

Sample Lesson – Narratives

Whole-Class Think-Aloud

Grade 3

In third grade, students can begin to add more concrete and sensory details. They can also begin to write more details to explode the hot spot. This teacher was innovative and used different colors to identify the elements of a narrative, similar to the way in which different colors identify the elements of an essay (see “Painted Essay,” *Module I: Writing Is Elementary*).

This teacher reflected:

This was a wonderful learning opportunity. My class had great discussions around word choice, dialogue, flashbacks, circular endings, transitions and strong verbs. We also brainstormed at great length about different ‘said’ words. Hooray!

Lesson 1 – Ocean Unit

Day	Time	Lesson
Day 1	30 minutes	Read aloud <i>Tacky the Penguin</i> , by Helen Lester, using paperclips to attach the icons* to the appropriate pages and explaining the icons at the same time. Repeat the activity with <i>Harriet and Walt</i> , by Nancy L. Carlson. Note for students the different types of problems and solutions in the books.
Day 2	60 minutes	Give children an icon page* and explain what icons are. Have students cut out and paste on colored cards (red – character; green – solution; pink– what character wants; yellow – problem; purple– dialogue). Repeat Day 1 activity with the book <i>Oh, Were They Ever Happy</i> , by Peter Spire, having students hold up the icons as the story is read. Note again the different types of problems and solutions. Do the activity again with <i>Six-Dinner Sid</i> , by Inga Moore.



Grade 3 work done after cumulative instruction using the *Developing Writers* series.



*All icon pages and worksheets referenced are included in *Narratives*; the third module of the *Developing Writers* series.

Day 3	30 minutes	Use exemplars of student work on the overheads, color coding the narrative elements.
Day 4	45 minutes	Write a whole-class narrative based on our study of Irish myths (see “Larry O’Leary”, on following pages). Color code and use icons to distinguish the parts. Save this for later revision, adding dialogue, details, hook, etc.
Day 5	20 minutes	Give students a paper with the main character star on it. Explain the character worksheet*. Students write a hook and a description of the character.
Day 6	20 minutes	Explain the worksheet* on what the character wants. Students reread their introduction and write this part of the story on icon-coded paper*.
Day 7	40 minutes	Use the problem worksheet*. Students brainstorm with a partner many problems that the character could have. They pick one or two to use in their story. They write about the problem on paper coded with the cloud/lightning icon*.
Day 8	40 minutes	With partners, students brainstorm different types of ideas for solving the problem. They write the ending to their story on paper coded with the resolution/idea icon*.



*All icon pages and worksheets referenced are included in *Bookmarks: Narratives*; the third module of the *Developing Writers* series.



Note: Teaching and learning writing takes a great deal of time and repetition, especially during the first year of instruction. In writing it is necessary to begin slowly. By going slow in the beginning, you will save time later because students will be writing high-quality first drafts and revisions will go more quickly.

Once students have mastered the *Developing Writers* technique, the first steps of the lessons can be condensed into fewer sessions, rather than extended.

Day 9	40 minutes	With partners, students brainstorm different types of resolutions (surprise ending; circular, etc.). They write the ending of their story on paper coded with the resolution/idea icon*.
Day 10	50 minutes	Take out “Larry O’Leary.” Add dialogue, details, thoughtshots, sensory and concrete description, etc.
Day 11	20 minutes	Students add more narrative elements (concentrate on dialogue and thoughtshots) to their own stories.
Day 12	20 minutes	Students add more narrative elements (concentrate on concrete and sensory details) to their own stories.
Day 13	60 minutes	Edit drafts. Write and illustrate final copies.
Day 14	60 minutes	Share stories.

Whole-Class Writing Sample

Grade 3
Larry O'Leary
Whole-Class Story –Draft 1

Once there was a wee leprechaun who lived in Ireland. He was small, tricky, cute, and cool. His name was Larry O'Leary. Larry O'Leary wanted a castle deep in the forest. But Larry O'Leary had a problem – he was too lazy so he had no gold. He could not buy a castle, not even a wee one.

Larry O'Leary had several ideas. First, he made a donation box. But that didn't work because everyone in Ireland was poor. The King had taken all their money for rent.

Next, he tried the wishing well. He had one penny that he threw into the well and made a wish for a castle filled with gold. But that didn't work because it was not a magical wishing well.

Finally, Larry O'Leary who was cute and cool had had it going on, decided to look for a lady leprechaun who lived in a castle. When he found one, he decided to put on a rock and roll show for her. Larry O'Leary found a guitar, miniature microphone, and a boom box. He learned how to play an Elf-is song – *Love Me Tender*. The lady leprechaun loved Larry's song and fell in love with him. They lived happily ever after in her castle filled with gold. Larry O'Leary (changes are in italics)

Whole-Class Writing Sample (with changes)

Grade 3
Larry O'Leary
Whole-Class Story – Draft 2
(*changes in italics*)

Added a snapshot of concrete description and some metaphorical language. (This was decided as a whole class.)

Once there was a wee leprechaun who lived in Ireland. He was small, tricky, cute, and cool. His name was Larry O'Leary. *Larry O'Leary had hair as silver as a quarter and eyes as dark as a moonless midnight. He always wore green except for his shoes. They were a deep brown cowboy boots with very pointy toes.*

Larry O'Leary wanted a castle deep in the forest. But, Larry O'Leary had a problem – he was too lazy so he had no gold. He could not buy a castle, not even a wee one.

Larry O'Leary had several ideas. First, he made a donation box. But that didn't work because everyone in Ireland was poor. The King had taken all their money for rent.

Next, he tried the wishing well. He had one penny that he threw into the well and made a wish for a castle filled with gold. But that didn't work because it was not a magical wishing well.

Finally, Larry O'Leary who was cute and cool had had it going on, decided to look for a lady leprechaun who lived in a castle.

When he met her, the lady leprechaun smelled like lilacs and roses from the valley. Her arms and hands felt soft like cotton and smooth as silk. Larry O'Leary thought the lady leprechaun was as beautiful as his mother with curly black hair and smoky blue eyes. She wore a poofy white dress sprinkled with four-leaf clovers and rose petals. Her voice was as peaceful as the sound of a tin whistle and sounded like a kitten purring.

Added sensory description and metaphorical language.

He decided to put on a rock and roll show for her. Larry O’Leary said, *“Would you like to see my rock and roll show?”*

The lady leprechaun answered, “I’d like to go, but under one condition – You don’t play the music too loud.”

Larry O’Leary replied, “O.K. I won’t. Don’t worry, babe.”

Larry O’Leary found a guitar, miniature microphone, and a boom box. He learned how to play an Elf-is song – Love Me Tender.

The lady leprechaun loved Larry’s song and fell in love with him. They lived happily ever after in her castle filled with gold.

Added dialogue.