Story Studio

Educator's Guide

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Story Studio's Creative Process

English Language Arts, K-6

Overview

This multi-part unit is appropriate for K-6, although is easily adaptable for any grade level or audience. Each part can be completed in one lesson or in multiple lessons, at the discretion of the educator. This allows for flexibility, as the educator can decide how long each section should take to complete. The educator can also decide on the level of vocabulary and complexity in the discussions, using examples that are suitable for the specific class, group, or individual.

In these units, students will work through the writing process and use this information to develop their own narrative story. Students will experience the process of story building to hone in their imagination and creativity before putting pen to paper. They will participate in activities that require them to work independently, with technology and devices, as well as working with others to be successful. They will also make connections to other texts and the world around them as they build narrative capacity.

Students will come to understand that communication can influence, entertain, teach, inspire, and help us make sense of the world and our experiences. They will recognize the role their audience plays in constructing meaning from their stories, and make strategic choices to help convey their messages and create their intended impact.

As a final outcome, students will use the planning process to write their own narrative story that follows a simple story line including description and detail.

Partner with Story Studio

Story Studio works with a limited number of schools and other educational partners to support the creation of class anthologies. Our partner programs include virtual one-on-one coaching sessions for educators, feedback for students, and the creation of a PDF anthology of student writing. Please contact us at info@storystudio.ca to learn more.

Big Ideas
- Language and story (text) can be a source of creativity and joy
- Using language in creative and playful ways helps us understand how language works

Learning Standards
- Recognize the structure and elements of story
- Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening and viewing strategies to make meaning
- Transform ideas and information to create original texts
- Communicate in sentences (and paragraphs), applying conventions of Canadian spelling, grammar and punctuation

Core Competencies
Communication
- I communicate confidently, using forms and strategies that show attention to my audience and purpose

Creative Thinking
- I can think "outside the box" to get innovative ideas and persevere to develop them
- I can develop a body of creative work over time in an area of interest or passion

First Peoples Principles of Learning
- Learning is embedded in memory, history and story
- Learning involves patience and time
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity

Cross Curricular Connections
Design, Skills and Technology
- Skills can be developed through play (Big ideas K-3)
- Choice of technologies and tools depends on the task (Big ideas 4-5)
- Stories can also be developed to connect to social sciences, arts education, and career education, dependent on grade level.

1: Gathering Ideas

This part of the unit focuses on gathering ideas and identifying the parts of a story. Students will be presented with story examples, as well as a collection of objects for story building to get their minds activated and thinking about the parts of a story.

Goal:
1. Gain an understanding of the parts of a story
2. Practice reading comprehension strategies
3. Use objects to build and represent parts of a story

Learning Activity

Minds On
We encourage you to start this workshop with a read-aloud that follows a simple story line: *One character with a brief introduction, has a problem, tries to solve the problem in clear ways that do not work, before finally hitting on a solution and ending the story*.

For example, look at -'How to Catch A Star'- by Oliver Jeffers or -'Hugs From Pearl'- by Paul Schmidt. At this time there are a large variety of authors posting videos of their read-alouds that you can share with your class. Alternatively, many publishing companies have opened the rights for educators to share a video of themselves reading a complete story when posted in a private online setting. Check out the list of resources provided at the end of this document for more options.

After reading, review the story with your group to guide a sense of character development and understanding of the parts of a story. Start with the first key question to identify who the character in the story is. Then ask for things students know or have learned about this character. Encourage students to use evidence or examples from the story as 'proof'. For example, *"The boy in -'How to Catch a Star'- is not very strong. I know this because he couldn't carry the life belt from his father's boat. He said it was too heavy."* Go back to the pages in the book to help students provide evidence and reasoning. Move on to discuss the important places the character goes in the story. Then, use the next two key questions to help identify the parts of a story: problem and suspense. Discuss how the story wouldn't be interesting, and nothing would happen to the character without these two parts.

Action
To reinforce the concept of story parts and further develop understanding, provide students with a collection of small objects that can be used in story building. These objects can be any small collections from lego, building blocks or geometric shapes, to different crafting

objects such as beads and buttons, and outdoor objects from pinecones to rocks and leaves. Read more about Story Building objects and kits in the Resources section. You want to ensure a variety of objects are available to encourage creativity and imagination.

In this practice, we remove barriers of the writing process and allow for students to use physical objects to build story parts that they can then begin to orally describe, developing narrative capacity and their oral storytelling abilities. To begin, allow open time for students to explore all of the available objects first without focusing their thinking. Once they have had a chance to see what is available, use the final three key questions to guide their exploration and discussions. You may wish to place small groups with certain collections of objects, or you may choose to allow students, in small groups, to select their objects as you model the development of story parts using the key questions. You may also wish to enforce a time limit for the selection of objects and the building of characters and settings. It is important to provide students with time to share their thinking with both small groups and the whole class.

Reflection:
With all grade levels it is always a welcome opportunity to take time to reflect back on children's picture books. At middle grade ages, students will be able to think much deeper about their own stories and who or what they want to write about. Encourage students to think about the things around them that influence them - their favourite books or movies, experiences they have had, or places they have been. Have students take time to record observations in a notebook, or using the attached ['Gathering Ideas'](#) StorySheet.

Have students begin to record their story parts and ideas from the story building activity in writing. They may wish to use or further develop these ideas as they begin developing their narrative in the coming lessons. You can guide their reflections by using the key questions and having them journal their thinking or illustrate what they created. Encourage students to describe how the objects they selected are used, and how they might add to a story. You may also have them describe how the objects selected for their character and setting are related, or different. The goal here is not for students to write a story, but rather that students have developed an understanding of using objects to build story parts, and can describe what those parts are.

Key Reflection Questions:
- Who is this story about?
- What do we learn about this character? (connect to specific examples in text)
- What is their goal in the story? What do they want to achieve or accomplish?
- What is stopping them from their goal? How do they feel?
- What kinds of things does the character do to try to solve their problem?
- How do they solve their problem?

Key Story Building Questions:
- Is there an object that can represent a character on its own? How might you combine objects to create a character?
- How might you combine objects to build a setting for your story?
- How might some of the objects be represented as tools or obstacles for your character or setting?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning

Try oral storytelling while sitting in a circle, rather than a traditional read-aloud. Encourage students to find a 'sit spot' where they can reflect on the read-aloud and consider their own connections and story ideas. Introduce the First Peoples Principle of Learning, "Learning is embedded in memory, history and story." As students discuss some of the key questions in the learning activity, focus on what the character has learned throughout the story. Discuss what learning the reader/listener receives as well. When discussing the First Peoples Principle of Learning, "Learning involves patience and time," discuss what the character in the story learned, and how the character showed patience.

