

I Have A Story To Tell

Title: I Have A Story To Tell

Subject/Grade: English Language Arts/6

Dates: March 4 – April 8

Period length: ~50 minutes

School: R.I. Baker Middle School

Teacher: Kayla Giebelhaus

Overview

This is a text creation unit focusing on narrative prose. Students will learn the steps of writing a story and the important elements included in a story. Some of the topics that will be covered in this unit are planning, writing a good “hook,” description, and conflict, as well as editing and revising techniques. Instructional time will be spent in discussion with students in order to encourage engagement and participation. Students will participate in writing, viewing, and representing daily through the use of visual writing prompts. They will also participate in speaking and listening during daily discussions.

Rationale

This unit centers on student writing. This is a skill that is transferable and essential in all disciplines and therefore the development of it is crucial for student success. This unit focuses specifically on narrative writing, which allows students to demonstrate creativity as well as knowledge of writing conventions.

Through daily writing prompts, students will foster effective writing habits as well as increase confidence in their writing ability. These prompts increase visual literacy and promote creativity. These prompts, and the unit as a whole, will also support students in preparation for the Provincial Achievement tests occurring at the end of the school year.

As the unit progresses, students will gain the knowledge to write an effective piece of narrative prose. The final result of the unit will be a story written from a visual prompt. This piece of writing will serve as a summative assessment of the students’ work.

Students started story writing earlier in the year. This unit will be a continuation of this previous knowledge.

Month-at-a-glance

	Monday (Library in afternoon period)	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday (x2)	Friday
March 3-7	<p>Spelling</p> <p>WP - Free Write</p>	<p>Story Review WP - Free Write Review of stories • Mind map review • Read short story as a class • Map short story • What are the important elements? ES - 2 things you know, 1 thing you want to review</p>	<p>Brainstorming WP - Brainstorming What are the important things to look for in the picture? Characters Setting Problems Talk about collaborative brainstorming</p>	<p>Spelling due</p>	<p>Spelling Test Reading Comprehension Independent Reading</p>
March 10-14	<p>WP - Free write</p> <p>Spelling</p>	<p>Conflict & Solution WP - Conflict What is conflict? - PPT Types of conflict (Beversidge notes) Identify types of conflict in books they have read (make chart) Solution: What makes a successful solution? (Beversidge notes) Identify in stories In groups with new picture, decide on conflict and solution</p>	<p>Middles WP - Conflict & Solution Explain "middles" • Try & fail (multiple times) • Worse, worse, better • Closer and closer Students will create tableaux demonstrating a conflict and middles</p>	<p>Spelling due Beginnings WP - Conflict, solution and middles What are the details we need to include in the beginning? Catchy hooks What makes a catchy hook? Look at examples in short stories</p>	<p>Spelling Test Reading Comprehension Independent Reading</p>
March 17-21	<p>WP - Beginning/catchy book</p> <p>Spelling</p>	<p>Planning WP - Plan with GOs What details other than conflict, middle, and solution are important to plan? • Character • Setting Introduce Graphic Organizers Use Graphic Organizers to plan from prompt</p>	<p>Character Description WP - Character Description Read good character desc What makes it good? Anything to add to our list? Each person gets a picture from a magazine. Describe person. Phss, personality etc.</p>	<p>Spelling due Setting Description & intro to writer's workshop WP - Seeing Description Read story. Have students draw a picture as I read. (see focus)/imagery sheet What made this description effective? Make list. (see) Explain writer's workshop WP - Story (Story will be for Summative assessment) Students will respond to the writing prompt with the intention of writing a story. Students conference for 10 minutes then plan</p>	<p>WP - Description (Character and Setting)</p> <p>Spelling Test Reading Comprehension Independent Reading</p>

Note: Mondays and Fridays are devoted to other continuing areas of curriculum. Mondays are devoted to spelling and Fridays are devoted to reading comprehension. Free writes will still take place on Mondays before spelling begins.

Thursdays are a double time block.

Bolded Writing prompts are those that will be collected for summative assessment.

