

The Impact of Narrative Development on Academic Success

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Definitions

Literacy: the ability to read and write: knowledge that relates to a specified subject

Narrative Development: a story or account of events, experiences, or the like, whether true or fictitious.

6 Early Literacy Skills

Print Motivation

Print Awareness

Phonological Awareness

Letter Knowledge

Vocabulary

Narrative Skills



The Evidence

- Children's interactions with various forms of narrative discourse can be an important determinate in their success with classroom literacy activities (Heath, 1982 & 1983; Michaels, 1981; Michaels and Collines, 1984; Snow, 1983; Wells, 1985 & 1986).
- Early literacy skills have a clear and consistently strong relationship with later conventional literacy skills, such as decoding, oral reading, fluency, reading comprehension, writing, and spelling (National Institute for Literacy, 2009)
- Story-based vocabulary instruction is the only proven method of increasing vocabulary in primary grades. This involves reading books aloud two or more times, and explaining some word meanings on each reading. Children can acquire 8-12 word meanings per week at school-enough to maintain average vocabulary gains during the primary years. No other methods of building vocabulary in the primary years have been empirically demonstrated/evaluated (Biemiller & Boote, 2006).
- Essential for continuity of personal memory, encoding of experiences, and social and cultural connection (Snow, et al, 1998).
- A major prerequisite language skill for adequate reading and writing development (Snow et al, 1998)
- Narrative skill, as measured on a standard story retelling task, was one of the best predictors of school success in 4-year-olds with language disabilities (Bishop and Edmundson, 1987).

- Narrative ability to be a significant component in predicting academic outcome in primary grade children with learning disabilities (Feagans and Appelbaum, 1986).
- Sentence complexity can create comprehension problems for struggling readers. If a reader cannot parse the types of complex sentences that are often encountered in academic texts, no amount of comprehension strategy instruction will help. The syntax of complex sentences poses challenges that are not accounted for by text-level processes such as relating sentences or reading beneath the lines to draw inferences (Scott, 2008).

Narrative Development

Available Assessments

- Emerging Literacy & Language Assessment (ELLA) Story Retell Subtest by Elisabeth Wiig, Ph.D., CCC-SLP and Wayne Secord, Ph.D., CCC-SLP Ages 4;6-9;11 (Cost: ~\$420)
- H-SRT HearBuilder Story Retell Test (from the story retell subtest of the ELLA) by Elisabeth Wiig, Ph.D., CCC-SLP and Wayne Secord, Ph.D., CCC-SLP - Ages: 4;6-9;11 (Cost: \$100)
- TNL Test of Narrative Language 2 by Ronald B. Gillam and Nils A. Pearson - Ages 5;0-15;11 (Cost: ~\$220)
- Narrative Assessment Protocol by Bowles, R., Justice, L., Skibbe, L., Piasta, S., Kahn, K., Coyle, L. <http://www.narrativeassessment.com/> PreK-2nd (Cost: free)

Apps

- Peter and the Cat Narrative Assessment by Black Sheep Limited Ages 5-9
- Squirrel Story Ages 3-6

Software

- SALT software www.saltsoftware.com

Narrative Checklist

(based on Hedburg and Stoel-Gammon, 1986)

- Heaps: Unrelated story elements with no seeming organization (2 years)
Notes:
- Sequences: Story elements are topically related, but not causally linked (2-3 years)
Notes:
- Primitive Narratives: Concrete theme but little interrelation between story component (3-4 years)
Notes:
- Unfocused Chain: Related from one part to the next; not from beginning to end (4-4 ½ years)
Notes:
- Focused Chain: Good connections between story parts, all related to a central theme (5 years)
Notes:
- True Narrative: Well developed story with internal plans, morals, and forward motion to all elements (6 years)
Notes:
- Narrative Summaries: Brief generality that provides a broad overview. Telling the story in whatever way makes sense. (7-11 years)
Notes:
- Complex Narratives: Includes use of flashbacks, fantasy, stories within stories, divergence from central plot (11-12 years)
Notes:
- Analysis: Breaking down the plot, characters, conflict, conflict resolution, etc. (13-15 years)
Notes:
- Generalization: Generalize to other narratives or situations (16 years to adulthood)
Notes:

Strategies to Increase Narrative Skills

- Heaps: Unrelated story elements with no seeming organization (2 years)
- Sequences: Story elements are topically related, but not causally linked (2-3 years)
- Primitive Narratives: Concrete theme but little interrelation between story component (3-4 years)
- Unfocused Chain: Related from one part to the next; not from beginning to end (4-4 ½ years)

Video 1

Observations

Types of Books for Young Narratives

- Cumulative or sequential stories:
 - I Know an Old Lady by Linda McClelland
 - Today Is Monday by Eric Carle
 - The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
- Chain or Circular Books: If You Give a Mouse a Cookie
 - If You Give a Moose a Muffin by Laura Numeroff
 - If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff
- Predictable Books
 - Three Billy Goats Gruff
 - Little Red Hen
 - Gingerbread Boy
- Question and Answer Books:
 - Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr.
 - Is It Time? by Marilyn Janovitz



- Repetition of Phrases
Are You My Mother?
Is Your Mama a Llama?
- Rhyming Books:
Is Your Mama a Llama?
Selections from Dr. Seuss
- Songbooks:
Three Green and Speckled Frogs
Three Little Ducks when out to Play



Great Resources:

- <http://www.kindergartenworks.com/common-core-standards/never-ending-story/> (has pictures and props to go with 20 common younger children's books)
- Story Grammar Marker <https://mindwingconcepts.com/collections/story-grammar-marker>
- Apps
 - Storychimes
 - Tabtales

Strategies

- ☆Read books without stopping, so children can hear the entire sequence and flow of the story. This will assist with understanding the theme, character development throughout the story, setting, plot, conflict, conflict resolution, and conclusion.
- Recall the main events of the story, asking what happened next: "Then where did Spot go?"
- Ask clarifying questions: "Why was Sally looking for Spot?"
- Flannel or magnet boards to tell stories.
 - Leave the flannel board and story pieces out after story time for children to explore.
- Retell a story with props.
- After story time, ask children to draw pictures to go along with the book.
- Act out nursery rhymes or stories with puppets.
- Add on to favorite stories. What happened the day after Max visited the Wild Things? What else did the five little monkeys do?
- Change the Ending

- Focused Chain: Good connections between story parts, all related to a central theme (5 years)
- True Narrative: Well developed story with internal plans, morals, and forward motion to all elements (6 years)
- Narrative Summaries: Brief generality that provides a broad overview. Telling the story in whatever way makes sense. (7-11 years)

Video 2

Observations

Video 3

Observations

Resources

- Wordless Books
 - A Boy, A Dog, and A Frog series by Mercer Mayer
 - Rainstorm by Barbara Lehman
 - Tuesday by David Wiesner
 - Flotsam by David Wiesner
 - Journey by Aasron Becker
 - A Ball for Daisy by Chris Raschka
 - The Lion and the Mouse by Jerry Pinkney
- Story Cubes by Rory
 - Original, Actions, and Voyages sets (~ \$7.00 each)

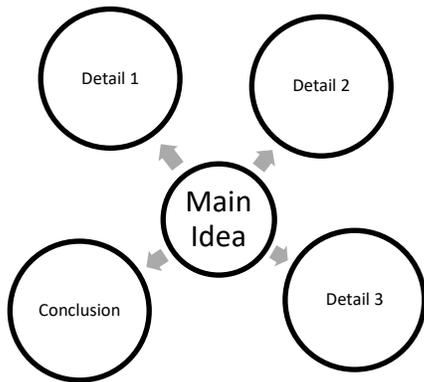
Apps

- Thinkamingo
- Story Dice
- Story Spark
- Spooky Story Dice
- 60 Story Starters (SuperDuper)
- Story Dice (Rene Zuidhof) free
- Writing Prompts (Teacher Created Resources)

Strategies

- Use story cubes or apps to create stories.
- Ask your child to tell the story in their own words based on the pictures on each page.
- Help them to develop their storytelling skills by prompting them to include details about the setting and descriptions of the characters, as well as encouraging them to include the key elements of the plot including the problem which arises and its resolution.
- Promote creativity and imagination by allowing your child to embellish the story however they want.
- Suggest that they add dialogue to the storyline.
- For younger children you could start by narrating the beginning and middle of the wordless picture book and then asking your child to narrate the ending. Or ask them to make up a completely new ending. If they are reluctant, give a number of alternative endings and see which one they prefer.