Differentiation
1. Offer read-aloud in a variety of formats - independent reading, read-aloud, video reading, sound recording
2. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*character, introduction, problem, suspense, attributes*) and review throughout the lesson to ensure that all learners understand the meanings.
3. Provide a list of attributes for ELL or primary students who may need the support.

Extension Activities:
- Have older students select their own book and have them complete a simple book review (written, video or online presentation), picking out the parts of a story we are looking for (character, introduction, problem, suspense, ending). *Option to assess.*
- After completing the activity, have students pick their own book to share with a partner/parent/small group and identify the parts of the story selected.
- Have young students retell the story or create a story sequence. This can be as simple as sentence or picture strips that students can put in order. Or have them complete the sentence/picture strips on their own to sequence. *Option to assess.*
- Have students orally tell one another stories using their selected story building objects

2: Creating Characters

This part of the unit focuses on developing characters for a story. Students will create unique characters using their imagination and creativity, exploring attributes and characteristics to create a well-rounded character.

Goal:
1. Engage students in creative thinking and imaginative play.
2. Use creative thinking to fully develop a unique character - determining their appearance, personality, fears, likes and dislikes, and a goal that they have.

Learning Activity

Minds On

To promote creativity and engagement, create a character together as a group. It is important to share one rule before beginning: *All characters must be the learner's own creation. They must be unique to them, and not taken from a movie, show, video game or other book.*

If meeting together in a group, pick a volunteer and dress them up with 3-5 items (capes, hats, wings, masks, props such as a shield or microphone, etc). Encourage them to think outside of the box of typical characters, or combine ideas to create new character roles. Then orally create a character description using the key questions:
1. What could this character be?
2. What is their name?
3. What is this character good at and not so good at?
4. What are they afraid of?
5. Most importantly, what could this characters' goal be? What is something they want to achieve in their story?

If meeting in an online setting, you can dress up on camera and have students determine the key questions to develop a character. Or, encourage students to do their own independent dress up, or establish a 'Character Dress Up Day' and have students send or post a picture of their unique characters. You can encourage other students to answer the key questions about one another's characters or dress up. Alternatively, if you are working with older students who may not have dress up supplies available to them, explore technology (online or app) options that can be used to create a character; for example students can create a bitmoji or avatar of their character ideas to share. You can also scale back the activity and create one character example and have the class answer the key questions for this one character rather than having them each create their own at this time. This group character creation activity allows students to start thinking creatively and encourages them to share ideas with others and make connections to the things around

them that influence them. This classroom character can then be used to model and further develop your narrative as a class throughout the coming lessons.

Action
Once ready for independent learning, provide students once again with the story building objects. Provide them with time to build a new character. Remind them to think creatively here - they don't need to build a person, their character can be any type of object or creature. Have them describe their character to peers, asking them to label the parts that make the character itself. For example, what allows the character to move/walk/fly? Challenge students to adjust and recreate their character to make it sit, stand, walk, or move. Encourage students to think about adding new objects as tools to develop their character's skills and abilities, or fears. These tools will help further develop context and actions for their stories.

When students are ready to focus on the specific character for the story they will develop, they can use the attached Character StorySheet, or an online program of your choice, to illustrate and describe their own characters for their story. This might be the same character used in the minds on activity, or in the story building, or something different created with their new ideas. Encourage students to be very creative in their thinking! Their character can be absolutely anything: a taco, a pencil, a cloud, a fairy with a unicorn horn, a half narwhal/half puppy, a magical spy, etc. Have them draw or design their character with detail, and answer the key questions on the page to develop a background or biography. The key piece of information developed for their character will be the goal. This goal will lead their characters' adventure throughout the story. The goal is to help students visualize characters as they create descriptions that can be later used in their writing. This opportunity allows for fun engagement to build confidence in creativity and imagination.

Reflection
Have students share their characters with one another, in whichever format they prefer whether they have built, illustrated, digitalized or simply written a description of their character. You may choose to do a gallery walk to allow students to see one another's ideas, or select volunteers to share. If in an online setting, students can post photos or illustrations of their characters with descriptions. You can allow commenting on one another's characters, having students ask questions or helping develop new ideas. Additional activities below can be completed to reinforce character development and encourage students to 'get to know' their characters really well.

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning
Encourage students to find a 'sit spot' where they can reflect on their character and consider their own connections and story ideas. Introduce the First Peoples Principle of Learning, "Learning is embedded in memory, history and story." As students discuss some of the key questions in the learning activity, focus on what their characters may learn throughout their story, and the history behind their characters. Ask students to make any connections

between themselves and their own histories, and the ones they have created for their character. Have students consider the community their characters are surrounded by and the other people or animals they may interact with within the story.

Differentiation

1. Offer read aloud in a variety of formats to create character (app, online program, handout, or hands on modelling (plasticine, Lego, etc).)
2. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*character, attributes*) and review throughout the lesson to ensure that all learners understand the meanings.
3. Provide a list of attributes for ELL or primary students who may need the support.

Extension Activities

The Why Game Example:

Eddie throws a rock… but why?

- Have students interview one another as they take the role of their character. This allows students to develop a deeper understanding of their character. Questions such as: *What is your proudest moment/greatest accomplishment? What is a secret you never told anyone? What do you hope to do with your life? What might stop you? What would you do if you had a million dollars?*
  - Why? He wanted to break the window of the old factory.
  - Why? He was mad at his parents and letting out frustration.
  - Why? His parents had just told him they were moving and he doesn't want to.
  - Why? His mom got promoted, but Eddie doesn't want to leave his friends.
- Play the Why Game - Students act as their character and are presented with a situation (such as throwing a rock, or laughing out loud) and are asked *Why?* Four times. This allows students to gain a deeper understanding of the way their character may react in situations and why.

3: Build A Setting

This section of the unit focuses on developing a setting for stories. Students will use their five senses to develop a description of where their character is in their story.

Goal:
1. Engage students in creative thinking.
2. Use five senses to create a description.

Learning Activity
Minds On
To describe where a story is taking place we encourage students to use their five senses. This paints a picture in readers minds of what the setting really looks like, and more importantly, how the character feels to be there. First, review the five senses.