	Monday (Library in afternoon period)	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
March 24-28	WP - Planning Spelling	Writer's Workshop Begin day by going through editing checklist together. Review concepts that are unclear (pronoun-antecedent agreement, subject-verb agreement etc)	Writer's Workshop	Spelling due Writer's Workshop	Spelling Test Reading Comprehension Independent Reading
March 31- April 4	WP - Free write Spelling	Writer's Workshop	Writer's Workshop	Final draft of story due. Author's chair for students willing to share.	Spelling Test Reading Comprehension Independent Reading

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Resources

- Stories with good “hooks”
(Books found from <http://www.npr.org/2007/06/25/11260800/great-opening-lines-to-hook-young-readers>)
- Descriptive story (Books found from <http://io9.com/5823291/great-character-descriptions-from-science-fiction-and-fantasy-books> and
 - **Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J.K. Rowling (page 8):**
"If the motorcycle was huge, it was nothing to the man sitting astride it. He was twice as tall as a normal man and at least five times as wide. He looked simply too big to be allowed, and so wild — long tangles of bushy black hair and beard hid most of his face, he had hands the size of trash can lids, and his feet in their leather boots were like baby dolphins."
- Alberta Language Arts Program of Studies
- *50 Literacy Strategies* – Gail E. Tompkins
- *Write From the Start* - Robin Bright
- *In The Middle* – Nancie Atwell
- *Gage Cornerstones: Canadian Language Arts [6a]*
- “Show Don’t Tell” worksheet
- Cathy Beveridge notes from Teacher’s Convention
- Planning graphic organizers
- Writing Prompts:
 - March 4 – Free Write - <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426320436/>
 - March 5 – Brainstorming
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426314540/>
 - March 5 – Brainstorming (2)
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426376647/>
 - March 6 – Conflict and Solution -
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426320736/>
 - March 10 – Free Write - <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426314602/>
 - March 11 – Conflict & Solution -
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426320489/>
 - March 12 – Conflict, Solution, & middle -
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426320751/>
 - March 13 – Planning using GO’s -
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426314611/>
 - March 17 – Beginning/Catchy Hook -
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426314568/>
 - March 18 – Character Description --
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426320754/>
 - March 19 – Setting Description -
<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426320741/>
 - March 20 – Story - <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/157696424426320407/>

Outcomes

GLO #1 - Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences.

1.2.2 – Combine Ideas

- Use talk, notes, personal writing and representing, together with texts and the ideas of others, to clarify and shape understanding

GLO #2 - Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print, and other media texts.

2.2.1 – Experience Various Text

- Explain own point of view about oral, print and other media texts

2.2.2 – Construct Meaning from Texts

- Summarize oral, print or other media texts, indicating the connections among events, characters and settings
- Make judgments and inferences related to events, characters, setting and main ideas of oral, print, and other media texts.

2.4.1 – Generate Ideas

- Choose life themes encountered in reading, listening and viewing activities and in own experiences for creating oral, print and other media texts

GLO#3 – Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to manage ideas and information

3.1.3 – Plan to gather information

- Develop and follow own plan for accessing and gathering ideas and information, considering guidelines for time and length of investigation and presentation

3.3.1 - Organize Information

- Organize and develop information into different types of texts with introductions that interest audiences & state the topic, sections that develop the topic and conclusion

3.3.2 – Record information

- Use outlines, thought webs and summaries to show the relationships among ideas and information and to clarify meaning

GLO#4 - Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to enhance clarity and artistry of communication

4.1.1 – Appraise own and other’s work

4.1.2 – Revise and edit

- Verb tense & pronoun references
- Paragraph structure
- Provide focus, expand ideas, eliminate unnecessary information

4.1.3 – Enhance legibility

4.1.5 – Enhance artistry

- Experiment with ways of communicating ideas and information

4.2.1 – Attend to grammar and usage

- Sentence structure variety
- Comparative & Superlative adjectives

4.2.2 – Attend to spelling

4.2.3 – Attend to capitalization & punctuation

- Colons
- Parentheses

- Ellipses

4.3.1 – Present information depending on audience

GLO #5 – Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to respect, support and collaborate with others.

