

Creating stories

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Why?

- Motivation. Recycle language. All skills.

Age and proficiency

- Everybody can be helped to create a story. People work with what they have. We help them to take the next step.

Stories

By 'stories' I mean stories made from imagination or experiences in daily life.

You the teacher

- Revel in what can be done with very few words. Show your joy at what they achieve rather than the mistakes they make. Help them to achieve what they can achieve rather than produce a pale imitation of your ideas.

Words, phrases, sentences

Accept a list of single words or short phrases.

Ask questions to build up sentences.

Bird

Little bird

Very little bird

Cat

Big cat

Very big cat

Fly little bird.

Creativity and accuracy

You don't learn to drive a car by studying the engine. Create and then polish.

Questions only

Your main role is to ask questions and to appreciate every response:

Establish the story by asking the questions:

Who? Where? When? What? Etc.

Help with several alternatives not one.

Repeatedly re-tell their story without changing what they have said.

Questions and elaborating a text

- Start with a single sentence or with a story summary.

Questions and re-tell with changes

(ie an existing story)

General re-telling

Change the place or the incidents

Change the medium eg to a drama

Questions and pictures

Their pictures or magazine pictures, etc..

Questions and objects

Witches hat, cardboard box town or house, boxes, jewelry, etc. Dolls, toys, etc.

Questions and music or noises

recorded or student music eg percussion

What's this? What's it doing?

Questions and mime, drama and dance

Mime somebody + action...others guess. Other students join and mime and others invent a continuation

Students mime a feeling eg

happy/frightened/sad/angry...

others guess and guess why

A chair, a box, a hat...decide who they belong to and what has happened.

Questions and permanent characters

Students create characters and develop them over months...add more info as their language grows. Stories arise.

Can be based on a large doll/photo.

Playing with a medium...and questions

Chalkboard, overhead projector, audio recorder, video camera, paint and inks, sticks and stones., plasticine, sand tray.

Let them play and let them be silly...and tease out a story with a beginning, middle, end.

Stories and the topic based approach

The chdn live in a story eg journey down a long river...meeting people...studying their way of life...telling about their own...cross curricular experiences...

Publishing and performance

Students **want** their texts to be accurate!

Parents, other classes, the public

Internet

Books, cards, posters, strips, 3D displays

Puppets, masks, shadow theatre

Video, audio tape (record and stop)

My two books on stories in language teaching are both published by Oxford University Press:

Creating Stories with Children

(Helping children to make stories. Gives you many of the ideas on this handout in full with pictures, lesson plans, etc.)

Storytelling with Children

(Helping children to respond to stories)

Also with Oxford a series of **six story books** for children at three levels.

The series is called: **Spellbinders**