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Story Elements for Kindergarten

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Unit: Story Elements

Grade: Kindergarten

Stage 1: Desired Results

Understandings

Students will understand that authors use story elements to create stories and that identifying these elements anchor comprehension.

Essential Questions

What ingredients make a story?
How does identifying story elements help me as a reader?
How does understanding story elements help me as a writer?

Knowledge

6 (A) Students will know what the basic elements of a story are: characters, setting, and key events.

Vocabulary:

Story-writing that has characters, setting, and key events

Characters-the people, animals, or things that are acting out a story

Setting- where a story takes place

Sequence of events- placing things in order often using words such as first, next, then, after, and last

Problem/Solution- a situation that characters set out to solve in a story

Retell- to share a story again

Identify- to find and name

Story Elements-characters, setting, key events of a story

Skills

6A Students will be able to identify character, setting and key events while using academic vocabulary in the process

8A Retell main events from a story read aloud

8B describe characters in a story and the reasons for their actions.

8 Students provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Task:

The teacher will read a final story. Students will be orally quizzed on the following. Name the characters. What is the setting or settings of this story? What happens in this story? Share the big events. (See Performance Rubric for Story Elements)

Other evidence (Acquisition and Transfer):

Guided Reading: Students continue identifying story elements in guided reading small groups.

Reading Center: Teacher will leave storybooks already read in this center. Students will read by pictures and act out a story or retell the story to a partner.

Comprehension Center: Sequencing Events pictures/puzzles

Writing Center: Students will choose a character from a book read aloud. They will create their own setting and events and draw/write their own story. (See Story Elements Writing Templates 1 and 2.)

Suggested Parallel Writing Unit: Author's study on author's craft

Class Book: Students pick one character from a book and create a story. Create a class book. See templates provided.

Anthology: Students create their own story and share with the teacher orally. Stories are typed and presented in a class book anthology or shared in parent newsletters.

Stage 3: Learning Activities

(Steps taken to get students to answer Stage 1 questions and complete performance task)

Mini Lesson	Teacher Instructions (Lengthen to more days if needed)
Day 1: Story Elements Are Hiding in Stories	<p>Focus: Story Elements Are Hiding in Stories (Who, Where, What Happens)</p> <p>Materials: <i>Owen</i> by Kevin Henkes, chart paper</p> <p>Lesson: “For the next two weeks, we are going to think about what is hiding inside of almost every good storybook. What <i>do you think</i> is hiding inside of good stories? Turn and talk to your partner.” Share out.</p> <p>Before: “As I read <i>Owen</i> by Kevin Henkes today, I am going to show you what is good to remember. When I read I will hold the book up. When I think, I will hold the book in front of me on my lap. Listen to find out what I want to remember.”</p> <p>During: Teacher reads story aloud. Stop to identify who is in the story and where the story takes place. Continue reading and thinking aloud about who is in the story and what happens. Student listen and begin sharing aloud who is in the story, where the story is happening and what happens, events.</p> <p>After: The teacher thinks aloud. “What do I want to remember about this book?” Teacher lists out on a chart and adds visuals.</p> <p><i>Owen</i> by Kevin Henkes Who Where</p>

	What Happens
Day 2: Using Story Elements Vocabulary	<p>Focus: Using Story Elements Vocabulary Materials: Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes, Story Elements chart, chart paper Lesson: “Let’s look at yesterday’s chart on the story we read, Owen. Who was the story about? Where did the story take place? What happens in the story?”</p> <p>Before: Teacher introduces the academic vocabulary that people use when remembering stories. Use a prepared anchor chart with visuals beside each academic word. This will stay up on your wall. (See example Story Elements Chart)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Story Elements</i></p> <p><i>Characters (who)</i>-the people, animals, or things that are acting out a story <i>Setting (where)</i>- where a story takes place <i>Events (what happens)</i>- placing things in order often using words such as first, next, then, after, and last</p> <p>During: Teacher explains, “Today I will begin to read another Kevin Henkes book titled Wemberly Worried. You will help me find the characters, setting, and events. People call these the story elements.” Point to these words on the anchor chart. The teacher tells students to listen for the character that this book is mostly about. Read several pages. Stop and ask students to mouth who the character is (Wemberly). Read a few pages more. Ask, what is the setting? Teacher explains that we will stop here for today and continue this book tomorrow.</p> <p>After: On chart paper write with whole group echo. The character in this book is mostly _____. The setting is mostly _____.</p> <p><i>Wemberly Worried</i> by Kevin Henkes Character Setting</p> <p>Students pair share. What ingredients are hiding in this story so far? Share out.</p>
Day 3: Story Elements With	Focus: Story Elements With a Focus on Ordered Events