Pick a simple setting such as a beach or a forest. Add a variety of pictures of the setting chosen. For example, show 3-5 different images of a forest (one spooky, one with people, one with big trees and water), while reading the following description:

> "I was walking in the forest. What was once a peaceful hike through the forest was now more like a city sidewalk. A steady stream of people snaked up the switchback trail. The chatter from the people was louder than the sounds of the forest. I was sweaty from the climb and I licked my salty lips. I took a deep breath of fresh air. I loved the challenge of the climb and being outdoors."

Have students close their eyes and listen to the description. Then have students guess which picture you described. Have students pick out each of the five senses from the description, changing touch to reflect feeling. With the concept of taste, use the example of opening their mouth and taking a deep breath; maybe they taste fresh air, or rain, or maybe they get a mouth-full of dust. Alternatively this can be done by providing students with a variety of pictures of simple settings and having them work independently or together to create descriptions for the pictures using their five senses.

Action
Go back to your story building materials here and have students select one or two items that could be included in the important places their character may go. Have students use their 5 senses to describe this item. To build understanding you may wish to begin by modelling an example - Give everyone a mini marshmallow. Suggest that your character is going to live somewhere just like this - Ask them to describe what it looks like, feels like, smells like, sounds like, before finally eating it and describing the taste. Encourage them to be creative in their descriptions to find comparisons or examples. Perhaps create a list that can be referred to when discussing figurative language. Then model the description using the details provided. For example - "Instead of saying my character lives in a marshmallow

house, we can say - *"My character lived in a small and squishy white house that smelled sweet like sugar all the time. It made everyone's mouth water when they walked in. It was a cozy and quiet house to live in and made everyone feel warm inside when they visited."*
This can also be extended to have students find and describe their own item and share their findings in a video or picture with voice recordings to be shared with the class/group community if in an online classroom.

After using one object, challenge students to combine objects to build the important setting for their story - somewhere their character from the last lesson will spend a lot of time in their story. Use the key questions once again for them to add or remove objects to further build the senses into their setting. With older students, you may want to discuss 'mood'/'tone' of the story; are they writing a funny story, a scary story, or perhaps an adventure or mystery? Discuss how their character and setting can change the mood of their story. For example, if their character is a little girl and they decide she is in a spooky forest, the story will be scary. But if their character is a vampire in the same spooky forest, the mood of the story changes as the vampire isn't likely to be scared of the forest, but rather feel quite comfortable.

Reflection
Have students create a list of places their own character, created in the previous lesson, could be in their story. Again, encourage them to think creatively and construct their own cities or imaginative places to live, such as on a cloud, underground, or in a world made of slime. Students can complete the attached StorySheet, describing and illustrating the main place their character will be in their story. Discuss with students that characters often move many places in a story and that is okay - we want to describe the significant places in our story, or the places that the character will spend the most time. If possible, have students share or post their illustrations or creations of their settings to ask questions or receive feedback and suggestions from others.

Key Questions:
1. Where is your character going to be in your story?
2. What does it smell like there?
3. What does it sound like where they are?
4. What does it look like around them? What can your character see?
5. What does it taste like?
6. How does your character feel to be there?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning
Encourage students to find a 'sit spot' where they can listen and focus on the setting descriptions. This spot can be used to brainstorm setting ideas for their story and to make connections between their world and the world created in their story. Introduce the First Peoples Principle of Learning, "Learning is embedded in memory, history and story." As students listen to the setting description, encourage them to close their eyes, using their

memory to pick out the five senses. Students can think about their own histories and places they have been; encourage them to find ways to include aspects of these places in their own story. Students can also think about the importance the land or setting has on their character.

Differentiation
1. Present visual, auditory and kinesthetic opportunities for reinforcing learning of the five senses and creating settings.
2. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*setting, five senses (touch, taste, smell, hear, see and feel*)) and review throughout the lesson to ensure that all learners understand the meanings.

Extension Activities:
● Have students design their settings using an online program such as Minecraft, or hands-on with recyclable materials, plasticine, or Lego.
● Have students write descriptions for their settings without mentioning exactly where their characters are. Then have students share their descriptions with one another and guess which setting the descriptions belong to. This can also be done by matching descriptions to the story building settings.

4: Mapping Stories

This portion of the unit can be used as a mini lesson or preview of the entire unit. It encompases a very brief introduction of lessons 1-4, touching on lesson 5 to map out and write a story.

Goals:
1. Use the writing process to brainstorm, map and write a story.
2. Engage in creative thinking and writing.

Learning Activity

Describe to students that a story map allows authors to begin to lay out the ideas for the plot of their story - this page is for bullet point ideas that can be added to and expanded on in their writing. Provide each student with the Story Studio Story Map activity page. Tell students, the first thing every story needs is a character. Their character can be absolutely anything: a taco, a pencil, a cloud, a fairy with a unicorn horn, a half narwhal/half puppy, a magical spy, etc, Encourage learners to think outside of the box of typical characters, or combine ideas from their favourite stories to create new unique characters.

Have students describe their character. To help with the character description you may ask or post the following questions for students to consider:
1. What could this character be?
2. What is their name?
3. What is this character good at and not so good at?
4. What are they afraid of?
5. Most importantly, what could this characters' goal be? What is something they want to happen?
6. Where might your character be? What are they doing there?

You can download the 'Character' page on our website to create a deeper description for the character, or have students draw a picture of their character before or after they write the description into the Story Map. The key questions will help to create the introduction of the story, describing who the character is and where they are, or perhaps what they are doing there. Explain to students that the character's goal is very important as it will develop the plot, and become the ultimate ending for their story. Encourage your child to illustrate or design their character and setting. This will encourage them to think creatively and with imagination.

Once students have decided on a character and setting, they will need to think of a problem stopping their character from achieving that ultimate goal. Again, encourage students to think outside of the box and use their imagination, the problem should not be easily solved.

When discussing what problem the character will face, you will also want to encourage students to think about the way their character will feel and react to the problem - are they shivering and hiding, maybe they stand strong and confident, or are jumping with joy, etc. There is a 'Problems and Obstacles' activity and lesson on our website if you would like your students to think deeper about their story ideas.

Explain to learners that the feeling we get when reading a book, or watching a movie, where we are super interested and excited, at the edge of our seats waiting for what will happen next... that is called suspense, or tension and authors create suspense by making their characters work incredibly hard, trying many different unsuccessful attempts, before finally solving their problem. In the 'obstacles' box, have students think of two or three things that will stop their character from solving their problem and achieving the goal. Depending on the age level of your students you can describe this as creating either two ways that they try to solve their problem that don't work, or for older students, obstacles that make the problem bigger.

