story Plan.

Read the middle section that says what your character wants. Imagine you are your character, and you just saw, or realized, what you want. Think about your actions and what you are thinking.

When you have your idea, give a silent thumbs up.

STEP 5

Discuss with a partner: What are your character's actions during this part? What are they thinking during this part?

STEP 6

Get your Middle and End worksheet.

Start writing in the middle section about what your character wants and their actions when they realize or see what they want.

STEP 7

Character thoughts can happen anywhere in your writing. This can help your reader understand how your character is feeling after something happens.

Whisper-read what you just wrote. As you read, think about where you could add a thought.

When you know where you want your character's thought, write a small "1" like this.

STEP 8

Write your character's thought here in the first thought bubble. The quotation marks and comma are already there. Remember to end your character's thought like this:

- He thought.
- She thought.
- They thought.

STEP 9

Now read the next part of your Story Plan. It's time for your character to encounter a problem. Imagine you are your character and you just came across the problem. Think about your actions and what you are thinking.

When you have your idea, give a silent thumbs up.

STEP 10

Discuss with a partner: What are your character's actions during this part? What are they thinking during this part?

STEP 11

Get your Middle and End worksheet.

Start writing about the problem your character encountered and their actions as the problem is happening.

You can continue writing where you left off.

STEP 12

Whisper-read what you just wrote and think about where you could add a thought.

When you know where you want your character's thought, write a small "2" like this.

STEP 13

Write your character's thought here, in the second thought bubble. Don't forget to add quotation marks, a comma, and end your character's thought with one of these.

STEP 14

Take turns sharing the middle of your story with your partner. Remember to include your character's thoughts.

You can make changes if you want.

STEP 15

It's time to draft the end. This is the part where you leave your reader with a great ending to your constellation story. Read the solution in your story plan. Imagine you are your character, the problem is being solved, you're getting what you wanted, and the story is ending. Think about your actions, and what you're thinking.

When you have your idea, give a silent thumbs up.

STEP 16

Discuss with a partner: What are your character's actions during this part? What are they thinking during this part?

STEP 17

Find the "End" section on your Middle and End worksheet.

Start writing the ending to your story. This should include your character's actions, the solution, and how you're ending the story for your reader.

Begin writing here. If you need more room, you can write on the back.

STEP 18

Whisper-read what you just wrote and think about where you could add one more thought.

When you know where you want your last character thought, write a small "3" like this.

STEP 19

Write your character's thought here in the third thought bubble. Don't forget to add quotation marks, a comma, and end your character's thought with one of these

STEP 20

Read the last section of your Story Plan. This is the message of your story, or what your character learned. This is also going to be the last sentence of your story. Add your message to the end of your story.

You can use one of these sentences or come up with your own.

STEP 21

Take turns sharing the end of your story with your partner. Remember to read your character's thoughts.

You can make changes if you want.

WRAP UP

Wow! You just finished your constellation story. You did a great job connecting all of the parts of your story plan and letting your reader know all about your character's thoughts and actions!

In the next lesson, you will edit your writing to make sure it's easy to read.

Make sure you put your V.I.P.s somewhere safe, and I'll see you next time.