<p>a Focus on Ordered Events</p>	<p>Materials: Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes, Story Elements chart</p> <p>Lesson: “Today we will continue reading Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes. Let’s look at our Story Elements chart to see what we have so far.” (Character, Setting)</p> <p>Before: “What is the next story element we will look for? Events! Events tell us what happen in a story. Events tell us what characters do in a story. These actions are often in order using words such as first, next, then, after, and last. Let’s read to find out what Wemberly does.”</p> <p>During: Teacher reads book. Model with stop and think every few pages. Ask, “What happens first? What happens next? What happens then? What happens last?”</p> <p>After: “Let’s return to our Story Elements chart and see if we can fill out the Events portion. What happens first or at the beginning? What is a key (big) event that happens next? What is the big event that happens at the end or last?”</p>
<p>Day 4: Story Elements; Events Create Mind Movies</p>	<p>Focus: Story Elements; Events Create Mind Movies</p> <p>Materials: Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes, chart paper</p> <p>Lesson: “How can identifying story elements help me as a reader?” Students will pair share. Share out.</p> <p>Before: “I noticed yesterday that sometimes it is tricky to remember the important or key events in a story. One way to remember events in a story is to create our own mind movie or pictures in our heads. As we read Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes today, we will identify (to find and name) the story elements. We will practice picturing the events in our thinking by listening as the story is read aloud and by using the storybook pictures. We will create our own movies or pictures in our heads.”</p> <p>During: Teacher will read Chrysanthemum. Stop after every few pages to gather story elements. For events use a stem such as “I am seeing... I am hearing...” Invite students to play along. For example, after reading, they can close their eyes. Create a mind movie or pictures and then share.</p> <p>After: “Let’s see if we can remember the story elements of Chrysanthemum as we fill out our Story Elements chart.”</p>

	<p><i>Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes</i></p> <p><i>Characters:</i></p> <p><i>Setting:</i></p> <p><i>Events:</i></p>
<p>Day 5: Identifying Story Elements on My Hand</p>	<p>Focus: Identifying Story Elements on My Hand</p> <p>Materials: Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes, Chrysanthemum chart created during class, Story Elements Hand (Visual provided titled Story Elements Hand)</p> <p>Lesson:</p> <p>“Sometimes I want to share about a book that I like with someone. Since I will not be carrying a chart around with me, what if I use my fingers on one hand to help me remember the story elements?”</p> <p>Before: Teacher presents Story Elements Hand visual. Place each of the story elements on a finger. Students name these elements with you. Thumb is character. Pointer is setting. Events are the remaining fingers. If there are more events than three, students can wiggle each finger once then again as needed. You may also just want to have a beginning, middle, and end.</p> <p>During: Whole group uses Story Elements chart of Chrysanthemum to practice identifying story elements on their hand.</p> <p>After: Students practice remembering story elements on their hand with other stories that they have read.</p>
<p>Day 6: Switching Authors; Story Elements Are Hiding in Stories</p>	<p>Focus: Switching Authors; Story Elements Are Hiding in Stories (Who, Where, What Happens).</p> <p>Materials: Tom by Tomie DePaola, , Story Elements Hand (provided)</p> <p>Lesson: “What ingredients make a story?” “How does understanding story elements help a writer?”</p> <p>Before: “Today we will be switching to a new children’s author. His name is Tomie DePaola. Let’s see if Tomie uses the secret ingredients of story elements. I will read the whole story then we will identify the story elements on our hand.”</p> <p>During: Teacher reads Tom by Tomie DePaola.</p> <p>After: “Use your shoulder buddy to identify each story element in Tom. Put your thumb up first. The person with</p>

	<p>the longest hair goes first. Take turns naming characters. Then, go to the setting. Take turns naming the settings. Next, go to the events. On your last three fingers, take turns naming the events.”</p> <p>Teacher asks, “Did you find story elements in our story today?”</p> <p>“How could understanding story elements help Tomie DePaola as a writer?”</p> <p>“Name one story element that you might use in your own writing? How might you use it?”</p>
<p>Day 7: A Look at Characters and a Problem They Set Out to Solve</p>	<p>Focus: A Look at Characters and a Problem They Set Out to Solve</p> <p>Materials: The Art Lesson by Tomie dePaola, Story Elements Hand (provided)</p> <p>Lesson:</p> <p>“Good readers notice things when they are reading. What is something you have noticed about a story we have read?”</p> <p>“I noticed that many of our characters have problems that they set out to solve in the story. For example, look at our Story Elements Hand visual. What is the girl trying to solve in these pictures?” (The problem is she can’t find her cat. She searches. At the end, she solves the problem by finding her cat.)</p> <p>Before: “Today we will read The Art Lesson by Tomie dePaola. It is a story that also helps us understand how art is important to the author. Listen to identify a big problem in the story and how the character, Tommy, sets out to solve this problem.”</p> <p>During: The teacher reads the story. Set down the book after several pages to engage class in naming the characters and setting. Continue reading the story. Stop after the big problem is presented. Share with the class that the problem usually means that a character thinks something is not right. “What is the problem in this story? Let’s put this problem on our beginning event finger.” Teacher reads more of the story. “How does Tommy try to solve the problem? Let’s put this event on our next ring finger.” Read the rest of the story. “Does he solve the problem? How is the problem solved? Let’s put this event on our pinkie.”</p> <p>“What if we wanted to name more events? We can wiggle our events fingers more than one time and identify these events!”</p> <p>After: Teacher asks, “Did you like this story? Why? What</p>