When students have mapped out their story ideas and are ready to move from into story writing, they will use the order of these ideas to create their story.
1. Start with an **exciting action sentence** - something their character is doing in the setting.
2. Stop and **introduce the character** and who they are, some of the things they like or are afraid of, and what their goal is. Have your child use their five senses to describe where their character is. These descriptions create key details in your child's story.
3. After the character has been introduced, writers can return to the action and introduce the **problem** in the story and how the character feels.
4. Then start adding **suspense** - two things the character tries to do to solve the problem, but they don't work.
5. Once characters have worked really hard, your child can decide on how the character finally solves the problem, leading to the **ending** of the story.
6. Have your child write a **big emotion last sentence** to end the story in a strong way.

Take a look at the story examples and other resources, as well as an educators guide on our website for more support.

Key Questions:
7. What could this character be?
8. What is their name?
9. What is this character good at and not so good at?
10. What are they afraid of?
11. Most importantly, what could this characters' goal be? What is something they want to happen?
12. Where might your character be? What are they doing there?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning

Sit in a circle and have students use their story map to do an oral storytelling using their ideas. This will encourage students to think more creatively about their story details.

Differentiation

1. Present visual, auditory and kinesthetic opportunities for completing and presenting student thinking. For example, learners can act out their story parts, or set them up as a scene or model to take pictures or video of.
2. Allow students to share their stories in a variety of formats, whether they are typing, video or voice recording, or sharing photos of their work.
3. If possible, scribe for students in need so that they are encouraged to focus only on their story ideas and details rather than the words themselves.
4. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*character, introduction, problem, suspense, describing words, etc*) and provide list examples accessible throughout the lesson to ensure success of all learners

Extension Activities:

- Have students create an 'Elevator Pitch' using their story map to briefly outline their story idea. Explain that an Elevator Pitch is a brief description Authors provide of their story idea to interest publishers in their book. Have students share or vote on one another's pitches.
- Have students act out or record a video or puppet show of their story.
- Have students read their story aloud using oral reading techniques.
- Encourage students to illustrate important or significant parts of their story, or perhaps design a book cover.
- Have students type stories and share with Story Studio using the 'Write' section of our website.

5: Hook Your Reader

This portion of the unit explores applying the brainstorming or prewriting process to begin writing the first draft of their story. Students will explore ways to 'hook' a reader into their story.

Goal:
1. Engage students in creative writing.
2. Use and apply the writing process to organize thoughts and ideas into a story.

Learning Activity:

Minds On

Now that students have brainstormed their character and setting, as well as the events for their story, they are ready to begin writing their story. This can be a daunting task for students. Have them go back to their created character and setting from the story building objects. With their character, ask them to think about what their character is doing in their setting. Encourage them to think of something exciting that could be happening, and how the character is positioned, or moving within the setting.

Before putting pencil to paper, tell students they are going to start their stories in a very specific way. They can prepare their 'hook' sentences orally by manipulating their character in the way in which they want their story to start. Explain that every story should start with a BIG ACTION sentence, something that the character is doing in the setting that they are in. Guide students in orally developing their sentence by modelling an action sentence. Then you can model an introduction by stopping the action to introduce who your character is, where they are and how they got there. Allow time for your students to explore these ideas and orally share their thinking with partners and small groups as they use their story building objects.

Action

It is important to guide students writing, especially at the beginning stage of their stories, so that students aren't simply stating what happens in the story. I.e. we want to avoid listing, "This happened, and then this happened, and then…" Instead, we want to learn about the character and where they are and what it's like for them to be there. You may choose to start with the attached StorySheet, 'Getting Stories Started' where students can brainstorm their story beginnings as well as complete two 'Adding Details' activities.

Have students go back to their action sentence from the story building. This action sentence acts as the 'hook' or first sentence in the story to grab the reader's attention. Explain that starting stories with "One day" or "Hi my name is…" aren't as likely to grab the attention of readers as something such as, "As her heart raced, she stood behind a tree, rapier in hand."

Use the story examples on our website for more big action sentences to start stories. Remind students that the use of, "Once upon a time," is used only for fairytales.

If you are working with older students, they may choose to start their stories with a question to gain the reader's attention. For example, "Have you ever been in a horrific situation and don't know what to do?" The question should reflect the theme of the story, or something the character is wondering. If working in an online setting, you may have students share their action sentences on Padlet or Google Classroom for example, where students can then interact with one another, leaving comments and suggestions on one another's action sentence ideas.

Now that readers are 'hooked in' with the action sentence, have students stop, or take a break in the action, to introduce their character and where they are, or how they got there. Remind them to think about their character description and setting brainstorming pages and how those details can be added into their introduction. Encourage them to go back to the story building materials to think about the objects and tools they used and how to incorporate them into their character and setting descriptions.

Once students have introduced their character and setting, they can continue with the events of their story, developing their problem and then adding in their suspense ideas as outlined in the next lesson. As students write, remind them not to worry about the spelling and grammar, but rather focus on their ideas and the details of their story. The drafting and revision process allows for time to go back to review, revise and edit..

When working in a classroom setting it is easier to scaffold student learning. Stopping students after writing each 'section' of their story (hook, introduction, problem, suspense, ending) allows you to ensure all learners are following along, as well as allowing for conferencing time. Sectioning the writing also allows you as an educator to assess the need for additional activities such as the 'sentence stretch', or 'golden descriptions' outlined in lesson 7. This stop time can also be used for students to illustrate a picture to reflect each of the four main parts of their story, breaking up their writing time, and also providing time for hands-on learning - perhaps learners can act out their story so far, or set it up as a scene or model to take pictures or video of.

Reflect
Educators should act as the 'content editors' at this time, asking students questions about their stories to help develop more details and make more connections within their stories. More collaboration in idea generation can be done through sharing learners' story introductions and having others ask questions they still have about the character or setting. Allow students to share their stories in a variety of formats, whether they are typing, video or voice recording, or sharing photos of their work.

Key Questions:
1. What big action is your character doing at the start of your story?
2. Who is your character and where are they?
3. What might be some important details readers should know about your character or where they are?
4. How does your character feel?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning
In working through the writing process, students will experience the First Peoples Principal of Learning, "Learning requires patience and time". Encourage students to reflect on their own learning throughout the writing process, and how their stories and ideas further develop with the more time spent on it. Encourage students to use their 'sit spot' to reflect on their stories.