- Summarize the story in writing. Have the student use a mind map for prewriting and first draft. Have them develop the characters, settings, plot, conflict (morals and internal dialogue could be developed at this point) and conflict resolution.
- Use story starters and a mind map to write their own story.



Increasing Narrative Development for Complex Narratives through Generalization

When working with a student that is having difficulty understand fiction and nonfiction, we must determine what is causing difficulties. For fiction, is the difficulty in understanding story elements, taking a character or author’s perspective, or understanding the theme? For nonfiction, is the student having difficulty with understanding the main idea and supporting details, having difficulty with the purpose of the writing, or is the student attempting to pull in his or her background knowledge as facts into the nonfiction? Below are strategies for both fiction and nonfiction.

- Complex Narratives: Includes use of flashbacks, fantasy, stories within stories, divergence from central plot (11-12 years)
- Analysis: Breaking down the plot, characters, conflict, conflict resolution, etc. (13-15 years)
- Generalization: Generalize to other narratives or situations (16 years to adulthood)

Great Resources

- http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf (Reading list for each grade level and excerpts that meet Common Core standards)
- <http://plymouthlibrary.org/index.php/teen/teen-booklists/553-across-the-ages-nonfiction-history-books-for-teens>

Strategies

Prepare

- Activate prior knowledge based upon the topic of the text. Prepare students to ask questions about the text. It gives them a chance to preview the text by looking at pictures or other graphics in the book, which are sometimes very important to understanding non-fiction.

Assist

- This next step is for students, especially those who are struggling with understanding fiction or nonfiction, to ask themselves while they're reading questions that in turn will assist in comprehension.
 - Vocabulary Analysis
 - Character Flow Chart
 - Plot Diagram Chart
 - Questions of their own
 - Questions about reasoning (faulty or not) that they might not understand.
 - Summarize
 - Make connections to other books they have read, stories of real life they have experienced or heard, movies or television show they have seen, etc. (Karyn Simonelli www.doe.virginia.gov/)

Difficulty Understanding Fiction

Often students will have difficulty understanding fiction because of not understanding the story elements (i.e.: setting, climate, plot, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution). Students can also have difficulty determining the theme due to difficulty taking an author's or character's perspective, thus, leading to difficulty understanding the theme of the story. The following steps will assist in breaking down the fiction in order to determine where the student is having difficulty.

Step 1

Read a passage or chapter book appropriate for the student's current ability (high/low readers)

Step 2

Use Main Idea and Supporting Details highlighting strategy (main idea in yellow and supporting details in color of student's choice)

Highlight Main Idea and Details

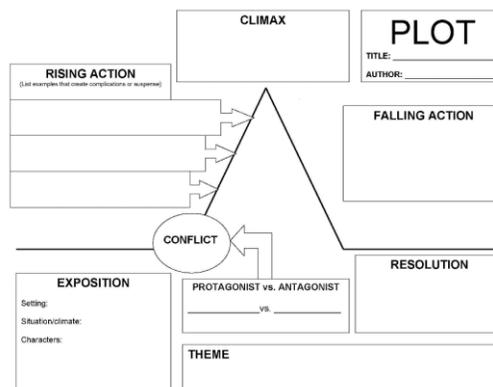
The student highlights the main idea in yellow (consistency in one color allows us to quickly scan to make sure the student is able to identify the main idea) and the supporting details in another color.

Rosa Parks was born February 4, 1913 in Tuskegee, Alabama. She spent her childhood in Alabama. When she was 11, she enrolled in the Montgomery Industrial School for Girls. Later, she worked as a seamstress in Montgomery.