5.2.1 – Cooperate with others

- Identify and participate in situations and projects in which group work enhances learning and results

Beginning, Middle, Culminating

Beginning:

- Students will be introduced to unit through a review of the information they already know about story writing. This will include a “story map” as well as a word web/mind map created as a class.

Middle:

- Students will participate in daily writing prompts to encourage writing fluency. Students will also participate in discussions as a class as to effective techniques in writing a story. The following topics will be addressed:
 - Conflict (types of conflict, what makes an effective conflict)
 - Planning
 - Effective “hooks”
 - Description of characters, setting, etc.

Culmination:

- As a culminating activity, students will write a complete story using the techniques and knowledge they learned throughout the unit. This process will involve peer review and collaboration. It will focus primarily on content with some focus on writing conventions.

Daily Activities

March 4 - review:

- Students will be introduced to writing prompts. Explain the procedure as follows:
 - Each day when students enter the classroom for ELA, there will be a picture displayed on the board along with a set of instructions (for example, today’s writing prompt is a free write so students may write about anything they would like related to the picture – this will be written on the board).
 - Explain evaluation procedure:
 - Students will respond to every writing prompt in their journal. Journals will be placed in appropriate bin/basket daily. I will read each response written and make comments. Students may choose 1-2 responses per week to be summatively marked. (Number of responses to be graded will be determined on a weekly basis and communicated to students).
 - Ask for any questions
- Students will then have 10 minutes to respond to the prompt
- Class discussion: *What are some things that you remember/know about story writing?*
 - Make a mind map on the board

- We will then review story maps. Display the story map on the board and ask students to help label the different points on the map.
- *What are the main/important elements of a story?*
- Read *The Fight* by Sigmund Brouwer (from Cornerstones) to the class and ask them to listen for the points we just discussed on the story map.
- After reading the story, as a class map the story on the story map on the board
- Exit Slip: *2 things you know about stories, 1 thing you would like to know/review*

March 5 - Brainstorming:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by brainstorming details of a story. (10 Minutes)
- As a class, brainstorm what are important things to brainstorm.
 - Character(s)
 - Setting
 - Conflict
 - Solution
- Explain the time given at the beginning of the PAT to brainstorm about the prompt. Discuss as a class what would be useful during this time.
 - During the PAT, students will have 10 minutes at the beginning to discuss prompts with classmates in groups of two to four.
- With the person next to them, using new prompt, brainstorm ideas of a story that could be written based on the image.

March 11 – Conflict and Solution:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by writing about a possible conflict
- Ask students: *What is conflict?*
- Discuss types of conflict (using PowerPoint) – Character vs. Character, Character vs. Nature, Character vs. Self, Character vs. Society/technology, Character vs. Supernatural
 - Have students follow along on a worksheet (to be created)
- Make a chart (on chart paper, white board, or smart board) of the different types and ask students for examples of each type in stories that they have read.
- *Now that we know what a conflict is, what do we need in a story to complete it? A Solution*
- What makes a successful solution? Discuss characteristics of solutions (using PowerPoint)
 - Have students follow along on worksheet
- From stories listed on conflict chart above, discuss solutions and whether they fall into the categories just discussed
- In pairs/groups, using writing prompt from earlier to:
 - Decide on conflict
 - Identify type of conflict
 - Decide on solution – does it have some of the characteristics discussed?
- Exit Slip: *1 important thing you learned today. 1 question you have.*

March 12 – Middles:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by outlining a conflict (list the type), and a solution (list the characteristics that it satisfies)
- *Would a story be effective if it jumped straight from the conflict/problem to the solution? What do you think we need then instead?*

- Discuss “Middles”
 - Try/fail, try/fail, try/succeed (solution)
 - Worse, worse, better (solution)
 - Closer and closer
- In groups of 4 (1 group of 3), using today’s writing prompt, students create tableaux (with a narrator to describe). Tableaus should include 5 scenes: initial problem, 3 middles (Try/fail, try/fail etc), and solution. Scenes should be narrated by one group member to explain to class what is happening.