Differentiation
1. Present visual, auditory and kinesthetic opportunities for completing and presenting student thinking. For example, learners can act out their story parts, or set them up as a scene or model to take pictures or video of.
2. Allow students to share their stories in a variety of formats, whether they are typing, video or voice recording, or sharing photos of their work.
3. If possible, scribe for students in need so that they are encouraged to focus only on their story ideas and details rather than the words themselves.
4. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*description, detail, big action, introduction, etc*) and provide list examples to review throughout the lesson to ensure success of all learners

Extension Activities:
● Have students share the first sentence or two from their independent reading novels or favourite books. Have them reflect on whether or not the sentence hooks them in, or challenge them to improve the sentence.
● Have students act out or record a video or puppet show of their introduction, or other story parts.
● Set up a 5-10 minute conference with each student, or between students, to review their story, ensure they are on track, and to ask questions to further develop details and feelings within their writing.

6: Problems and Obstacles

This portion of the unit has students pause their writing to focus on developing the main plot line details within the story by creating a problem and obstacles for the character and considering the emotions the character may feel. Students will reflect on and identify the problem and suspense in stories and gain an understanding of the importance or significance of these parts of a story. Students will apply this learning to their own stories, giving their characters a problem and creative ways the character unsuccessfully tries to solve the problem.

Goal:
1. Apply understanding of parts of a story by creating a problem and suspense related to character and setting.
2. Use creative thinking to communicate story ideas.

Learning Activity

Minds On

Use puppets or cut out figures to tell a great detailed introduction to a story by starting with a big action (something the character is doing). Then add an introduction describing who the character is, where they are or live, and then end the story abruptly. Ask the key questions: *What's missing from my story? Why wasn't it interesting/exciting?* Explain that stories are boring when nothing happens, and the way that we make our stories more interesting is by adding a problem for our character. Ask learners to come up with problem ideas or examples for your story introduction to get their minds activated.

If you aren't comfortable telling your own story, go back to your read-aloud book from lesson one and reread the story without the middle portion where the character tries different ways to solve their problem. The reading should include the introduction and what the problem is, and then skip right to the solution and ending. Then ask which way the students prefer, today's reading or the first day. Ask the key questions: *What's missing from my story? Why wasn't it interesting/exciting?* Explain that in order to make stories interesting, authors create a problem for the character that stops them from achieving their goal right away. That feeling we get when reading a book, or watching a movie, where we are super interested and excited, at the edge of our seats waiting for what will happen next... that is called suspense, or tension and authors create suspense by making their characters work incredibly hard, trying many different unsuccessful attempts, before finally solving their problem. Ask the students or group to pick out each way the character in the story tries to solve their problem before they finally succeed. Explain that suspense is this feeling of excitement when you wonder what will happen next or if the problem will ever be solved. To

reinforce this concept you can use puppets, figures, or characters from previous lessons to create examples as a group of suspense and the reasoning for why each way isn't working.

For older students you may want to further develop their understanding by explaining that there are three types of problems a character may face: character vs character, character vs environment and character vs self. To reinforce this, use the group character created in lesson two and make a list of different problems that the character could potentially face, then categorize those problems into self, character and environment. For example; the character may battle a villain (character vs character); the character may struggle to make friends because they are shy (character vs self); or perhaps there is an earthquake that traps them underground (character vs environment).

Specify the importance of considering how the character feels about their problem as it develops. Do they crouch in a corner and cry? Maybe their eyes are wide open with fear and they are shivering. Or perhaps they are feeling confident and brave. By sharing how our characters feel we can connect to our readers emotions, helping them relate to the character and better understand the story. Encourage students to think about the way their bodies react when they feel certain ways - are they shivering and hiding, looking down at the ground, or jumping with joy, etc. If meeting in person or even in a video setting you could play a game of Feelings Charades to begin the action: have a student show the emotions of lonely, shy, angry, sad, tired, worrisome, nervous, scared, or excited, through charades or in a silent video and have the rest of the class record the body language and expressions seen as they guess the emotion being portrayed. This also allows students to collect a list of words and ways to describe how their character is feeling.

Action
You may wish to provide the story building materials here to reinforce understanding and provide the opportunity for hands on exploration. Ask students to consider what objects may develop an obstacle for their character. Have them discover which items could be used as a tool in achieving their goal or solving the problem. Challenge students to think about how the objects might be unsuccessful and develop the problem further.

Use the attached StorySheet, 'Creating Problem and Obstacles' to have students rethink the character for their story. They can rethink or extend their ideas from lesson two, describing their character, their fears, and the ultimate goal they have. Then have students consider the problem their character could face in achieving this goal. They can then record the feelings and reactions their character may have to this problem. Explain that the way we can do this in our own stories is by using our characters fears and weaknesses, or the environment they are in to create obstacles that stop our character from solving their problem right away and reaching their ultimate goal. Have students make their characters work really hard by creating *two ways* that the character tries to solve their problem, but they don't work.

Reflection

Once these ideas are recorded on the StorySheet ['Creating Problem and Suspense'](#), students can begin writing the development of their problem into their stories. If possible, have students share or post their character's problem and suspense ideas for feedback and suggestions and more creative engagement.

Key Questions:

1. What's missing from the story?
2. Why wasn't the story interesting or exciting?
3. What problem might your character face? Why is it a problem?
4. How does your character feel about the problem? How do they react?
5. What might your character do to try to solve their problem and why wouldn't it work?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning

Deconstructing a character's background, goal, problem and ways they try to solve their problem involves learning that is embedded in story, learning that is holistic and reflective, and a message that involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions. Encourage students to reflect on the learning their character does throughout their story and encourage them to make connections between their character and the land.

Differentiation

1. Present visual, auditory and kinesthetic opportunities for completing and presenting student thinking.
2. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*plot, problem, suspense/tension*) and review throughout the lesson to ensure that all learners understand the meanings.

Extension Activities:

● Have students act out or record a video of their problem and suspense ideas to share with others and receive feedback.
● Pair up students and have them create problems and suspense ideas for one anothers characters as a way to activate more creative thinking.
● Have small groups create their own storytelling introductions with a character and setting. Have a second group create a problem, and then have another group create obstacles before having a final group provide a solution to the problem.

7: Details Matter

In this portion of the unit students will explore the importance of descriptions and details and how to write a strong story to gain and hold a reader's attention.

