

Reading Comprehension Activity Kit

Story Elements

Designed to meet these objectives:

Language

- Students will recognize and describe the elements of a story, including characters, setting, problem, and solution.

Research has shown that practicing reading comprehension skills helps students become more confident, strategic readers—a prerequisite for future scholastic success. This easy-to-use activity kit is just what you need to help students move from simply recognizing words to fully understanding what they read!

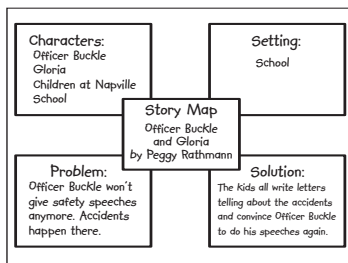
What's Included

- 14" x 20½" pocket chart
- 5 story cards
- 20 story element cards

Before You Begin

Discuss the elements of fiction with your students. Explain that the *setting* is the place where the events of the story happen. The *characters* are the people or animals in the story. In most stories the characters are faced with a *problem*. How they find a *solution* to their problem makes up the plot of the story.

Help students identify the setting, characters, problem, and solution in a story the class has recently read. List the results on the board, or make a story map on chart paper.



Setup

Hang the chart where students can see it easily. Place the story cards and story element cards in the storage pockets on the back of the chart.

Using the Kit

The kit is perfect for small groups or for independent use as a language center.


Small Groups

Place one of the story cards in the chart and have students follow along as you read it aloud. Discuss the story and its events. Then, read each of the story element cards. Which one describes the characters that were in your story? Place that card in the appropriate pocket.

Do the same for the setting, problem, and solution. Then, reread the story and the cards students have placed in the chart. Does everyone agree with the choices? Turn the story card over to show students that the answers can be found on the back.

Independent Use

Once students are familiar with story elements, place the kit in your language center to provide independent practice. Select a story card and place it in the chart; have students sort through the story element cards to find the ones that match the story. Then, have them arrange the cards in the chart. You may want to direct students to complete only one story analysis or have them do several, depending on their skill levels.

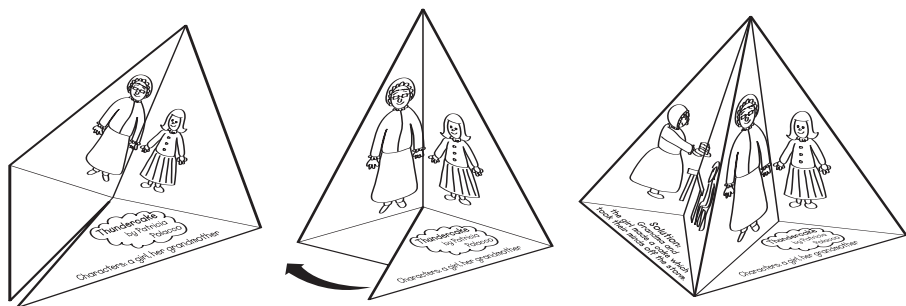
<div><p>The Stone Witness</p><p>One day, Jack Rabbit saw Coyote standing by a cactus. His tail was wedged in the cactus spines. "Hurry, hurry!" Coyote begged. "I'll do anything you ask!"</p><p>"I'll help you, you must promise to help me someday," said Jack. Coyote promised, but Jack said, "You are tricky. I must find a witness."</p><p>"Don't leave! You can trust me," walked Coyote. Jack was not convinced. So Coyote said, "That red rock can be our witness!" Jack agreed and began to untangle Coyote's tail. As Jack worked, Coyote thought, "What a fool he is!" As soon as Coyote was free, he pounced on Jack. "Now I've got my dinner!" he said. Jack reminded him of his promise, but Coyote just laughed. Just then, Owl flew over. "What is all this noise?" she asked. Jack told her about cheating the witness and the witness's helper made:</p><p>"That is not true!" Coyote growled. "That never happened, and he cannot prove a lie!"</p><p>"But we had a witness!" said Jack. "A green bird heard the whole thing!"</p><p>"That's just a lie!" Coyote. "The rock was real!"</p><p>Owl asked, "Since you admit you were there, I believe the rest of Jack's story, too. You must let him go."</p><p>Coyote knew he was caught, he let Jack go and walked away with an empty stomach.</p></div> 	
Characters	Jack Rabbit, Coyote, Owl
Setting	the desert
Problem	One character breaks the promise he made to another character.
Solution	The character gets caught in a lie and is forced to keep his promise.

