



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

Video: Grunge's Big Adventure

Narrative Story Structure
(a story)



Sense of Story

Story, in its various forms, is important for us in our daily and on-going effort to make sense of the world. Researchers have found that when children are read to regularly, they begin to develop the sense of story between the ages of two and five. When asked to "tell me a story," they begin with a formal opening ("once upon a time"), make use of the past tense, and close with a conventional ending ("... happily ever after"). Over time, their stories grow longer and more complex. By five years of age, children tend to use more character dialog, and the plots of their stories are beginning to include a chain of events linked to a central character. A fully developed plot, with a beginning, which introduces the characters and actions, followed by a climax, or high point, of the story tied to a theme, and wraps with the feeling of completion at the end typically develops after children are nine years old.

Benefits to Reading and Listening Comprehension

Children who have a well-developed sense of story are better able to retell stories because they have developed a framework that assists their memory. Researchers have found that the language of story is tied closely to reading achievement, especially beyond the beginning reading stages.

Prediction is a key thinking process for success in everyday living (For example, the sky is dark and gray. The wind begins to blow. You predict a storm is coming. Or, your friend said he would call you after noon. It is 12:15 p.m. and your phone rings. Your friend hasn't called you yet, so you predict he is on the line.) Children who have a well-developed sense of story are better able to predict *what* is likely to be said and *how* it might be said in a listening situation. When reading, they are more likely to predict *what* is stated on the printed page and *how* it might be written. Children with a well-developed sense of story are better able to predict a sequence of events and make causal links between relationships. They are also better able to predict syntax (rules or patterns of grammar), which affects the gaining of meaning, fluency, and pleasure in reading.

References:

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