

[Writer's Room]

Productions

Creative Writing Curriculum

DREAMER-

(noun) creator of fantasy. Visionary.

Who-Where-What

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Who-Where-What

OVERVIEW

The Characters, Setting, and Plot are the building blocks of a story. Your student's imagination is full of creative ideas and clever fantasies. These tools will help them find a constructive way to turn their imagination into a real story. These basics are the first steps in storytelling and will help them tell the story they want told.

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GOALS

1. Creating a unique character with Physical Characteristic, Personality Traits, and an Occupation.
2. Creating a setting for the story using tools like Weather, Time, and Location.
3. Creating a plot or activity for the characters using the setting of the story.

Breakdown

Characters:

Who is your story about and what is special about them? How are the characters feeling in the story? Characters are more than just the hero and the villain. The main characters may meet others on their journey or need help to solve the problem. Characters (big and small) all have a purpose in the story.

Setting:

Where does your story take place and will the weather or time affect it? (Time doesn't have to be the time on the clock. You can think of it as a holiday, a season or a historical period of time.) The setting can be helpful to your characters. It will create more details for the story and maybe even help the author discover a plot. By simply changing the location of a story you can change everything the characters have to do or handle. Imagine if Rapunzel wasn't trapped in a tower, but instead trapped in the middle of the ocean, on a boat. Setting adds details to create a unique story.

Plot:

What happens in the story? What is the problem the main character has to overcome? The plot doesn't have to be complicated. At this stage of writing we want to encourage the students to use the characters and setting to find a plot that fits. If the main character is a surfer, maybe he is conquering a giant wave or simply finding his board. Always ask the question, "What happens next?"

MILESTONES

Your student will know these terms and be able to create ideas for their story using each of these milestones.

Characters:

Who is in the story?

Job or Occupation. Physical Characteristics. Personality Traits.

Setting:

Where does it take place?

Location. Time. Weather.

Plot:

What is going on?

Problem introduced. Characters solve problem.

Tips:

- Keep asking questions. (If their characters are going to the Moon, ask your student *how* they got there and *what* did they see.)
- Try not to finish their thought.
- The Setting can help create a Plot for the story. (“*They went outside to play, but there was thunder and lightning!*”)
- It’s okay to get inspiration from an already existing story, but try to make sure they are still creating a unique idea and not just retelling their favorite movie.
- Have fun creating with your students! We know it can be stressful to have a student sit down to write. Don’t let their wiggles get the best of you. Storytelling can happen in many different situations. You know your students best. Work with their strengths.

Games and Ideas:

Story Jars Game:



Need: 3 Jars. Popsicle sticks (or slips of paper). Jar Labels: Job/Appearance/Personality & Location/Weather/Time

Jar Suggestions: (Come up with your own too!)

Jobs:

Chef, Police, Fire Fighter, Dancer, Doctor, Bodybuilder, Magician, 1st grade teacher, Superhero, News Caster, Computer Guy...

Appearance:

Near Sighted, Hairy, Allergic, Itchy, Tall, four arms, a bunny...

Personality Traits:

Shy, Mean, Stubborn, Know-it-all, Talkative, Outgoing, Bossy...

Location:

Farm House, School, the Park, Doctor's Office, the White House...

Time:

Spring, 4:00am, 1792, Valentine's Day, Midnight...

Weather:

Heat wave, Fog, Lightning storm, Earthquake...

Based on what is pulled out of the jars, come up with a story to tell.

Example: *Once in (**time**) there was a (**job**) who was very (**personality**). That day it was very (**weather**) and they needed to find shelter. They used their (**appearance**) and found a way into the (**location**). Now they were safe from the weather. The End.*

“What Comes Next” Game:



This is a fun game you can play with your students. Once their story has a character and a setting, get them up and act out the story!

You'll be amazed and entertained to watch your student create their very own plot, using the characters and setting they've created.

Creating their own costumes is a great way to help the story come to life. Let them choose the character they want to play then help them “cast” the rest of the characters in the story too. *(If there are more characters than willing participants, you can always let Mr. Teddy Bear play a character as well! There are no rules in this game, just good ol' fashioned make believe.)*

Join in the fun by helping to narrate the story.

“The BUNNY was walking in the PARK when they saw something! ... what did the Bunny see?...”