RAFT IDEAS

Topics: Storytelling, Listening, Writing, Critical Thinking

Materials List

To make the game:
- ✓ 5 character props (see **Assembly**)
- ✓ 5 object props (see **Assembly**)
- ✓ 2 bags, opaque
- ✓ 2 media trays
- ✓ 2 brads
- ✓ 4 pony beads
- ✓ 2 spinner circles
- ✓ 2 arrows for spinner or unbent paper clips

To make the story book:
- ✓ file folder
- ✓ two rubber bands
- ✓ tubing
- ✓ paper

This activity can be used to teach:
Common Core English Language Arts Standards:
- Narratives (Grades K-12, Writing, 3)
- Development & Organization (Grades 3-12, Writing, 4)
- Conversation (Grades K-12, Speaking & Listening, 1)
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas (Grades K-12, Speaking & Listening, 4 & 6)

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Craft Your Own Story
The art of storytelling RAFT style

Once upon a time, there was…..
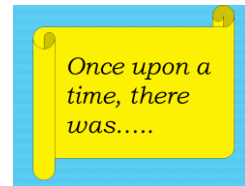
The art of storytelling is a tradition that has spanned cultures and time periods the world over. Being able to craft a story that has a beginning, middle and end is an important step for students to developing literacy and critical thinking skills.

Assembly of the Game

Assembly of Spinner

1. Create a spinner (or two) from the media trays, circles, brads and pony beads (See *Spinner on a Media Tray* idea sheet.)
2. On the circles, make spaces that are either quarters, sixths, or eighths, depending on how many spaces you want for the group of children you are working with.
3. Place plot or story elements into the spaces (e.g., it was in the garden, dark tunnel, hiding behind a tree was…, many years passed, a dark and stormy night, etc.)

Creating Character and Object Props

1. Character props are objects that have eyes which can be personified in each student's writing.
2. Object props are objects that do not have eyes which students can imagine a character interacting with in a storyline.
3. The best objects are discarded children's toys that are three dimensional and kids can experience with their senses. If you are short on supplies, die cut figures can also work. Older students can also pull sentence strips and phrases from a pouch

Assembly of Book

1. Assemble the storybooks using the file folders, paper, rubber bands and tubing.
2. Use a hole punch to make two or three holes on the folded side of the file folder.
3. Place holes in the paper in the exact same places, line up the holes in the paper and the file folder.
4. Insert one looped end of a rubber band in the hole from the back. Slide a piece of tubing through the loop.
5. Slide the loop at the other end of the rubber band through the other hole or middle hole and thread the tubing through to keep the rubber band in place. (Repeat step 4 and 5 if using a third hole in your binding technique).

Playing the Game (up to 5 players at a time)

1. Have each student choose one character prop from the bag randomly.
2. Have each student choose one object prop from the other bag randomly.
3. These two props, the character and the object are going to be the central elements of the story the students tell. The students should think of a name for their character and whether the character wants the object or already has it and wants to get rid of it.
4. Students should take turn spinning the spinner. Where the spinner lands is a story element that the student needs to insert into the action of their story.

5. Students can build a group story where they are their character and they add information as they spin, and make a funny story. Alternatively, students can create their own story that they illustrate, write and/or dictate into their story book.

Tips for Using the Game
The storybook that is created by the players is a record of playing the game and adding in details. In its simplest form, the game can be used to help students generate ideas when they are stuck. Allowing them to have two concrete objects to touch and describe as they create their story allows students to formulate ideas and generate sentences that are related to their experience. When playing the game for fun and putting details into the story based on each spin and choice from the grab bags, students are not in competition with each other. They are simply enjoying the craft of creating text and trying to solve the problem of keeping their story coherent with all the twists and turns that can pop up with random ideas. Students can tell the story they are making as they play the game and have someone record their voice or write down their words, or they can collect facts on a story map and generate the story at the end of playing.

Cultural Connections
Storytelling has been a part of human culture since the development of language and imagination. Stories have been told through pictures and words, and have been real and imaginary. The art of storytelling is a fun way to explore language and the world around us.

Taking it Further
Through the use of digital tools and technology, students can now transform their stories into various formats that other people, outside the classroom can, can listen to and view. By using free, open source software, after creating their stories, students can now transform their creation into a piece of digital art that can be shared with family and friends as well as new colleagues around the world!

Using any software that has page functions can allow for a student to illustrate and tell a story. Powerpoint, Google Doc, and Open Office all have presentation formats that allow students to project their finished work in a slideshow format. After creating the story in the classroom by playing the game, adding this text and pictures to these software programs can be completed in a few short sessions at the computer.

Other programs can be used that are more time intensive but allow you to animate your finished story, SAM Animation, Photo Story, iMovie, and Scratch are just a few.

Web Resources (Visit www.raft.net/raft-idea?isid=705 for more resources!)
- Story Arts – Storytelling in the Classroom - http://www.storyarts.org/classroom/index.html
- By Word of Mouth: A Storytelling Guide for the Classroom - http://www.compago.com/story/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/A-Storytelling-Guide-for-the-classroom1.pdf
- Resources for creating and sharing stories http://scratch.mit.edu and http://www.samanimation.com/