

Subject: Language Arts

Topic: Introduction of Narratives

Lesson Task:

This lesson will introduce students to the topic of narratives. It will begin by establishing an understanding of and appreciation for why it is important to be able to write and tell a good narrative and what value it holds beyond the classroom. The lesson will assess students' prior knowledge about narratives and how narratives differ from other forms of text.

After announcing to the students that they will be creating their own personal stories during an 8-week writing process, students will have the opportunity to read and listen to the award winning narrative, *Sarah's Story* written and performed by New England storyteller, Bill Harley.

Goals:

- Students will understand what a narrative is.
- Students will understand the importance and relevance of being able to write/tell good narratives and connect its value to their own lives.
- Students will understand that stories can be derived from personal, everyday experiences.
- Students will believe that they have valuable stories to share and that through the writing process they CAN develop a good narrative.

Objectives: *Upon successful participation in and completion of this lesson, students will be able to:*

- Define what a narrative is.
- Explain why it is important to be able to write/tell a story.
- Distinguish narratives from some other forms of texts.
- Express that writing narratives is a process.
- Say with confidence, "I CAN write a good story!"

Instructional Materials and Resources:

- Easel, Pad and Colored Markers
- Scholastic Dictionary with the word narrative marked
- Menu from any restaurant
- Driver's license
- Book: *Sarah's Story* by Bill Harley
- Blank writing paper/pencils
- Tape recorder/CD player
- *Come On Out and Play* recording with *Sarah's Story* by Bill Harley
- Pretend campfire
- Optional: Graham crackers, marshmallows and Hershey's Chocolate Bars

Time: 60 minutes

Instructional Activities and Tasks

Set

On an easel pad, reveal statement that says:

Teachers have students write stories just to keep them busy.

Ask students, is this True or False?

So, WHY do teachers have students write stories; WHY do we need to learn to write stories?

Depending on student responses, provide the following scenarios:

- When you go out at recess and see your friends and want to tell them about something that happened to you, what do you do? *(Tell them a story.)*
- How many of you like movies? After you see a movie, do you ever tell someone else about it? When you do, what are you doing? *(Telling them a story.)*
- When your pet eats your homework and you have to go to your teacher and explain, what do you have to do? *(Tell a story.)*
- How many of you have gone camping? When you go camping, you set up the tent, make a fire, cook dinner. Then after dinner you sit around the fire, make s'mores and what do you oftentimes do? *(Tell a story.)*

So, stories are one important way that we communicate and share things about ourselves with one another.

Being able to write and share a story helps make you a good and an effective communicator, someone that others understand and are interested in listening to.

Procedures and Activities

Reveal the word *NARRATIVE* *(written on easel pad)*.

Who would like to tell me what this word says? *(Narrative.)* Say that with me, narrative.

Will someone please tell me what a narrative is or take an educated guess at what a narrative is?

Would someone please read out loud the definition of narrative from the dictionary? Hand willing student dictionary with marked page or read it aloud if no one volunteers.

So, a narrative is what? That's right, a story. Narrative is a synonym or another word for story.

With a show of hands, how many of you have ever read or heard a narrative? Of course, you ALL have!

Again with a show of hands, how many of you think you can identify a narrative?

Okay let's see you in action!

- Show a menu. Everyone who thinks this is a narrative, give a thumbs up.
- Show a driver's license. Everyone who thinks this is a narrative, give a thumbs up.

- Show *Sarah's Story*. Everyone who thinks this is a narrative, give a thumbs up.

Okay, you've got it! Now write your name on this paper and the word NARRATIVE in big letters. Neatness doesn't matter. (Handout papers)

Okay, what is it that this book has that the menu and license don't have that makes it a narrative?

Take a minute; write down what comes to mind. It doesn't have to be a complete sentence...just words are fine. Wait a minute or two depending on student response.

What is it that this book has that the menu and license don't have that makes it a narrative? Would anyone like to share what they wrote?

Let's create a K-W-L chart for Narratives with your responses.

K is for what we know.

Record responses.

Depending on responses offer an example of something I know about narratives.

I know that every narrative has a setting. A place/location where the story occurs. Does that trigger any other information you know about narratives?

Okay. Remember how we said that one of the times that it's useful to be able to tell a story was when you are sitting around a campfire? Well, we're going to sit around a campfire and listen to an award winning narrative called *Sarah's Story* by New England storyteller, Bill Harley. Have any of you ever heard of Bill Harley or seen him perform?

He's one of my favorite writers/storytellers. As you listen to *Sarah's Story* I want you to ask yourself if you can relate to Sarah in any way. And I also want you to listen for those things that we listed on the KWL chart that you know are part of a narrative.

Oh, and here's the fixings for s'mores!

Play *Sarah's Story*.

Did you hear many of the items from our K-W-L chart in the story?

Could anyone relate to Sarah and how she felt when the teacher gave the assignment?

If I asked you to write a story right now and hand in your final copy before lunch time, show me with a raise of hands, how many of you think you could write a story that you would be proud of? That's right, probably no one!

Well, I wouldn't do that. And the reason why I wouldn't do that is because writing a story is a process. It's like learning to ride a bike. It takes time, effort, practice and patience with yourself. It requires planning, drafting, revising, editing, re-writing and more re-writing.

By now you have probably figured out that you are going to have the chance to create your own story over the next 8 lessons. And you are going to do it through the narrative writing process. I expect that by a given date we will have terrific stories to share. I KNOW YOU CAN DO THIS. And I am here to help you learn the process and be successful. Sarah told a story and you can, too!

So, with a show of hands, how many of you feel confident that you can write a story you'll be proud of?

Closure

Let's summarize what we did today.

What is a narrative?

Why is it important for us to learn how to write narratives?

How can I identify a narrative? What makes it different from a menu or license?

Is it more likely to take 5 minutes or 5 days to write a good narrative? Why?

Homework

As you go about the next few days, listen to yourself as well as other people, and see how often you and others share stories. And pay attention to those stories that you enjoy and ask yourself, what is it about this story that I like? Is it the character, the setting, the problem?

Next time we'll be looking at each one of the parts that make up a good narrative.

Until then you can begin thinking about what YOU might like your story to be about.
Only limitations: no weapons, no violence.

NOW: Everyone stand. Turn to your neighbor. Look your neighbor in the eye and repeat after me...YOU can write a good narrative. Now look here and repeat after me... I CAN WRITE A GOOD NARRATIVE!

And you will!

Assessment

- Ability to produce effective responses to questions.
- Ability to identify/generate/record any of the story grammar elements during writing assignment.
- Ability to participate in group discussion.
- Ability to listen to and track the sequence of the story on the recording.