

Lesson: Language Arts Grades 4-6 Elements of Plot



Puzzling Plots

Often students find that "plot" leaves them feeling puzzled!

Introduction

Objective:

Students will explore the concept of "plot" by designing their own puzzle.

Students will learn how to recognize the elements of plot --setting, characters, rising action, problem, climax, falling action, and solution.

Academic Content Standards:

- ❖ National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association Standards for English Language Arts: #1, and #2
 - *Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts: to build an understanding of texts, of themselves and of the cultures of the United States and the world to acquire new information...*
 - *Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g. philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.*
- ❖ Ohio Academic Content Standards for Language Arts #5 Reading Applications: Literary Text
 - *Students enhance their understanding of the human story by reading literary texts that represent a variety of authors, cultures and eras.*
 - *Students learn to apply the reading process to the various genres of literature, including fables, tales, short stories, novels, poetry and drama.*
 - *Students demonstrate their comprehension by describing and discussing the elements of literature (e.g., setting, character and plot), analyzing the author's use of language (e.g., word choice and figurative language), comparing and contrasting texts, inferring theme and meaning and responding to text in critical and creative ways.*
 - *Students learn to explain, analyze and critique literary text to achieve deep understanding.*
 - *Benchmark: C (Grades 4th, 5th, and 6th Grades)*

Getting Started

Materials:

- Picture book of *The Jungle Book*
- Blank white paper
- Markers
- Plastic baggies

Vocabulary:

- Plot
- Setting
- Characters
- Rising action
- Problem and solution
- Climax
- Falling action.

Lesson

Orientation Activity:

The teacher will read aloud a picture book version of *The Jungle Book* to the students. Students are asked to compare and contrast the differences and similarities of the book in comparison to The Children's Theatre production. Both versions will differ slightly, but the one constant is the plot. Students will explore the plot in the story and play, and identify the various plot elements. Students will then answer the questions, "If someone asked you what the play was about, what would you tell them?" "What are the elements of the plot?" The students will identify the setting and characters, the problem and solution, the rising action, the climax, and the falling action. The teacher and students will discuss the significance of each of the elements.

Learning Activity:

Students will create a sequential flow chart for the main events of *The Jungle Book* plot. Students will include all of the plot elements in the chart. An example of the sequence is setting, characters, problem, rising action, climax, solution, and falling action. Students will write a sentence or two describing each of the plot elements before beginning the next step of the lesson, drawing accompanying illustrations. Students will draw a pattern for a puzzle on a blank piece of paper. The puzzle may be any shape or size, but it will have 7 to 8 pieces, and the pieces are to be large enough to draw a picture inside. Students will draw a picture for each plot element in the order of the puzzle pieces (left to right, top to bottom). For example:

Puzzle Piece 1 Setting	Puzzle Piece 2 Characters	Puzzle Piece 3 Problem	Puzzle Piece 4 Rising Action
Puzzle Piece 5 Rising Action	Puzzle Piece 6 Climax	Puzzle Piece 7 Falling Action	Puzzle Piece 8 Solution

The students will draw pictures for the various plot elements in each puzzle piece, then cut them out, mix up the pieces and place them in plastic baggies. The challenge for each student is to trade puzzles with another student and attempt to put the pieces of the puzzle back together in sequential order by looking at the illustrations.

Students will return the puzzles to their owners after having been given time to work another student's puzzle. Next, students will write the sentences they previously constructed explaining each plot element on the back of the corresponding puzzle piece.

Evaluation and Follow-Up

Assessment Tools and Methods:

Evaluation of student work in their ability to correctly recognize and identify each plot element in the story and play, *The Jungle Book*.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

Math: Connect this lesson to a problem-solving concept using puzzles in math class. Explore other types of puzzles that could be used to illustrate the plot of a story, e.g., Cryptoquips and Rubix Cubes.

Social Studies: Use the lesson for student creation of time lines for historical events.