

Comprehension Instructional Routine: Identify Story Grammar

Preparation/Materials: “The Hayloft in the Barn” and “Otters on the River”, two story maps for teacher (use with a transparency or draw story map on a whiteboard or chart paper), markers, pictures of a hayloft, barn, and otter



- *Italicized sentences are what the teacher does*
- **Bold type is what the teacher says**
- Regular type is what the student(s) say
- **Bullet (•) and bolded type are what the teacher and student(s) say in unison**
- Teacher or student slides finger under underlined letter(s) or word(s)

TEACHER EXPLAINS TASK

We are going to use a story map to identify the parts of a story. Just as we have eggs, milk, flour and sugar to make a cake, we have characters, setting, and events to make a story.

TEACHER MODELS TASK

Display a large copy of the story map.

I am going to use a story map to help me understand what I read.

Point to the appropriate icon for character, setting, problem/goal, events/steps, and end.

MAIN CHARACTER

The main character is the person or animal that the story is mostly about.

SETTING

The setting is where and when the story happens.

PROBLEM or GOAL

A problem is something that has to be solved or a goal is something that the character is trying to reach. In a story, the character has a problem or a goal.

EVENTS OR STEPS

The events in the story are the steps that the character takes to solve the problem or reach the goal.

END

At the end of the story the problem is solved or the goal is reached.

TEACHER & STUDENTS PRACTICE TASK TOGETHER

Now we will read a story and then use a story map to help us understand what was read.

Display the story. Point to the story's title and a picture of a barn and a hayloft as you model the think aloud.

The title of this story is “The Hayloft in the Barn.” The title of the story can give me a clue to what the story might be about. I know that a barn is a large building on a farm where animals live and where food for the animals is stored. Hay is used as a food for horses and cows. Hay is grass that has been cut, dried, and then stored in the hayloft in the barn. The hayloft is in a high place, usually just below the barn's roof. I wonder if the story will be about animals in a barn or in the hayloft.

Follow along as I read the story. *Point to each word as you read aloud.*

The Hayloft in the Barn

One morning, a little boy walked into the barn. He heard a meow. He thought there must be a kitten somewhere. The boy looked in each barn stall but only saw the horses eating the straw. Nearby, he saw his dad milking the cows. Once again, he heard a meow and wondered where it might be coming from. Then he thought the meows were coming from up above in the hayloft. He carried a very heavy ladder to reach the hayloft door. He climbed the ladder carefully and opened the door. There he found a tiny, cute gray kitten.

Now, let's use a story map to identify the important parts of the story. *Point to the appropriate icon as you ask questions and record responses on the large story map.*

The main character is the person or animal that the story is mostly about. In this story, the boy is the main character.

Who is the main character in this story?

- The boy is the main character.

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TEACHER & STUDENTS PRACTICE TASK TOGETHER (continued)

Yes. The boy is the person the story is mostly about.

I will write 'the boy is the main character' under MAIN CHARACTER on the story map.

The setting is where and when the story happens. The setting of this story is one morning in a barn.

Where does this story take place?

- The story takes place in a barn.

When does the story take place?

- The story takes place one morning.

Yes. The setting is one morning in a barn. I will write 'the setting is one morning in a barn' under SETTING on the story map.

The problem is what the boy would like to solve. The problem for the boy is that he wants to find the kitten.

What is the problem for the boy in the story?

- He wants to find the kitten.

Yes. The problem for the boy is that he hears a meow and wants to find the kitten. I will write 'the boy wants to find the kitten' under PROBLEM on the story map.

The events or the steps are the actions the boy takes to solve the problem. First, the boy looks in each stall. Then, he carries a ladder and crawls into the hayloft.

So, what does the boy do to solve his problem?

- He looks in each stall.
- He carries a ladder.
- He crawls into the hayloft.

Yes. I will write 'he looks in each stall, carries a ladder and crawls into the hayloft' under EVENTS or STEPS on the story map.

Ask additional questions if needed to evoke more events that lead to the solution. For example:

The boy climbed the ladder.

What did he do?

- *He climbed the ladder.*

Yes. I will also write 'he climbed the ladder' under events on the story map.

Now, let's fill in the story's ENDING. Remember, the ENDING is when the problem is solved. Did the boy solve his problem? Did he find the kitten? Yes, at the end of the story the boy finds the kitten.

What happens at the end of the story?

- The boy finds the kitten.

Yes. I will write 'the boy finds the kitten' under ENDING on the story map.

Great job. We identified the different parts of the story using a story map.