Goal:
1. Engage students in creative writing.
2. Explore and apply age appropriate literary elements such as figurative language,

Learning Activity:
The drafting and revision process allows for time to go back to review spelling and grammar. At this time educators should continue to act as the 'content editors', asking students questions about their stories to prompt more details and make more connections within their stories. More collaboration in idea generation can be done through sharing learners' stories and having others ask questions they still have about the character, setting, or problem development. Allow students to share their stories in a variety of formats, whether they are typing, video or voice recording, or sharing photos of their work. Remind, or continually ask students, how their character feels as they move through the story. Learners should look back at their planning pages where they discussed feelings and descriptions.

When working in a classroom setting it is easier to scaffold student learning. Stopping students after writing each 'section' of their story (introduction, problem, suspense, ending) allows you to ensure all learners are following along as well as allowing for conferencing time. Sectioning the writing also allows you as an educator to assess the need for additional activities such as the 'sentence stretch', or 'golden descriptions' outlined below. These activities are most beneficial when students have already completed a large chunk of their writing - somewhere around the suspense portion of their stories. It allows students to take the time to go back and first read through their entire story, before looking specifically for a sentence to stretch, or turn into a golden description.

Sentence Stretch

This activity is especially useful to early elementary students in order to add more information to their sentences and make them more interesting. Start by sharing a very simple sentence such as, "The boy ran." Ask students, *is this sentence interesting? Does it give us very much information?* Tell students that it is important to make sure the sentences in our stories are providing information and sharing important details. To stretch out the sentence, have students think about the *who, what, where, when, why,* and *how* that could be included to add more details to the sentence. Share with them a list of adjectives, or describing words, to choose from. Tell them that by including more of these words we can learn so much more, in this case about the boy. This can easily be done in an online setting by

posting the simple sentence and having each student create their own stretched sentence, or by having a student add one detail and passing it on to the next student, adding another detail until everyone has added details to make one large informative sentence or two. This can also be done on the attached handout where there is an example, as well as one for students to complete independently. After completing the activity, have students look back at their own stories and find one simple sentence to stretch.

Golden Descriptions

For higher elementary students, this activity helps learners think about the usefulness of their descriptions. If meeting online or in person, start with a drawing activity that has students draw the same item, adding more description each time they draw. For example, first ask students to draw a tooth. Do not answer any questions, students are to decide on their own what the tooth will look like. Have students hold up or share their drawings and ask, *Why are they all different?* Discuss the importance of describing words and how they help us visualize. Next ask students to draw a large tooth, and again discuss the similarities and differences in everyone's drawing. Ask, *Was this description useful?* Lastly, have students draw a shark tooth that hung from his mouth like a dagger. As students share their drawings and discuss the similarities, explain that by using figurative language (a simile in this case) to add details to our sentence, we create a 'Golden Description'. Explain that useful descriptions should be used often throughout their story, but that a 'Golden Description' makes the scene unforgettable and should be used at the very important parts of the story. Use the following example to reinforce the concept:

> "The tree was as tall as a building," is a *useful* description.
> "The tree stood there like a soldier, protecting the forest animals with their long branches," is a *golden* description

Students can complete the example on the attached handout, or have students practice by creating their own golden descriptions. This can easily be done in an online setting, again using Padlet or Google Classroom for example, where students can share their sentence descriptions as well as add to others. Have students apply this to their own stories by going back to reread their story and either highlight a Golden Description or add one.

Key Questions:
1. How does your character feel?
2. Is this sentence interesting? Does it give us very much information?
3. Is this description useful? What could you add to make it unforgettable?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning

In working through the writing process, students will experience the First Peoples Principal of Learning, "Learning requires patience and time". Encourage students to reflect on their own learning throughout the writing process, and how their stories and ideas further develop with the more time spent on it. Encourage students to use their 'sit spot' to reflect on their stories.

Differentiation
1. Present visual, auditory and kinesthetic opportunities for completing and presenting student thinking. For example, learners can act out their story parts, or set them up as a scene or model to take pictures or video of.
2. Allow students to share their stories in a variety of formats, whether they are typing, video or voice recording, or sharing photos of their work.
3. If possible, scribe for students in need so that they are encouraged to focus only on their story ideas and details rather than the words themselves.
4. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*description, detail, adjective, simile, metaphor, etc*) and provide list examples to review throughout the lesson to ensure success of all learners

Extension Activities:
● Ask students to highlight and share any figurative language within their stories.
● Have students act out or record a video or puppet show of their introduction, or other story parts.
● Pair up students and have them create useful and golden descriptions together.
● Set up a 5-10 minute conference with each student, or between students, to review their story, ensure they are on track, and to ask questions to further develop details and feelings within their writing.

8: Excellent Endings

This portion of the unit explores solving problems, and creating strong endings for stories.

Goal:
1. Engage students in creative thinking and writing.
2. Apply understanding of parts of a story by creating a solution to the problem, and a detailed ending to the story.

<u>Learning Activity</u>
Minds On
Begin by using puppets, toy figures or character cut outs to tell a great detailed introduction to a story similar to lesson six but complete with a problem and two ways that the character unsuccessfully tries to solve the problem. Then ask for volunteers to come up with different solutions and ending ideas for the story. Encourage students to be creative and imaginative. Discuss that endings can be happy, sad, silly, or even surprising. To further develop their thinking, ask questions such as *What happens? How does the character feel? What might they do with this feeling, do they celebrate?* Repeat back their ending ideas to model how to solve the problem and include emotion. Explain to learners that when the character solves their problem, they are ready to end their story, and as the author, they get to decide how the story ends. Remind learners that their characters have worked really really hard, and they are at the most exciting point in their stories when the readers aren't sure if the character will even solve their problem, so we don't want to end the story in just one sentence.

Action
You may wish to have students complete the attached ['Endings'](#) StorySheet where students can brainstorm different ending ideas before adding to their stories.

Explain to students that none of their stories will end with, "To be continued" because even in a series of stories, each individual story and the problem involved comes to its own conclusion and new problems are developed in the next story. You may also need to explain what happens when the character dies in the story - remind students that this can only happen at the end, and if it does, they as the narrator still need to include details and feelings surrounding the character's death. Depending on the age level of your group, discuss how to make the endings of stories more detailed by using descriptions of the five senses again, and writing short sentences which makes readers slow down the ending and allow for more emotion.