Additional Activities

Reinforce students' new skills with some of these engaging activities.

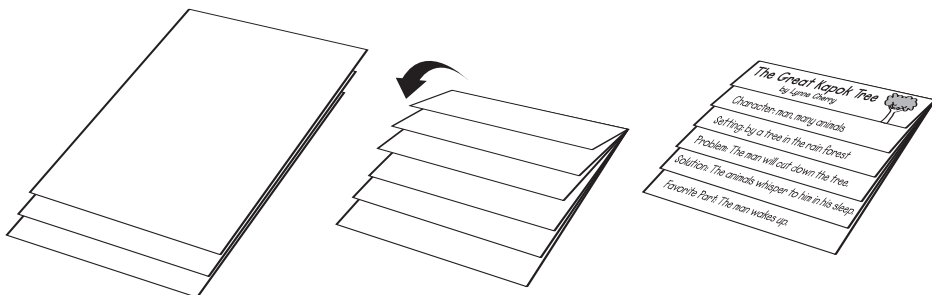
Story Elements Pyramid

Cut out 4 equal-size squares of paper. Fold each square twice to make diagonal folds from corner to corner, then cut to the center along one fold line to make two triangular flaps. On each paper, draw a picture of one of the four story elements in the uncut half of the square, and write about it in one of the flaps. Fold the pieces and glue the flaps as shown. Glue all 4 sections together to form a pyramid.



Flap Book

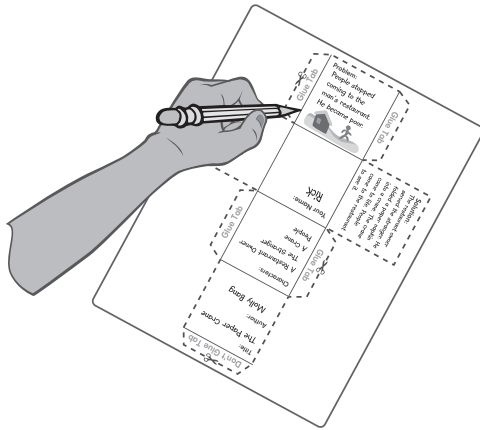
For each book, stagger 3 sheets of paper and fold them as shown below. Staple along the fold line if desired. Have children write the title and author of a story they have read on the first page. On the flaps below, have them list the characters, setting, problem, solution, and their favorite part of the story. Finally, have them lift each flap and use the empty space to draw an illustration of the story element.



Story Elements Cube

Draw a template like the one shown below, making sure all the faces of the cube are identically sized squares. Then, write the title and author of the book in one square. In the other five squares, draw the following:

- a picture of the main character
- a picture of the setting
- a picture that shows the problem
- a picture that shows the solution to the problem
- a picture of your favorite part of the story



Cut along the outside edge of the template. Then, fold along the lines to make a cube, and tape or glue the flaps to hold the cube together.

Story Staircase

Starting at the top-left edge of a sheet of paper, write words in 8 lines to form a “staircase” with 1 word at the top and 8 words at the base:

- Line 1: Write the main character’s name (1 word).
- Line 2: Use 2 words to describe the main character.
- Line 3: Use 3 words to describe the setting.
- Line 4: Use 4 words to state the problem.
- Line 5: Use 5 words to describe an event.
- Line 6: Use 6 words to describe another event.
- Line 7: Use 7 words to describe a third event.
- Line 8: Use 8 words to explain how the problem was solved.