Essential Skill: Intro to Narrative Writing

Parts of a Story

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi writers. It's Margaret. I love going to the movies. It's fun to sit back with a bucket of popcorn and watch a story unfold and play out on the big screen. When I watch these stories on the screen, it makes me feel so many things. Sometimes, it's a story that makes me laugh. Or one that makes me jump out of my seat, or one that makes my heart feel all warm inside.

Just like the movies, writing can make us feel things, too. When you read a story about a brave hero on a quest, or a lonely puppy who finds a new home, that's called a *narrative*—it's just a bigger word for story. Narrative writing and storytelling happens all around us, on a stage, in a book, or even in a video.

My friend sent me this video last week because she knows how much I love penguins. Check it out!

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: How did the video make you feel?

HOOK 2

Maybe you said you felt nervous in the beginning, or maybe you said you felt relieved at the end of the video. Or maybe you felt something completely different. A good story will

make us feel lots of things. All of these feelings are because we felt connected to who the story is about.

Who the story is about, is also called the *character*. The penguin is a character in this story.

Another important part of the story is the *setting*—or where the story takes place. The setting in this video is on a sheet of ice in Antarctica.

But having just a setting and characters doesn't necessarily make it a story. Take this picture for example. It has characters and a setting, but nothing is really happening. It's not a story. Good stories have a problem that a character needs to solve.

Let's watch the video again.

DISCUSSION 2

Discuss: What is the problem in this video?

HOOK 3

You probably said the penguin is getting separated from the group. Or maybe you said something about the penguin needing to make the jump in time. You may have said something else about the penguin and the breaking ice. A problem like this one is important to a narrative because it's what keeps an audience interested in what's happening.

Think about the feelings you had when you watched the penguin face this problem. Those feelings are a lot more exciting than just watching a penguin standing still on the ice.

There's one more part that's needed for this to be a story. We have a penguin with a problem, but we can't just leave it at that. Seeing our characters solve their problem gives us that feeling of relief at the end—that's called a *solution*.

We already saw the solution in this video, but what if you could change it up to make it your own story? What would the solution in your story sound like for this penguin's problem? Maybe you'd add a new character to throw the penguin a rope. Or maybe you'd have a helicopter fly in to help the penguin. There are so many possibilities. Think of it like you only saw the first part of this video, it stopped here.

DISCUSSION 3

Discuss: What could be a new solution to this story? Remember, this is your story, so be as creative as you would like.

HOOK 4

If I could change the solution, the penguins would hold fins to make a penguin bridge, so that their friend can walk over the water and turn safely back to their colony. I bet you came up with some cool solutions, too.

As you can see, good stories need: a character, a setting, a problem, and a solution to the problem. All of these parts are needed for this to be a story where we feel all kinds of emotions for our character and the problem they are solving.

Now, it's your turn to watch some videos and identify the parts of the narrative story you're watching. You'll use this checklist and decide whether it's a great story with all the right parts.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 1

Get your supplies. Each student needs a Parts of a Story worksheet.

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

Watch this video. As you watch, see if you can find all the parts of a narrative. Check each part off as you see them by using the checklist on your page, like this.

STEP 4

Find number 1.

The problem and solution are already filled in for this video. The problem is that the dog can't reach the treat, and the solution to that problem is a person helps the dog get the treat.

Discuss with your partner: Who are characters in this story? Remember the characters are who the story is about.

STEP 5

Maybe you said a dog and his owner, or a dog and a person. That's okay for now because we don't know their names.

Now, pay attention to the setting.

Discuss with your partner: What is the setting of this story? Remember, the setting is where the story is happening.

STEP 6

Maybe you said inside a house or a kitchen.

Write both the characters and setting for this story here.

STEP 7

Now, watch this video. As you watch, see if you can find the different parts needed for this video to be a narrative. Check each part off as you see them by using the checklist on your page, like this.

STEP 8

Find number 2.

Fill in the character and setting for this video here. If you're not sure what to write. Think about who the video is about and where it's happening.

STEP 9

Discuss: What problem is the character having in this video?

STEP 10

Fill in the problem for this video here. If you're not sure how to start your sentence, you can start like this:

- The problem in this video is…

Or

- The boy's problem is...

STEP 11

Here's what I wrote:

- The character is this boy.
- The setting is outside, next to a swimming pool.
- The boy's problem is that he can't eat a banana with pool floats on his arms.

Now think about what the solution could be to this problem. Here are a few choices that would make sense:

- He could take one pool float off and eat the banana with that hand.
- Someone else could feed him the banana.
- He could save the banana for later.

Let's see how this boy's problem gets solved.

It looks like someone else fed him the banana.

Circle the solution that you saw.

STEP 12

Now, watch this last video. As you watch, see if you can find the different parts needed for this video to be a narrative. Check each part off as you see them by using the checklist on your page, like this.

STEP 13

Find number 3.

Fill in the characters and setting for this video here. If you're not sure what to write, think about who the video is about, and where it's happening.

STEP 14

Discuss: What problem is the character having in this video?

STEP 15

Fill in the problem for this video here. If you're not sure how to start your sentence, you can start like this:

- The problem in this video is…

Or

- The turtle’s problem is…

STEP 16

Here's what I wrote:

- The characters are these two turtles.
- The setting is outside in the grass.
- The turtle's problem is that he is flipped on his back and can't get back up on his own.

Let's see how this problem gets solved.

When you're done watching, fill in the solution to the problem here.

STEP 17

What if you could change the solution to this problem? Maybe a person walks by and flips the turtle right side up. Or maybe a group of raccoons scurries by and teams up to flip the turtle.

Discuss: What could be a new solution to this story? Remember, this is your story, so be as creative as you would like.

STEP 18

When you have your idea, write it down here, next to "New Solution." Think of this as your story, so be as creative as you would like.

WRAP UP

Great job! Now that you know how to identify parts of a story, you're ready to become a narrative storyteller.

When you're writing to tell a story, it's important to let your reader experience different emotions by including each of these parts. As a writer, you will get to write in lots of different styles or genres. The narrative genre is only one style of writing. Some other genres might look like this exciting story you make up, or this recipe you write for a new concoction. Or this letter convincing your teacher to give you more recess. As a writer, you'll get to write in all of these genres.

Before you go, try to find other pieces of narrative writing you see around you. See you next time, writers!