March 13 – Beginnings:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by planning a story using one of the planning techniques from last class to plan a story.
- Read the first sentence of 5-7 different novels to the students. Give students a checklist that includes the titles of the novels as well as places to check off the following:
 - I want to read this!
 - I might read this
 - I would never read this
- After reading the first sentence of each novel, students choose one of the options above based on that opening.
- Once complete, discuss as a class what made students interested in reading the books.
- Come back together as a class and make a list of what counts as a catchy hook.
- Make hooks together. How can we make this a question, end with an explanation point etc.
- *Now that we know what catches us as readers, we are going to talk about what is important to include in the beginning of our stories. So far we have talked about what things are important to gather from writing prompts, conflicts and solutions, and how to plan. Now that we have most of the information for our stories, we can begin writing. The first place to start in our writing is at the beginning. What are the details that we need to include in the beginning of our stories?*
 - *Introduce our characters*
 - *“Set the stage” – setting*
 - *Start close to the problem*
- From today’s prompt, as a class, make a list of the important details to include in the beginning of a story. Write the beginning of a story using a good hook and details from our list.

March 18 – Planning:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by explaining a conflict, middles (at least 2) and a solution. (kind of like a summary)
- *Before we begin to write, it is important to plan. What are some important details to plan?*
 - Characters
 - Setting
 - Conflict
 - Middles
 - Solutions

- Introduce graphic organizers – briefly describe and demonstrate how each one works
- Allow students time to use graphic organizers to plan a story from today’s prompt.
- Exit Slip: Which of the planning methods that we used today worked best/made the most sense for you? Why?

March 19 – Character Description:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by writing a description of the character(s) in the image. Be sure to include more than just a physical description
- Read two good character descriptions from books/short stories to the class.
- *What made these descriptions effective?*
 - Figurative language
 - Vivid language
- Each student will receive a picture of a person from a magazine. Students will then be responsible for writing a character description of that person. They will need to use elements from the list created as a class. Be sure to describe more than just physical appearance.

March 20 – Setting Description:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by writing a description of the setting in which the image takes place.
- Read section of a story with good setting description. Have students draw a picture as I read. For those who do not want to draw, they may fill in the imagery worksheet.
- *Were you able to see an image in our head/on the paper from what I read? What allowed you to do that? What makes a setting description effective? Are there characteristics that are similar to character descriptions? What is different?*
 - Make a list
- Write another response to today’s writing prompt, making sure to use characteristics from our list.

March 20 – Writer’s Workshop:

- Students will respond to writing prompt by writing a detailed description of both characters and setting.
- Explain writer’s workshop:
 - *We will now be starting to write a story using all of the information that we have learned in the past few weeks. We are going to do this through a writer’s workshop. Each student has a name card with a magnet/Velcro/etc (will depend on set up) on the back. I have made a chart that is separated into the different stages of writing that you will go through: prewriting/brainstorming, planning, writing draft, self-editing, peer-editing, typing final draft. You will not move through each of these stages in a straight line, you will go back and forth. This chart will show others where you are so that if you are looking for someone to peer-edit with, you can see who else is in the same stage. You may also meet with me, if you have questions or would like me to read your story. Each day I will have a list on the board, and you may write your name and each class I will go through the list and talk to as many people as I can. If I haven’t heard from you at all, I may put your name on that list one day. That is not a bad thing, it just means I want to see where you are at.*
 - *Each of you will have a writing folder. In your folders I have put the following papers:*
 - *Daily Writing Record: this will help you keep track of where you are*

at and how long you have spent on each stage. It will also help you later to see how the writing process happened for you during this story writing experience. (Explain how to fill in writing record)

- *Personal spelling list: As you write, if there are words that you consistently have a hard time with, you will add them to this list. This will help you be aware of words that you need to work on*
- *Editing checklist: You will use this check list when you edit your own work as well as when peers edit your work. There are two (maybe three?) included in your binder because you will edit more than once. If you self-edit or peer edit more than this, I will have extra copies.*
- *Rubric: I have included a rubric in your folder so that you will know exactly what you are being marked on. We have looked at this rubric before as a class so it is nothing new, but I want you to know how you are being marked.*

- *Are there any questions?*

- Students will then be shown the writing prompt for the story. They will have 10 minutes to discuss with a group of 2 to 4 before starting their planning individually.

