Growing a Story

A BAREFOOT LITERACY LESSON FOR AGES 6 – 8

TEXT LEVEL WORK: FOLLOWING AND CREATING A STORY LINE

WORD LEVEL WORK: LOOKING AT ADJECTIVES

Building a story is not as easy as it seems. Where do you start? Where do you go next and how do you finish? Using the cumulative plot line of The Gigantic Turnip, you can assemble a story in easy stages. Read the story aloud and ask the children to listen carefully — you will be asking them some questions about the words in the story.

LESSON 1

1. Look at the words in the story. What sort of house did the old man and old woman live in? What sort of vegetables did they want to grow?

2. Point at some things in the room and ask the children to add a word to make them more interesting (“a teacher” becomes a “funny, smiling teacher,” a “bookshelf” becomes a “wobbly, full bookshelf”). Explain what adjectives are and how they make your writing more interesting.

3. Make some cards with nouns on them using the nouns from the book (you could use pictures, too!). Give one to each child. Each child has a card and has to say an adjective out loud that goes with it. Swap the cards around and try again.

4. Children have to create a list of 5 words from the book and write an adjective next to each one.
   Extension: Think and talk about whether “gigantic” is the same as “enormous.”
   Differentiation: Think of a list of words and ask the children to match adjectives to the words. Is there more than one way of matching the words and adjectives?

5. Read the story again and point to all the adjectives as you read. Stop occasionally to ask children to replace an adjective in the text with a new one.
LESSON 2

1. Remember the story we read yesterday about the gigantic turnip? Read the story again!

2. Ask the children how the story began. Who was the first person to try and pull out the gigantic turnip? Ask the children to recap the stages of the story.

3. Ask the children what written form/genre the story reminds them of — encourage them to think of the story as a list. It starts with just the old woman and by the end, there are 10 different sorts of creatures pulling the turnip.

4. Model a storyboard like the one on the next page. Adapt the number of sections on the storyboard to match ability.

5. Ask the children to think of their own version of the story. What could they find buried in the ground? It could be a turnip, or a carrot — or they could be pulling out an old boot, a bone or even a box of treasure!

6. Now the children need to build their own story. First they need to plan. Send them to write on their own storyboard. The first box is to set the scene and begin the story, then there are six sections where other people or animals come and help and the last box is for when the treasure/turnip is finally pulled out of the ground.

7. Discuss what happens when you work as a team.

IDEAS FOR FURTHER LESSONS

Using the rough storyboard they have created, the children can turn this into a written piece of work, or even a book and illustrate it.