STUDENTS PRACTICE TASK

Now it is your turn to use a story map to help you understand what was read. Look at the title. The title of a story can give us a clue to what the story may be about. The title of this story is "Otters on the River." *Provide a picture of an otter.*

What do you know about otters?

- _____

Accept all appropriate responses about otters. Limit discussion to two minutes.

Now, listen and follow along as I read the story.

Point to each word as you read aloud.

Otters on the River

Last weekend Sally went to the river. She played with her cousins in the water and on the rocks. Sally saw a rocky ledge on the other side of the river. She had never seen a real live otter before. She was hoping to see an otter today. So when her cousins went to the house for lunch, she decided to stay by the river. Perhaps an otter would appear. She climbed on a large rock and quietly watched the rocky ledge. Sally was careful not to make a noise. Suddenly, there was a splash! Then, not just one otter, but two otters swam by! What an exciting day!

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STUDENTS PRACTICE TASK (continued)

Now, let's use a story map to identify the important parts of the story.

Point to the appropriate icon as you ask questions and record responses on the large story map.

In this story, who is the person that the story is mostly about?

Sally is the person that the story is mostly about.

Yes. I will write 'Sally is the main character' under MAIN CHARACTER on the story map.

Where does this story take place?

This story takes place on a river.

When does this story take place?

This story takes place last weekend.

Yes. I will write 'the setting is last weekend on a river' under SETTING on the story map.

Now, what is the goal for Sally in the story?

Sally wants to see an otter

Yes. I will write 'Sally wants to see an otter' under GOAL on the story map.

So, what are the events or steps that Sally takes to reach the goal of seeing an otter? *Accept any variation of the correct answer.*

She climbed on a large rock.

She quietly watches the rocky ledge.

She was careful not to make a noise.

Yes. I will write 'she climbed on a large rock, quietly watched the rocky ledge and was careful not to make a noise' under EVENTS or STEPS on the story map.

Now, let's fill in the story's ENDING. Remember, the ENDING is when the goal is reached.

Did Sally reach her goal of seeing an otter?

Yes, she reached her goal.

What happens that tells you she reached her goal?

Sally saw two otters swim by.

Yes. I will write 'Sally saw two otters swim by' under ENDING on the story map.

Great job. You identified the different parts of the story using a story map.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

When students consistently identify the different parts of a story, provide individual turns using other explicit passages. Call on students in an unpredictable order, calling more frequently on students who made errors.

SCAFFOLDING SUGGESTION FOR ERRORS

Verify that students are correctly identifying the story grammar elements. If students are experiencing difficulty with this concept, teach one story element at a time and/or have students copy your words and draw a picture for this one story element. If students have difficulties determining the character, ask them who has the problem or goal to be reached.

Adaptations using this Instructional Routine:

- Have students draw a picture and/or write to show an understanding of one story grammar element. Once the students are successful with one story grammar element, increase the number of elements to be depicted.
- Have students explain their drawing to the teacher to reinforce their understanding of the story grammar element.
- Have students retell the entire story to the teacher or to the class using their own completed story map or their drawing of the story grammar elements on a story map.
- Select other explicit, narrative texts to practice finding the story grammar elements using the story map.

For further independent practice, refer to the following Kindergarten and First Grade FCRR Student Center Activities at http://www.fcrr.org/Curriculum/pdf/GK-1/C_Final.pdf

- C.011
- C.012

The Hayloft in the Barn

One morning a little boy walked into the barn. He heard a meow. There must be a kitten in here. The boy looked in each barn stall but only saw the horses eating the hay. Nearby, he saw his dad milking the cows. Once again, he heard a meow and wondered where it could be coming from. Then he thought the meows were coming from up above in the barn's hayloft. He carried a very heavy ladder to reach the hayloft. He climbed the ladder carefully and crawled into the hayloft. There he found a tiny, cute gray kitten.

Otters on the River


Last weekend Sally went to a river. She played with her cousins in the water and on the rocks. Sally saw a rocky ledge on the other side of the river. Sometimes otters live under a rocky ledge. She had never seen a real live otter before. She was hoping to see an otter today. So when her cousins went to the house for lunch, she just sat on a large rock and quietly watched the rocky ledge. Sally was careful not to make a noise. Then, not just one otter, but two otters swam by! What an exciting day!


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NOTE: This story map is well suited for narrative texts. If the story has a moral or a theme, include these features. Depending on the structure of the story, the teacher may wish to create their own story map.

Title: _____


	MAIN CHARACTER
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	SETTING
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	PROBLEM or GOAL
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	EVENTS or STEPS <i>(Important events or steps to solve the problem or reach the goal)</i>
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END	ENDING <i>(The problem is solved or the goal is reached)</i>
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