



## Story Suitcase

**Theme:** Storytelling

**Grade Level:** K - 5

**Concept:** Transformation, Journey, Imagination

**Time needed for lesson:** 45 min.-1 hour

*Overview: Using evocative props, children create and enact a story with a beginning, middle and end.*

**Objective:** The objective of this lesson is to activate imagination, enhance vocabulary, develop creative writing skills, increase confidence and develop observational abilities in students. Students will use characters, plot and setting to create their own story.

**Essential Question:** What are the elements necessary to create a story?

### **Preparation for lesson:**

Reading, writing and/or telling stories

Identifying and describing characters, action, setting, as well as cause and effect.

Young students will practice distinguishing fantasy from reality.

Teacher will review action verbs and descriptive language.

Teacher and artists will prepare a suitcase full of props.

(Optional): View the movie *Nanny McPhee* by Emma Thompson

### **Lesson Activities:**

1. Create a large open space in the classroom.
2. Students will place paper road throughout the space in multiple directions. Students will sit in circle on floor.
3. Teacher and/or artist will open the suitcase and introduce the props and masks.
4. Teacher will facilitate the students to create a story for the characters, props and place using the questions *who, what, why, where, how, when?*
5. Students will be encouraged to identify and use their 5 senses.
6. Teachers or other willing participants-parents, aides, etc will don costumes made from ordinary objects to portray characters.
7. Students will take turns (by passing a talking stick, magic wand, etc.), describing the characters and props as well as directing the actions of the characters and props.

(Optional): Video-tape lesson experience

**Extension of the lesson:**

Students will review video tape of storytelling experience. They will edit and rewrite the story using descriptive language; metaphors and similes.

Even very young students might benefit from the concepts of editing and brainstorming: subtracting from and adding to the story.

Younger students can do this orally.

Students can create a book with illustrations.

*Teachers can share story suitcase with other teachers!!!*

**Materials needed:**

Camera

*Everyday objects can be great props. Some examples:*

Long rolls of colorful wallpaper borders for roads

Small blanket or carpet (should look magic)

Magic potion bottle

Colorful tin box with some kind of sticks, i.e.: chopsticks, dowels,

spoons for sound effects

incense burner

transparent cloth

fake spider, snake or sparkly red apple

magic wand

wrapped mystery objects

box of jewels

a cape (a big colorful skirt will do)

giant paper bag for cave or tunnel or valley or mountain or trap or...!

Car window shield reflector

umbrella

**Vocabulary:** (will vary according to age group):

Names of props, descriptive language related to texture, smell, sound, appearance of props and characters; action verbs and adverbs used to describe the movement of the characters. This is an excellent opportunity to introduce metaphors and similes.

**Other words to consider:** characters, setting, action, beginning, middle, end, transform, environment, collaborate, fantasy, reality, drama, danger, conflict, mystery, participate, sequence

## **Benchmarks**

### ***Language Arts:***

The student will be encouraged to participate in activities that foster individual creativity.

Vocabulary - The student will develop and expand knowledge of words and word meanings:

- to increase vocabulary
- recognize cause/effect relationships
- place events in sequential order by telling the beginning, middle and ending
- retell, reenact and dramatize a story

Oral Language/Listening and Speaking: The student will demonstrate thinking skills in listening and speaking.

Listening - The student will listen for information and for pleasure.

Speaking - The student will express ideas or opinions in group or individual settings.

### ***Science:***

The student will investigate and describe objects that can be sorted in terms of physical properties.

- Observe, describe, sort, and classify the sensory attributes of objects according to taste, smell, hearing, touch and sight.
- Observe and describe how objects move (e.g., slide, turn, twirl, and roll).

### ***Social Studies:***

The student will demonstrate knowledge of basic geographic concepts.

***There are many benchmarks that will be applicable to this lesson at every grade level, including visual art, music and theater.***

## **Whole child**

*Thinking/Cognition:* Students will understand time concept of beginning, middle and end and will identify and describe characters, setting and props. They will identify motivations of characters.

Young students will distinguish between fantasy and reality.

Vocabulary will increase as well as the use of metaphors, similes and descriptive language.

*Feelings/Emotions:* Students experience satisfaction in creating a story and the emotional response evoked by the drama, laughter, fear, etc.

*Doing/Physical:* Students will be touching, moving, manipulating props and directing movement of characters, using senses.

*Creating/Intuition:* Students will invent characters and intuit their motivations, create settings and generate plots.

**Assessment:**

(Student self-assessment)

***On a scale from 1 to 5***

- Was my description vivid enough so that the reader can visualize the characters in his/her imagination?
- Did I include all the five senses in my descriptions of character, setting and props?
- Did I enjoy working with my classmates to create this story?
- Would I continue to create stories?
- Did I use new vocabulary in this lesson?
- Did the story have a beginning, middle and an end?

