

Comprehension Activity

Introduce: Story Elements

Activity Type: Introduce

Grade: K-3

Group Size: Small Group, Large Group, Whole Class

Length: 15 minutes

Materials: A fiction book to read out loud, chart paper or board

Goal: Given a work of fiction, students will be able to determine its setting, characters, and plot.

Prepare:

Choose a book that appeals to early readers.

Model/Instruct:

1. Write the terms *character*, *setting*, and *plot* on the board or chart paper. Ask students what they think these terms mean.

Look at the terms on the board. What do you think *character* means? What does *setting* mean? What does *plot* mean?

2. Record the students' comments on the chart paper or board.

3. Explain the meaning of story elements.

Story elements are the basic building blocks of a story. Without a character, a setting, and a plot, you would not have a very good story. In fact, it wouldn't really be a story at all. Every story will have at least one character, a setting, and something that happens.

4. Give examples of the ways students have already come into contact with story elements.

Do you have a favorite character from a television show or movie? Have you ever given a description of the time and place where something happened? Have you ever heard a story with a problem and solution?

Practice:

5. Read the book, pausing at appropriate points to note information about character, setting, and plot. For plot, you may choose to focus specifically on problems and their solutions.

We are going to focus on the story elements when we read this book. I will stop at points and we will write down things that have to do with the characters, setting, and plot. We will use that information to help us understand the book. What do we know about the character, setting, and plot?

6. Record students' comments about character, setting, and plot on the chart paper or board.

7. Finish reading the book.

Adjust:

For advanced students:

Encourage these students to use the information the group collected about character, setting, and plot to draw a picture showing the story elements. Remind students that the picture should show a scene from the book. It should include the main character, the setting, and either the problem or the solution from the plot.

For struggling students:

Some students may have difficulty focusing on all of the story elements during one reading of the text. In this case, you may choose to do more than one reading and ask students to focus on only one element per reading. To provide additional assistance, ask questions such as these:

Who are the important people in this story?

Where does this book take place?

What is going on in this book?

What is the problem?

How is the problem solved?

For ELL students:

Before reading the book, explain the meaning of any key vocabulary or concepts. Allow students to draw pictures of the characters and setting so they can express their understanding visually rather than orally.