

Overview

Students will use experiences from the garden to plan and write a story.

Connection

Consider making connections to:

- Other writing pieces you have done
- A picture book you read recently with strong character details and sequencing
- A life example, like this: *"Do you guys have a favorite dinner dish that mom or dad makes at home? My kiddos LOVED this new dish I made at home this week. I made a new pasta dish, and it was delicious. But I was a little frustrated when I was making it. Do your parents get frustrated in the kitchen? Not fun, right? Let me tell you what happened. I was getting everything ready to cook when I realized that the instructions were not very detailed. It told me I needed a cup of onions, but I didn't know how to cut them. It said I needed basil, but it didn't tell me how much. I need details when I am cooking something new. I really wish the author was more specific. Recipes should be detailed and organized, and so should stories."*

Teaching Point

Strong writers use sequencing words and sensory details when writing a story.

***Tip: This standard encompasses a lot of skills. This lesson is focused on planning the story to include sequence and incorporating descriptive action words.*

Incorporating character thoughts and feelings could be tackled in a separate mini-lesson using the same writing piece.

Teach

Read a short picture book with your students. Choose a book where the character goes through a conflict in which he or she goes through multiple steps or smaller events.

Grade Level: 2

Subject Area: ELA

Time Frame: 2 - 4 writing blocks

Materials:

Picture book of your choice
Blank anchor chart paper
A brainstorming storyboard worksheet
Sequencing words anchor chart
Sensory detail anchor chart

Resources:

Storyboard worksheet

Standards:

W 2.3: Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

So many picture books can work. Consider using one that relates to another theme, concept, or lesson you have been working on in class.

As you read, show your students that authors put things in order. Do this by completing a storyboard with them to plot out the smaller events in the story. Sketch in the boxes just like you want them to do when they complete their storyboard. You can do this on a larger version of the storyboard (on anchor chart paper) or using a digital format like SMART, PowerPoint, etc. After you have done a box or two, ask students to participate as well. The one you create as a class will act as the mentor chart for students.

As you read, you may also want to keep a running list of the sensory words the author used to engage the senses. Pointing this out as you read may help students incorporate similar details later.

Introduce the writing task to your students. Explain that they will be writing a story about an experience they had in the garden. They will focus on putting events and details in chronological order and adding sensory words to their writing.

Active Engagement

Brainstorming

Weather permitting, this would be a great time to work in the garden. Tell students to recall a time they were working in the garden. Ask them to recall what they were doing, what was their goal, who did they work with, what were they talking about, etc. Using a simple storyboard worksheet (a sample is included), have them sketch out the events of that gardening day. They can include thought or talk bubbles to show what they were thinking or saying.

***Tip: Based on the skill, experience, and time, it may be helpful to set a requirement for the number of boxes you want completed. Too few boxes will result in a struggle to include sequencing in the drafting phase.*

Writing

After students have created their storyboard, they should be ready to write. The ideas and events in their storyboard will become the details of their written story.

Before writing, review any resources you have on transition/sequence words. Have students refer to an anchor chart for guidance.

Remind students to incorporate sensory words. Have your anchor chart up for that as well.

***Tip: Consider having students write for a short block of time OR until they have written*

about 3 of their storyboard blocks on the first writing day. Review their writing and organize them into writing groups based on their level of mastery of the two skills you taught. Then you can push into groups the next day to help them.

Link

Remind students of the strategy and when they will use this.

“The next time, and every time we write stories, we will continue organizing events in order and including sensory words. Strong writers include these things to help readers understand and enjoy the story.”

Possible Modifications

Instead of students writing a nonfiction story about an experience they had in the garden, they can write a fictional story that takes place in the garden. Perhaps they start with a real day in the garden, but embellish it.

Students can write from a less traditional point of view to narrate their story. Pull out ideas from a bucket so that students can think more creatively. They can write from the perspective of a snail, a bee, an ant, a lizard, a mosquito, a stray cat, a bunny, a beetle, etc.

Final Product Ideas

- Students can write this story in a sentence/paragraph form on a sheet of paper and design a creative cover page.
- Students can create a mini-picture book using computer paper and staples. They can write a few sentences on each page and illustrate it.
- Students can type their stories in a Google Doc. You can assist them in sharing it with you. You can then save these to publish in a class “book” that students can illustrate later.

Your Notes & Ideas

Super Stories Start with a Storyboard

Directions: Use the boxes below to put events in order. Pay attention to the numbers in the boxes.

1	2	3	4
	→	→	→
5	←	←	←
	→	→	→

Super Stories Start with a Storyboard

Directions: Use the boxes below to put events in order.

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