March 20-April 3 – Writer’s Workshop:

- Students will work through stages listed above during these days. They will type the final copy of their story.
- If students complete their stories early, they may illustrate their story as well.
- On the last day, as a culmination, students may sign up for an author’s chair if they wish to share their story with the class.
- **Note:** On March 25, class will begin by going through the editing checklist together. If needed, we will review concepts as a class (ex. pronoun-antecedent agreement, subject-verb agreement etc.)

Evaluation & Assessment

Formative	Summative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Prompts – Students will hand in every writing prompt. All but 1 or 2 a week will be formative. I will write feedback for students and make notes for myself on what needs to be reviewed/taught. • Discussions – in each lesson, we will have a class discussion that will result in a group list, mind map, word web etc. • Observations – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ During group activities, I will observe student interactions to see if students are understanding the content ○ During writer’s workshop, I will meet with each student at least one. After each meeting, I will make notes about where the student is at and any additional help they may need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing folder/portfolio: Writing Prompts – Students will be asked to put 6 prompts (which I will designate) into their writing portfolio. These will be given a grade for ideas/participation, not for conventions (may provide feedback in the form of comments so that students are aware of conventions but will not be included in grade) • Final Story – Will be graded based on Alberta PAT marking scale. Grades will be given for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Content (x2 weight) ○ Organization (x2 weight) ○ Sentence Structure ○ Vocabulary

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer-editing - Students will work with peers to review and revise the stories they have been writing. These revisions will include content as well as conventions. Students will be given checklists and guidance to aid in their peer feedback. This feedback is intended to improve collaboration as well as self and peer editing skills. • Exit slips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conventions
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Communication Home

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website – will post overviews of topics we cover in class (ex. Planning, “hooks”, description, conflict)
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Connections to other subjects

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTS – stories will be typed on the computer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using GoogleDocs to edit with peers •

Adaptations:

C.

- Have him tell Mrs. W his ideas rather than writing them all down.
- Split writing between him and Mrs. W ex. Have C. will write a few sentences then Mrs. W will write a few. Switch back and forth.
- Write just words in graphic organizers?

Appendix:

1. Student Writing Record – will be stapled to the inside front cover of students’ writing folders
2. Personal Spelling list – Words that students consistently spell wrong will be added to this list.
3. Editing Checklist – Students will use this checklist in self-editing as well as peer-editing
4. Observation chart –I will meet with each student at least once during the writer’s workshop. This chart will allow me to make notes about each student I have met with. This will ensure I speak with every student and ensure that if I meet with a student again, I know what we discussed the time before.
5. Final Story Rubric – This is the rubric by which students’ final stories will be graded .Students will be introduced to the rubric prior to writing their story and have the opportunity to ask questions.

1.

_____’s Writing Record

Date	Summary of today’s writing	What I plan to do next class

Adapted from “Appendix F Student Writing Record” Atwell, Nancie. *In The Middle*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc, 1998.

3.

Editing Checklist

Circle: Self-edit / Peer-edit If peer-edit – Edited by: _____

	Yes	No	Comments
Content:			
Do the details included in the story relate to the overall storyline?			
Are specific details used to describe characters?			
Are specific details used to describe setting?			
Does the story hold the reader's attention?			
Organization:			
Is the introduction interesting and effective?			
Do the events of the story follow an order that is effective and makes sense?			
Are the connections made between characters and events continued throughout the story?			
Does the ending tie the story together?			
Sentence Structure:			
Does the sentence structure create an easy flow when reading?			
Are there a variety of sentence types and lengths?			

