

Lesson Plan - Story Writing (Follows on from Story Planning lesson)

Re: @princeandtiger - You can't always have cheese - Page 4

Learning question:

- How do I write a story?

Learning objectives:

- To develop writing skills in the context of story writing.
- To develop the ability to use narrative tenses when story writing.
- To develop the ability to use a variety of sentences when story writing.

Learning outcome:

- Produce a descriptive narrative with plot, setting and characters, using consistent tense and a variety of sentences.

STARTER ACTIVITY: Write some sentences in both the present tense and the past tense. You can write the same narrative in the two different tenses to see how they compare. The differences may be small, for example: 'I feel like jumping for joy' (present tense) will simply change to, 'I felt like jumping for joy' (past tense). **EXTENSION ACTIVITY:** What are the benefits/negatives of writing in each tense?

As well as deciding if you are going to write your story in past or present tense, you also need to decide if you want to write the story in first person or third person. I.E. What point of view will the story be told from? First person is where you describe what is happening from your own (or one of your character's) point of view like our examples before. (I feel/felt like jumping for joy.) Third person is where the action is described from the outside point of view. (E.G. They felt like jumping for joy.)

When deciding on both of the two aspects, you need to consider whether a certain choice will enhance the telling of the story depending on the plot/storyline. For example, if a story is largely based around the thoughts and feelings of one central character then it is possibly best to tell the story in first person and in present tense so that the central character can describe, in detail, how they are feeling throughout. Alternatively, if the story is an action packed adventure about many different characters during a past event then past tense and third person may be the better way to go so that you can describe all the different characters and write about what they all did.

Whatever you decide, the general rule of story writing is to keep to your chosen tense throughout. (There are exceptions to this rule, such as, if you have a time jump in your story.)

TASK 1: Draft the beginning of your story. What/Who's point of view is it going to be told from (first or third person) and is it going to be written in past or present tense. Are you starting in the middle of the action or are you going to set the scene before the action starts? When are you going to describe the setting and how are you going to introduce characters and plot?

You should have already planned your setting (I.E. the time and place(s) your story is set in) so now describe your setting in detail. What does it look like? Can you describe colours, sounds, smells, etc? What is the weather or temperature like? Try to paint a picture in words for your readers so that they can imagine and understand where your story is set.

Do the same with your characters, especially the main characters. Give your readers the details they need to be able to imagine what they are like. (Not just how they look but what their personality is like too.) Obviously, depending on your plot/storyline, you might have some mysterious characters that you do not want to give all the information about at the start but make sure you know who they are so that you can give the readers the details about them when the time is right.

EXTENSION TASK: Explore different ways of telling the story (I.E. different tenses / points of view). Which would make the best way and why?

When writing, remember to use a variety of different types of sentences. We can use simple sentences like: Prince Rishi woke up. (Simple sentences generally contain 1 noun and 1 verb or action) Remember, we can add extra information to simple sentences, without turning them into different types of sentences, if we want/need to. For example: Prince Rishi woke up early. We can put 2 simple sentences (or clauses) together using a connective (E.G. and, but, or, so) to create a compound sentence. For example: He slept very well so Prince Rishi woke up early. Both of the clauses in the aforementioned sentence could be sentences by themselves. That is what makes it a compound sentence. Sometimes a clause in a sentence cannot stand alone as an independent sentence itself; it is dependent on the other clause. For example: After a good night's sleep, Prince Rishi woke up early. This is known as a complex sentence. While 'Prince Rishi woke up early' could be a simple sentence itself, the other clause (After a good night's sleep) could not. Complex sentences can generally be written either way round so you can switch the clauses around if you want to. For example: Prince Rishi woke up early after a good night's sleep.

TASK 2: Write a paragraph making sure to use different types of sentences (simple, compound and complex). Try to use at least one simple, one compound and one complex sentence though it does not have to be in that order.

EXTENSION TASK: If you want to build tension/suspense in your story, a good format to use is the following order of sentences: Compound, Complex, Simple, Short (Or Complex, Compound, Simple, Short). A short sentence could be as short as just 1 or 2 words.

For example: She took a deep breath and she slowly grasped the dusty door handle. Even though she was terrified, she quickly opened the creaky door. She looked into the darkness. Nothing.

So you should now have everything you need to write your story. Work through your plan from the beginning. You can make changes. Remember to keep your writing in the same tense and keep the story being told from the same point of view throughout. Introduce your setting and characters, introduce the problem/conflict, build the tension/action, overcome the problem/conflict and arrive at your (re)solution.

PLENARY TASK: READ, REWRITE, REREAD, REWRITE. It takes many drafts to write a perfect story. You may have to completely rewrite some or all of it to get it right. That's story writing! Check your paragraphing, punctuation, spelling and sentence structure. Are you happy with everything or would you like to change anything?

Share your story with someone else. Ask them what they like about it and if there is anything that they think could be better.