	<p>made the story interesting?" Have students sight evidence while sharing.</p>
<p>Day 8: Identify Story Elements; Reading and Writing</p>	<p>Focus: Identifying Story Elements; Reading and Writing Materials: Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs by Tomie dePaola, Story Elements Hand (provided)</p> <p>Lesson: "How does identifying story elements help me as a reader?" "How can understanding story elements help me as a writer?"</p> <p>Before: "Today I will read Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs by Tomie dePaola. Your job is to first listen and to look at the pictures. Use mind movies or pictures to remember the events. After, you will use your story elements hand to identify and retell the story."</p> <p>During: Teacher reads Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs by Tomie dePaola.</p> <p>After: "Use your shoulder buddy to identify each story element. Put your thumb up first. The person with the shortest hair goes first. Take turns naming characters. Then, go to the setting. Take turns naming the setting or settings. Next, go to the events. Take turns naming the events on your last three fingers." Teacher asks, "Did Tomie dePaola use story elements in this story?" Share out whole group. "Did you like this story? What do you think makes this a good story?" "Name one story element that you might use in your own writing? How might you use it?"</p>
<p>Day 9: Performance Assessment</p>	<p>Focus: Performance Assessment Materials: Watch Out for the Chicken Feet in Your Soup by Tomie dePaola (or other shorter text), Performance Rubric for Story Elements (provided), Story Elements Hand (provided)</p> <p>Lesson: "Today and tomorrow, we will see if you can name the story elements and identify them in a story that I read. You can use your hand or the Story Element chart to help you."</p> <p>Before: "I will read a story by Tomie dePaola titled Watch</p>

	<p>Out for the Chicken Feet in Your Soup. What is your job? The students’ job is to listen to the story and to look at the pictures to create a mind movie. Be ready to share the story elements using your hand or the Story Elements chart.”</p> <p>During: The teacher reads the story.</p> <p>After: Test students individually using the performance based rubric and test questions provided. Other students may work in centers during this time.</p>
<p>Day 10: Performance Assessment</p>	<p>Focus: Performance Assessment (continued) Materials: Watch Out for the Chicken Feet in Your Soup by Tomie dePaola (or other shorter text), Performance Rubric for Story Elements (provided), Story Elements Hand (provided)</p> <p>Lesson: “Today I will reread Watch Out for the Chicken Feet in Your Soup by Tomie dePaola. We will continue our work from yesterday. For those I have not tested, what will be your job?” “Your job is to listen to the story and to look at the pictures to create a mind movie. Be ready to share the story elements using your hand or the Story Elements chart.”</p> <p>Before: Reread yesterday’s story before testing continues.</p> <p>During: Test students individually using the performance based rubric and test questions provided. Other students may work in centers during this time</p> <p>After: Story Element Author’s Celebration: Make the “Bread Dolls” recipe, located on the back page, which Tomie’s grandmother used to make. The class shares their favorite author and/or book that was read over the past 2 weeks. Review the ingredients hiding inside good stories. (The after portion can be used on another day as a celebration.)</p>

Materials

dePaola, T. (1989). *The Art Lesson*. NY: The Putnam & Grosset Group.

dePaola, T. (1998). *Nana Upstairs & Nana Downstairs*. NY: The Putnam & Grosset Group.

dePaola, T. (1993). *Tom*. NY: The Putnam & Grosset Group.

dePaola, T. (1974). *Watch Out for the Chicken Feet in Your Soup*. NY: Simon & Schuster.

Henkes, K. (1991). *Chrysanthemum*. NY: Greenwillow Books.

Henkes, K. (1993). *Owen*. NY: Greenwillow Books.

Henkes, K. (2000). *Wemberly Worried*. NY: Greenwillow Books.

Resources

Books

McGregor, T. (2007). *Comprehension Connections*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Zimmermann, S., & Hutchins, C. (2003). *7 Keys to Comprehension*. NY: Three Rivers Press.

Electronic

Parkway School District (2007). "Thinking About Story Elements Kindergarten-Parkway C2."
[http://printableworksheets.in/?dq=Kindergarten Story Elements](http://printableworksheets.in/?dq=Kindergarten+Story+Elements).