Are there are a variety of sentence beginnings?			
Vocabulary:			
Are the words and expressions used accurately?			
Are the words and expressions used to create images and/or to enhance details?			
Are the words and expressions used to engage the reader?			
Conventions:			
Are words spelled correctly?			
Is punctuation used correctly?			
Is capitalization used correctly?			
Is there proper subject-verb agreement			
Is there proper pronoun-antecedent agreement?			

Additional Comments:

Final Story Rubric

	Content (x2)	Organization (x2)	Sentence Structure	Vocabulary	Conventions
5	All details included in the story relate to the overall theme. Details used to describe character and setting are vivid, specific, and effective. The writing is confident and/or creative and holds the reader's attention.	The introduction is purposeful, interesting, and effectively establishes details and direction of the story. Events are developed in a purposeful and effective order and order is maintained. Connections between characters and events are consistently maintained. The ending ties events/actions together.	Sentence Structure creates an easy flow when reading. Sentence type and length are consistently effective and varied. Sentence beginnings are consistently varied.	Words and expressions are consistently used accurately. Words and expressions create vivid images and enhance details. Words and expressions thoroughly engage reader.	The writing is essentially error-free. Errors, if present, do not reduce the reader's understanding or flow of reading.
4	Most details included in the story relate to the overall theme. Details used to describe character and setting are specific and effective. The writing is purposeful and holds the reader's attention.	The introduction clearly and effectively establishes details and direction of the story. Events are developed in a purposeful order and order is maintained. Connections between characters and events are maintained. The ending provides an appropriate finish for events and/or actions.	Sentence Structure creates flow when reading. Sentence type and length are usually effective and varied. Sentence beginnings are often varied.	Words and expressions are often used accurately. Words and expressions create images and add clarity to details. Words and expressions engage reader.	The writing includes only minor errors. Errors rarely reduce the reader's understanding or flow of reading.
3	Most details included in the story relate to the overall theme. Most details used to describe character and setting are effective. The writing is straight forward and generally holds the reader's attention.	The introduction establishes details and direction of the story. Events are developed in a recognizable order and order is mostly maintained. Connections between characters and events are maintained. The ending is predictable or forced and is connected to events and/or actions.	Sentence Structure generally creates flow when reading, but may occasionally impede meaning. Sentence type and length are sometimes effective and varied. Sentence beginnings are sometimes varied.	Words and expressions are generally used accurately. Words and expressions are used to clarify details. Words and expressions somewhat engage reader.	The writing includes mostly minor errors. Errors occasionally reduce the reader's understanding and sometimes interrupt flow of reading.
2	Some details included in the story relate to the overall theme. Few details used to describe character and setting are effective. The writing is superficial and does not hold the reader's attention.	The introduction presents details and but lacks direction. Events are not developed in a recognizable order and order is not maintained. Connections between characters and events are not maintained. The ending is predictable or forced and is not connected to events and/or actions.	Sentence Structure often upsets flow when reading, and may impede meaning. There is little variation of sentence type and sentence length. There is little variety of sentence beginnings.	Words and expressions are occasionally used accurately. Words and expressions are not specific or clarifying. Words and expressions are basic and do not engage reader.	The writing often includes errors. Errors often reduce the reader's understanding and interrupt flow of reading.
1	Few details included in the story relate to the overall theme. Details used to describe character and setting are not effective. The writing is confusing and/or frustrating to the reader.	The introduction includes few details and is ineffective. Events are not developed in a recognizable order. There are no connections between characters and events. The ending is not connected to events and/or actions.	Sentence Structure lacks flow and often impedes meaning. There is no variation of sentence type and sentence length. There is no variety of sentence beginnings.	Words and expressions are often used inaccurately. Words and expressions are not specific or clarifying. Words and expressions may confuse reader.	The writing consistently includes errors. Errors severely reduce the reader's understanding and interrupt flow of reading.