

Lesson 3: Add Some Drama

UNIT: Australian Adventures

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi, writers. It's Anne.

The Adventure Story Club is getting ready to have a ton of new stories. As writers, we want our characters to feel real so the adventures can be more exciting. One way to make characters feel real is to have them show their feelings just like real people do.

In a moment, we are going to play an acting game to help us brainstorm how characters might feel. I'll give you a situation, then you can show the feeling with movement and facial expressions.

Watch my two friends play this game first. Here's the scenario for them: there are these bakers who baked this amazing cake. They are bringing it out but then watch what happens.

My friends feel shocked. Notice what they did to show their reaction. Without talking, or even making a sound, they showed they were shocked by opening their eyes wide, putting their hands on their face, and opening their mouths.

Now it's your turn to play.

Imagine you are visiting a safari park where you can feed different animals from inside your car, when something shocking happens.

When you see the video, silently act out your reaction with movements and with your facial expressions.

Ready?

Go!

Maybe you reacted like this.

Okay, here's the next one.

Imagine you are on a thrilling roller coaster ride, quickly taking wild twists and turns.

When you see the video, silently act out your reaction.

Ready?

Go!

Maybe you reacted like this.

Okay. Last one.

Imagine you are scuba diving, and you find something truly amazing.

When you see the video, silently act out being excited.

Ready?

Go!

Notice what you just did for the last round of the game. Notice what movements you made and what your facial expression was like.

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: How would you describe what you did to show excitement?

HOOK 2

I don't know how you reacted, but you might have smiled or thrown your hands up in the air. You may have done something else too, and that's great.

As a writer, thinking about how you show feelings can help you write about how your character shows their feelings. This is another way that writers make their characters feel like real people.

Let's take a look at my story about Harper. So far, I wrote a lead where she was using her binoculars to look at the cave she's heading to. Then I wrote about what she wants.

The next part of my story map is that she's going to encounter a cassowary. Here's how I wrote about my character encountering an animal:

- Harper pressed on toward the cave. The path wound through the outback around short trees and large rocks. As she rounded a corner, she suddenly saw a cassowary standing on the trail.

I think that when she sees this cassowary, she feels surprised. I'm going to imagine what might Harper do with facial expressions and movements when she is surprised? This time, instead of acting out your surprised reaction, try to use words to describe what you would do.

DISCUSSION 2

Discuss: How would you react if you were Harper? Instead of acting it out, how would you describe your reaction using words?

HOOK 3

There are lots of things that Harper might do. People have all sorts of movements and facial expressions when they feel surprised. I think that Harper would react like this: Her eyes get big, her mouth opens, and she takes a breath in. I can use all of these details in my writing. Here's what I wrote:

- Harper froze, and her mouth fell open. Her eyes grew big as she stared at the incredible bird. She took a deep breath trying not to scare the animal.

Notice how I never used the words "Harper was surprised." Instead, I described what she did—she froze, her mouth opened, her eyes grew big, and she took a breath. My reader will know that she feels surprised, and they can picture in their mind exactly what is happening in the story. Here is how I wrote the rest of this event:

- She slowly reached for her camera hanging around her neck. The cassowary raised its head to look right at Harper. It was almost as tall as she was. Click! The camera snapped the picture. Hearing the sound of the camera, the cassowary bowed its head and ran off. Harper winced.

"Oh, no. I didn't mean to scare it," Harper thought. "I hope it's OK." Returning her camera to the side pocket of her backpack, she continued down the trail.

You may have noticed that I added Harper's feelings and what she was thinking. All of these details help my readers picture my story.

Today, you'll write about two events that happen next in your story. You'll describe what happens and you will include your character's feelings and thoughts along the way.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 1

Get your supplies.

STEP 2

Get your story map.

To review your story, take a few minutes to silently read your story map to yourself. Begin with the lead.

STEP 3

Get your Story Draft worksheet. Silently read what you wrote in the last lesson.

STEP 4

You're about to write about "Event #1." Here's what I wrote:

- Harper pressed on toward the cave. The path wound through the outback, around short trees and large rocks. As she rounded a corner, she suddenly saw a cassowary standing on the trail.

Notice how I'm moving my character along and describing the setting along the way. Then, my character encounters an animal.

When you're ready to try this in your story, click the arrow on the right.

STEP 5

Now it's your turn. A great way to show your character moving along is to describe the setting along the way. Your setting might be the Australian Outback with red sand, large

rocks, and a hot sun, Or maybe the forest with tall trees, green leaves, and flowing water.

To start a new paragraph, skip to the next line and indent. Write a few sentences about what your character sees on their journey, and how they first notice an animal.

Pause writing right after the animal appears in your story.

STEP 6

In your story, your character has come across an animal. Silently think about how your character would feel when they saw that animal. Maybe they're surprised, nervous, excited, or something else.

When you have the idea for the feeling, show a quiet thumbs up.

STEP 7

It's time to play the acting game again.

On the count of three, use movements and facial expressions to silently show what your character is feeling when they see the animal. Everyone will be showing different feelings, and that's okay.

Ready?

One, two, three, go!

When you're ready to move on, click the arrow on the right.

STEP 8

Notice how you moved and what your facial expression was.

Keep writing more sentences to describe how your character moved and their facial expression. Then you can write what happens in the rest of this event. Pause writing after you finish describing event number one.

STEP 9

Now you're about to write about "Event #2."

Here's what I wrote:

- Harper pressed on down the trail, keeping an eye out for any other birds. The trees were even fewer here, making the hot sun feel even more uncomfortable. Soon, Harper came across a river. She scowled as she realized the river blocked the trail.

Notice how I'm moving my character along and describing the setting along the way. Then my character's path is blocked by something.

When you're ready to try this in your story, click the arrow on the right.

STEP 10

Now it's your turn. Start a new paragraph and write a few sentences about what your character sees on their journey, and when they notice their path is blocked.

Pause writing right after your character notices what is blocking their path.

STEP 11

In your story, your character found that the path is blocked. Think about how your character would feel. Maybe they're confused, frustrated, or something else.

When you have the idea for the feeling, show a quiet thumbs up.

STEP 12

It's time to play the acting game again. On the count of three, use movements and facial expressions to show the feeling that you are thinking of.

Ready?

One, two, three, go!

When you're ready to move on, click the arrow on the right.

STEP 13

Keep writing more sentences to describe how your character moved and their facial expression. Then you can write what happens in the rest of this event.

Pause writing after you finished describing "Event #2."

STEP 14

The first page of your story has numbers one and two. If you have continued on to other story draft pages, make sure you continue numbering them to keep your story in order.

WRAP UP

Writers, your characters are feeling more and more like real people as you include thoughts and feelings along the way.

In the next lesson, you'll write about how your character gets what they want and the big surprise. It's going to be a thrill!

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