Remind students that they want to end our stories just as strong as they began them. Ask, *How did we create a strong first sentence/hook?* Reflect back on the big action sentences that students started their stories with. Explain that to make a strong last sentence to conclude our stories we want to end with a BIG EMOTION showing how the character feels. For example, *"Shana felt relieved, it was back to peace and quiet and she didn't have to worry anymore, she was home. The end."* Alternatively, if you are working with older elementary students, encourage them to end their stories with a piece of advice or a lesson the character has learned throughout the story. For example, *"So they stopped bugging me. I had lots of friends, and I learned that no matter what problem you are in, there is always a way out."*

Discuss how as authors we want readers to feel satisfied by the ending of the story and they shouldn't be left with unanswered questions. This is why we don't introduce new characters at the end of stories, and instead ensure that the events are all connected and make sense, while also being creative.

Reflection
Have students solve the problem within their stories and write their endings. After writing, allow time for students to share their stories with one another before revising and editing. Allow them to be one anothers 'content editors' at this point. Have them share their stories and any illustrations with one another, asking questions and sharing ideas that they may wish to further develop.

Key Questions:
1. How can the character solve their problem?
2. How does the character feel now? What do they do with this feeling?
3. How did we create a strong first sentence?
4. How might you create a satisfying ending?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning
In working through the writing process, students will experience the First Peoples Principal of Learning, "Learning requires patience and time". Encourage students to reflect on their own learning throughout the writing process, and how their stories and ideas further develop with the more time spent on it. Students can also reflect on the learning their character does throughout their story. Encourage them to make connections between their character and the land. Sit in a circle and have students share a lesson their character learned throughout their story. Or have them share something they have learned throughout writing the story.

Differentiation
1. Present visual, auditory and kinesthetic opportunities for completing and presenting student thinking. For example, learners can act out their story parts, or set them up as a scene or model to take pictures or video of.

2. Allow students to share their stories in a variety of formats, whether they are typing, video or voice recording, or sharing photos of their work.
3. If possible, scribe for students in need so that they are encouraged to focus only on their story ideas and details rather than the words themselves.
4. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*description, detail, adjective, simile, metaphor, etc*) and provide list examples accessible throughout the lesson to ensure success of all learners

Extension Activities:
- Have students act out or record a video or puppet show of their story
- Have students read their story aloud using oral reading techniques.
- Pair up students and have them create endings for one another's story. Alternatively you could have them each share their stories prior to the ending and have other students create an ending for each other to allow for more idea generation.
- Set up a 5-10 minute conference with each student, or between students, to review their stories, discuss ending options and to ask questions to further develop details and feelings within their writing.

9: Dialogue

If appropriate for the grade level of your class, this portion of the unit helps students create meaningful dialogue in their narrative. Students will determine the significance of the dialogue in their story, and use proper punctuation and parts of speech to ensure dialogue is complete.

Goal:
1. Students will identify the purpose of dialogue in their story.
2. Students will incorporate meaningful dialogue into their story.
3. Students will use grade appropriate grammar and punctuation, including quotation marks.

<u>Learning Activity</u>
Dialogue can be a difficult concept for many students to understand and incorporate into their stories properly. Start by introducing dialogue as the fancy word we use when characters are speaking out loud in a story. Let students know that dialogue should be chosen carefully. We like to think of it as salt - a little bit is good but a lot can quickly be too much! Explain to students that their readers don't need to know everything their character says. Rather, we want to use dialogue to further develop their characters personality, to show the relationship between characters, and to move the story along in an exciting way.

You may want to start by sharing a short story without dialogue and one with dialogue to show how adding dialogue to stories can be more entertaining. For example:

> Story 1: One day I was walking through the grocery store with my mom. She saw a cart rolling by itself, heading straight toward me. But, I didn't see it. All too quickly, I ran right into the cart and landed in a heap on the floor. It was such a disaster.

> Story 2: I was walking through the grocery store one day with my mom. All of a sudden, she yelled out, "Watch out for that cart!" Just as I was turning around to see what she was talking about, I noticed the cart coming towards me too quickly. I yelled out, "Oh no! Stop!" just as the cart came crashing into me. I landed in a heap on the floor and screamed, "Ouch, watch out next time!" It was such a disaster.

Ask students which story they think is better and why. Discuss how the dialogue added excitement, and makes the reader feel as though they are a part of the story.

Another option is to pose a picture prompt displaying two characters and create a padlet or other conversation board for students to create their own ideas of dialogue to reflect the prompt. Adding speech bubbles to the prompt may help student thinking as well.

Once students understand dialogue and its importance, have them reread their stories for dialogue. Perhaps they will need to take some out, or change their thinking to create significance. If their story doesn't have any dialogue, perhaps ask that they create one or two examples to include. Once they have found the important pieces of dialogue in their story, they are ready to follow the rules of dialogue and apply the proper punctuation. Download a copy of the Dialogue StorySheet in the Learn section of our website to share with students. They can work through the StorySheet independently, or you may choose to create a more guided lesson.

Explain to students that writers use quotation marks and dialogue tags to let their readers know when a character is speaking. Display the rules and examples below for using dialogue. You may also choose to share a video or anchor chart with examples.

Three parts of Dialogue:
1. What is said goes inside quotation marks: "Hello,"
2. Add *how* it is said: "Hello," *she whispered*.
3. Add a <u>tag</u> with more information: "Hello," she whispered <u>looking down at her feet.</u>

Rules of Dialogue:
● For every new speaker, start a new line.
● Quotation marks are placed around the words spoken
● Capitalize the first letter inside the quotation marks.
● Commas and periods go inside the quotation marks
● Tell who is speaking before or after the dialogue
● Include a tag with more information

Have students apply these rules and all parts of dialogue to the dialogue in their story. If using the StorySheet, there are examples for students to try before applying to their own stories.

Key Questions:
1. Which story is better? The one with dialogue or the one without?
2. Where is the dialogue in your story?
3. Is the dialogue providing information about a character or helping to move the story along?
4. Did you include *who* spoke the words, and *how* it was said?
5. Did you include a tag with a bit more information?
6. Have you applied the rules of dialogue including punctuation?

Applying First Peoples Principles of Learning

In working through the editing process, students will experience the First Peoples Principal of Learning, "Learning requires patience and time". Encourage students to reflect on their own learning throughout the writing process, and how their stories and ideas further develop with the more time spent on it. Students can also reflect on the learning their character does throughout their story. Sit in a circle and have students share a lesson their character learned throughout their story. Or have them share something they have learned throughout writing the story.

