Telling a Story Worksheet

Retelling a story you heard, and telling one of your own, with a beginning, a middle and an end.



MASTERED BY
Children string events together in "heaps" and chains at 3 and 4

ITEMS
70

Name: _____ Date: _____

A story has parts: who it was about, where and when, what went wrong or what they wanted, how they felt, what they did about it, and how it ended. Retelling a story you just heard is the first rung, because the parts are handed to you. Telling something that happened to you is next. Making one up is last. Narrative skill in kindergarten is one of the best predictors of how reading comprehension goes, because a story is the same shape whether you hear it, tell it or read it.

What to expect: A three-year-old lists things that are true at once ("a dog, a park, my mom") with no order. A four-year-old puts things in order but leaves out the problem, so the story has no point. A five-year-old has a problem but may skip how it was fixed - the story just stops. Children who leave the same part out every time are showing you what to teach: name it, model it, and ask for that one part.

Retell It: Short Stories

Read one story. Then ask the child to tell it back. Listen for who it was about, where and when, what went wrong, and how it ended - a young

1. Mia went to the park with Dad. She climbed to the top of the slide. Then she got scared and would not come down. Dad held out his arms and she slid right into them.



2. Ben's dog ran out the gate. Ben called and called. The dog was digging in the neighbor's garden. Ben brought him home with a treat.



3. It was Lily's birthday. Grandma baked a cake, but the cat knocked it off the table. Everyone was sad. Then Grandma made cupcakes instead, and they were even better.



4. Sam lost his red mitten at school. His hand was freezing on the walk home. The next day his teacher had found it on the playground. Sam put both mittens on and did a happy dance.



5. The baby dropped her spoon on the floor. She cried. The dog picked it up and carried it away. Mom laughed and got a clean one.



6 Leo built a tall tower of blocks. His little sister bumped it and it fell down. Leo felt angry. Then his sister helped him build it even taller.



7 Nora wanted to ride her bike without training wheels. She fell off twice. Dad ran beside her one more time. Then she rode all the way to the corner by herself.



8 We went camping by the lake. At night it started to rain and the tent leaked. We ran to the car and slept there. In the morning the sun came out and we swam.



Retell: The Lost Kitten

Read the story once. Then ask the parts one at a time - the story stays on screen - and finish by having the child tell the whole thing back. No

On Saturday morning, Nora heard a small sound coming from under the porch. She knelt down and saw a gray kitten with one white paw, curled up against the cold. Nora ran inside for a towel and a bowl of milk. The kitten was too frightened to come out at first, so Nora sat very still and waited nearly an hour. By lunchtime the kitten was asleep in her lap, and her mother had already agreed they could keep it if nobody claimed it.

9 Who was the story about?

10 Where did it happen?

11 What was the problem?

12 How did Nora feel?

13 What did she do about it?

14 How did it end?

15 Now tell the whole story back in your own words.

Retell: The Science Fair

Read the story once. Then ask the parts one at a time - the story stays on screen - and finish by having the child tell the whole thing back. No

Marcus had two weeks to build his project, but he spent the first week deciding what to do. Finally he chose to test which paper towel soaked up the most water. He bought three brands, poured the same amount of water into three dishes, and timed how long each towel took. The cheapest brand did the best, which surprised everybody including Marcus. He came in second at the fair, behind a girl who had grown crystals in a jar.

16 Who was the story about?

17 Where did it happen?

18 What did Marcus want?

19 What was the problem along the way?

20 How did it end?

21 Now tell the whole story back in your own words.

Retell: The Storm

Read the story once. Then ask the parts one at a time - the story stays on screen - and finish by having the child tell the whole thing back. No

The wind started in the afternoon and by dinner the power was out. Dad found the camping lantern in the garage and they ate cold sandwiches around the kitchen table. Jonah thought it was the best dinner he had ever had. His little sister did not agree and cried until Dad let her hold the lantern. The lights came back on just before bedtime, and the first thing everyone heard was the television, still on from hours before.

22 Who was the story about?

23 When did it happen?

24 What was the problem?

25 How did Jonah's sister feel?

26 What did Dad do about it?

27 How did it end?

28 Now tell the whole story back in your own words.

Retell: The New Bus Driver

Read the story once. Then ask the parts one at a time - the story stays on screen - and finish by having the child tell the whole thing back. No

For three years the bus had been driven by Mr. Okafor, who knew every child by name and kept a jar of stickers by his seat. When he retired in October, a new driver named Ms. Patel took over. Nobody liked her at first because she would not let anyone stand up while the bus was moving. By December, though, she had learned all the names too, and there was a new jar by the seat with dinosaur stickers in it.

29 Who was the story about?

30 What was the problem at first?

31 Why did she make that rule?

32 What changed?

33 How did it end?

34 Now tell the whole story back in your own words.

Retell: The Library Card

Read the story once. Then ask the parts one at a time - the story stays on screen - and finish by having the child tell the whole thing back. No

Amira had wanted her own library card since she was five, but the rule was that you had to be able to write your whole name. She practiced on the back of receipts all summer. In August she walked to the library with her grandfather, wrote A-M-I-R-A B-E-G-U-M on the form, and the librarian slid a card across the counter. Amira checked out six books, which was the limit, and carried them home in both arms.

35 Who was the story about?

36 What did Amira want?

37 What got in the way?

38 What did she do about it?

39 How did it end?

40 Now tell the whole story back in your own words.

Personal Narrative: Something That Happened

One prompt at a time. Give the child a moment; then, if they stall, ask for one part ("Where were you?"). The answer is what a complete telling

41 Tell me about a time you went somewhere fun.



42 Tell me about a time you got a bump or a scrape.



43 Tell me what you did this morning before you got here.



44 Tell me about a time you helped someone.



45 Tell me about a time you saw an animal.



46 Tell me about your last birthday.



47 Tell me about a time you made something.



48 Tell me about a time it rained or snowed.



49 Tell me about a time you were very silly.



50 Tell me about a time you went to the doctor or the dentist.



Personal Narrative: A Problem and a Fix

These need a problem, a feeling and how it ended. If the child stops at the problem, ask "and then what did you do?"

51 Tell me about a time something broke.



52 Tell me about a time you lost something.



53 Tell me about a time you were scared.



54 Tell me about a time you got in trouble.



55 Tell me about a time you could not do something at first.



56 Tell me about a time you were sick.



57 Tell me about a time you had a fight with a friend or a brother or sister.



58 Tell me about a time you got lost, or could not find your grown-up.

59 Tell me about a time you wanted something and could not have it.



60 Tell me about the best day you can remember.



Story Starters: Make One Up

A kick-off, and the child supplies the rest. Make it up together the first few times - you say a sentence, they say a sentence.

61 A dog finds a key in the garden. What happens next?



62 A girl wakes up and her bedroom is full of balloons. Tell the story.



63 A boy's kite gets stuck in a tree. Tell the story.



64 A cat sneaks onto the school bus. Tell the story.



65 It is the first snow, and the sled is missing. Tell the story.



66 A tiny dragon hatches in the kitchen. Tell the story.



67 A robot comes to a birthday party. Tell the story.



68 Two frogs want the same lily pad. Tell the story.



69 The ice cream truck breaks down on the hottest day. Tell the story.

70 Grandma's glasses have disappeared again. Tell the story.