Rosa Parks has been called the "mother of the civil rights movement" and one of the most important citizens of the 20th century. In the early 1950s, the bus system in Montgomery, as in many parts of the United States, was segregated. Blacks were required to board the bus at the front, buy their tickets, and then re-board the bus in the back. Sometimes, they weren't able to get on the bus again before it drove away. They were not allowed to sit in the front of the bus, which sometimes made it difficult to get off at the right stop. Even if they were sitting in the "black section", they were still required to give their seats up to white passengers if the "white section" was full. In December of 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a city bus to a white passenger. The bus driver had her arrested. She was tried and convicted of violating a local ordinance.

Step 3

Use a Plot Diagram to break down the story.



Step 4

If the student is still having difficulty with the theme, consider whether the student is able to take the author/character perspective. May need to do a comparison of the protagonist and antagonist or a character analysis for further support.

Title of Book: _____ Author: _____

	Protagonist	Antagonist
Name		
Physical Appearance		
Social Attributes (how does he/she get along with others?)		
Emotions/Mental Status:		

Character: _____

Beginning of the book (Thoughts, Actions, Dialogue)	Interpretation of these events

Middle of the book (Thoughts, Actions, Dialogue)	Interpretation of these events

End of the book (Thoughts, Actions, Dialogue)	Interpretation of these events

Step 5

Use 2/3 1/3 Notetaking to summarize the main idea and details for a chapter or to summarize the story elements (characters, plot, setting, conflict, climax, conflict resolution, ending of story, theme).

Steps

1. The student uses the left 2/3 of a sheet of paper to document main idea and chapter summaries or could use the left side for the story elements.
 - a. If using for the story elements, the header would be the element.
 - b. The indented section, where details would typically go, would be the details about the element.
2. The student then uses the right 1/3 for the following:
 - a. Notes regarding more information the student would like to know
 - b. Vocabulary to look up
 - c. Questions to ask the teacher
 - d. Or, if the notes are taken before class, this section could be used for additional information the teacher presents.

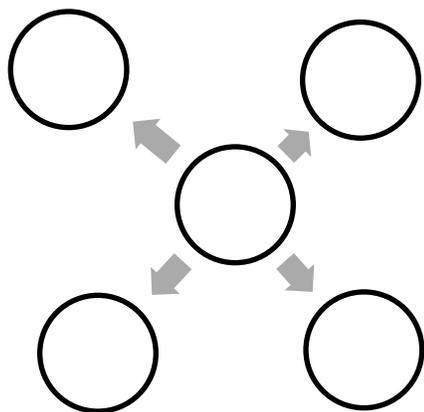
2/3 1/3 Notetaking

Name: _____
Class: _____

I. Main Idea A. Detail B. Detail C. Detail	Comments Questions Link to what you know Vocabulary What you would like to learn more about
II. Main Idea A. Detail B. Detail C. Detail	
III. Main Idea A. Detail B. Detail C. Detail	
 2/3	 1/3

Step 6

Use a mind map to summarize the story. The student would begin by providing the main idea of the story in the middle bubble. Then would provide at least three details and a conclusion.



Step 7

Compare and Contrast to other story (fiction or nonfiction), personal experience, etc. This Compare and Contrast Chart from readwritethink provides a strategy that requires less visual processing as well as a way to organize details as compared to a Venn Diagram.

Compare and Contrast Chart readwritethink
NCTE

Item #1 _____	Item #2 _____
How are they alike?	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
How are they different?	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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Literary Packet



- A book report format will encourage your student to be sure that the information that is being read is also understood before moving onto the next chapter. Your student should utilize the following steps while preparing to and reading a book:
- Read the summary presented on the back of the book (or the paper cover).
- Use the information entered into the book report format to refer to while reading and to also add further information learned while reading.
- Use for assignments after the students have finished reading the book