Differentiation

1. Allow students to share their stories in a variety of formats, whether they are typing, video or voice recording, or sharing photos of their work.
2. Provide video explanation and examples of dialogue where possible.
3. Write out/post the key vocabulary (*dialogue, tag, punctuation, quotation mark, etc*) and provide list examples accessible throughout the lesson to ensure success of all learners.
4. Encourage students to share, or pair students up to share their dialogue and provide suggestions and support to one another.

Extension Activities:

- Encourage students to act out their stories in order to consider where they might need dialogue in their story.
- Have students read their stories aloud, or record their reading to reflect on their stories and consider the significance of the dialogue included.
- Pair students up or provide short conferencing time to review dialogue.
- Have students turn their stories into a script for a screenplay.

10: Editing and Revising

In this final portion of the unit, students will take time to work through the editing and revising process for their own stories according to grade level objectives. Educators will then collect all stories for a final edit and revision before sharing with Story Studio.

Goal:
1. Students will engage in the editing and revising process.
2. Students will use grade appropriate sentence structure and conventions throughout their story.
3. Students will finalize and share a complete story with the educator.

Learning Activity

As an educator you will need to decide how much editing and revising you would like your students to do, or what they are capable of doing independently. Students will need to share their stories with you, whether that requires them to type them, or simply photograph their words to submit to you for typing, is up to you. Our biggest goal when editing and revising stories is to ensure that the story remains in the author's voice. We stress to students while writing that they do not need to worry about spelling, grammar or punctuation and so, as editors, these are our priorities. We want the writers to be proud of their stories and to still recognise it as their own work. Essentially, we are proofreading more than actually editing.

Depending on the grade level of your students, you may choose to use the Editing and Revising StorySheet on our website for students to edit their own stories, focusing on three things: perspective and tense on one page, and paragraphing, spelling and punctuation on the second. You may choose to only use one of the two pages depending on the level of your students. There are examples embedded into the StorySheet for students to use as well. You can ask students to read through their story three times, once focusing on each of the three topics. Provide students with an online dictionary to use for spelling. Post definitions and examples of the key punctuation you would like them to look for. You may also choose to set up short conferences between students or with you in order to work through editing. There is also a parent's guide to editing and revising on our website that may be of use to families working together.

You may also encourage students to extend their editing and revising by having them share their story with a peer/parent after they have completed a first edit. Explain to students that having another person read through their story can help point things out that they missed along the way, or help to answer any questions that a reader may have about the story. Having more people read through our story can only make it better - encourage students to share what they are comfortable with in a way that works for them, whether that be an oral reading, posting written work, or acting out their story, You want to encourage confidence in

their storytelling. This will also help alleviate some of the editing that you as an educator will do when stories are shared with you.

Once students have finished writing their stories, you will want to celebrate them as authors - to do this, students will create a title for their story, and write a small biography about themselves, the author. We often follow the format of: My name is __. I am __ years old and in grade __. I really like to __. My favourite book is __. If I could do anything, I would __.

Outlined below are the general editing guidelines that we at Story Studio follow when editing student stories for publication. These guidelines are not meant to overwhelm you. Our main goal is to maintain the author's voice but, if you're comfortable with it, please feel free to follow the more specific tips below. As editors, our aim is to get the text into a printable form that follows consistent house style.

What to Change
- Correct all typos and spelling mistakes.
- Correct all punctuation, including quotation marks, commas, and periods.
- Add paragraph breaks.
- Break up run-on sentences.
- Maintain consistent perspective (first or third person). If the story switches, stick with what the author used in the first instance.
- Maintain consistent tense. In most instances, we use past tense. Again, stick with what the author used in the first instance.
- Remove excessive use of the word *then* or *and*. For example: *Then I ran across the street. Then I threw my arms around my pet kangaroo. Then I took him home. Then I fed him alfalfa sprouts.* This can be changed to: *I ran across the street. I threw my arms around my pet kangaroo. Then I took him home and fed him alfalfa sprouts.*
- Feel free to insert optional relative pronouns if they are required, or it improves the sentence. For example: *He went to the store, only to realize **that** he didn't have any money!*

What Not to Change
- Do not change sentences beginning with 'and' or 'but' unless it should obviously be joined to another sentence. We allow the kids some creative license with this.
- Do not change the spelling of character's names. Many students are very particular and have intentionally chosen a particular spelling.
- Do not move sentences or paragraphs around because it will read or sound better.
- Avoid the use of semicolons as most kids do not use them in their writing. Instead create two sentences or use a conjunction
- Do not join sentences together unless it's otherwise difficult to read or grammatically incorrect. For example, this does not need to be changed: *He was as tall as a tree. His hair was moose--brown. He loved to jump. He had giant toes.* This does need changes: *He was as tall as a tree. Moose--brown hair. Loves jumping. Giant toes.*

Resources

Story Building Kits & Materials

Begin to cultivate a supply of objects and materials to be used to explore story building. These loose objects and materials may include the following: Glass beads, wooden blocks, Lego, popsicle sticks, geometric shapes, string, plastic cups, paper shapes, mirrors & magnifying glasses, beads, keys, gear shapes, buttons, playdough/plasticine, pinecones, rocks, sticks, leaves, shells, etc. You can read more about the concept of 'Make Writing' and the objects used by Angela Stockholm here.

These objects will be used individually or collectively to create story parts such as character, setting, problem, obstacles, as well as providing tools and details for plot development.

A great resource to check out online for more story building ideas and activities is https://www.storycity.land/

Author Read Alouds:

- Oliver Jeffers - Stay at Home Story Time: https://www.oliverjeffers.com/books#/abookaday
- Jarrett Lerner: https://jarrettlerner.com/activities/
- Jarrett J. Krosoczka: Illustrator & Author https://www.youtube.com/studiojjk
- Dav Pilkey: https://www.scholastic.com/site/pilkey/dav-pilkey-at-home.html
- Mo Willems Lunch Doodles: https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/mo-willems/lunch-doodles/
- Find more here: https://www.weareteachers.com/virtual-author-activities/?utm_content=1584565321&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&fbclid=IwAR2czkeYB1whO_NV300PwX37fI0NnY7uAWuv0-3sLIuRjUZ-509kaVTRCaQ
- Canadian Authors: https://www.cbc.ca/books/canadian-writers-are-sharing-readings-of-their-books-online-1.5500364

Character Building:

- Bitmoji: https://www.bitmoji.com/
- Lego: http://www.reasonablyclever.com/mini-mizers/classic-kid-safe-mini-mizer/
- Avatar: https://avatarmaker.com/
- Characters can also be created on Minecraft or as Skylanders to buy interest https://www.skylanders.com/ca/en/character-creator