Strategies for Use

- Read the jacket or back cover summary first. If this is not available, attempt to find a summary on line.
- Add what you learned from reading the summary to the book report format.
- Write the main idea and at least three supporting details about the chapter before reading the next chapter. If you are unable to recall details, the chapter should be skimmed or reread before moving forward.
- Additional characters/characteristics as well as additional information learned about the characters should be included as the information is presented.
- When you reach the point of the climax (how the conflict is resolved) of the story, he/she should complete that section.
- After completing the story, you complete the section regarding how the story ended.
- Finally, you should reflect on the story and complete the section regarding whether the book was liked or disliked. This requires you to utilize critical thinking in order to provide details of why the story or book was liked or disliked. This is crucial in order to build a desire to read more books of a particular genre or to try other books of a different genre if the student did not like the book.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Book Title: _____ Author: _____

Illustrator: _____ Publisher: _____

Vocabulary words I don't know (write the word here then use the tent cards for the definition)

Plot: (Main idea of the story)

Setting: (Describe the time, location, climate, mood)

Main Characters: (Who are they and what are they like)

Conflict or Central Problem: (Describe the main problem or conflict the characters have to solve)

Use this area to write down the main idea and at least 3 details about each chapter

<p style="text-align: center;">Chapter _____</p> <p>Chapter Title: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Predict: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Main Idea: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Details to Support the Main Idea:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p style="text-align: center;">Chapter _____</p> <p>Chapter Title: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Predict: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Main Idea: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Details to Support the Main Idea:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
--	--

Resolution of the Conflict: At what point was the conflict resolved? How did it get resolved?

Resolution/Conclusion: At the end of the book...

Your thoughts on this book: Tell whether you liked or did not like the book. Give three reasons for your opinion.

Difficulty Understanding Nonfiction

Many students with language disorders will incorporate their background knowledge into nonfiction and then treat it as facts of the story. This will impact comprehension of nonfiction.

The following steps are useful in breaking down nonfiction.

STEP 1

Read a passage appropriate for the student's reading level (www.newsela.com)

Step 2

Use Main Idea and Supporting Details highlighting strategy (main idea in yellow and supporting details in color of student's choice)

Step 3

Provide a mind map with important areas outlined.

Types of Text Structures in Informational Texts				
Text Structure	Definitions	Critical Words	Graphic Organizer	High School Examples of Texts
Description	Descriptive details about characteristics, actions, etc.	Descriptive adjective and words like on, over, beyond, within		Representative democracy involves leaders receiving votes from the populace after a period of campaigning for that office. Competition between candidates, coupled with free and open speech, is necessary for this system of government to be successful.
Problem/Solution	Sets up a problem and its solution	Propose, conclude, a solution, the reason for, the problem or question		The type of government created after the American Revolution included the ideals of protecting individual liberties while at the same time preserving the collective order of society. To that end, a government based on combining popular consent, separation of powers, and federalism was created.
Time/Order Chronological	Gives information in order of occurrence	First, second, before, after, finally, then, next, earlier		A proposed bill first goes to a committee to be reviewed. The second step in the process is for the House or Senate to debate the bill, making necessary revisions. The last step in the process of a bill becoming law is after both houses of Congress pass the bill, it goes to the President to be signed into law.
Comparison/Contrast	Looking at two or more items to establish similarities/differences	While, yet, but, rather, most, same, either, as well as, like, and unlike, as opposed to		Some customers like the conveniences offered by big banks including, computerized banking, multiple branches, and a large network of ATM machines. Other customers prefer small banks that often times offer more personalized service and are better connected to their communities.
Cause/Effect	Give reason/explanation for happening	Because, since, often, due to, as a result, for this reason, on account of, consequently		As a result of the Great Depression, almost half of all the elderly in the United States lost their savings and thus their ability to support themselves when they were ready to retire. As a result, Congress passed the Social Security Act of 1935 to help mitigate the disastrous impact of the Great Depression on the elderly.

http://www.esc4.net/users/0223/docs/highschool2_typesoftextstructuresininformationaltxts.pdf

Conclusion

On target narrative development provides a glimpse of how the student will do overall academically. For students who struggle with narrative development, we must target narrative develop directly in order to lead to greater academic success.