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Comprehension Lesson Plan for the First Grade

Overview of Lesson

1. Explain the central goal/big idea of the lesson.

When reading narratives, effective readers are actively engaged with the text and its components. This includes asking questions, making predictions, being aware of characters and how they develop, and noticing the larger parts of the story, such as the events, problem, etc. The reader can comprehend more using these strategies as they engage with the text and actively think throughout the story. In this lesson, the focus is on the identification of key story parts—character, setting, problem, and solution. By identifying the key parts of the story, the reader can understand the changes that occur and progress to how the character impacts these events. When identifying these parts, the reader also becomes more aware of the story through recall and recognition of each part. By doing this, the story becomes more comprehended through multiple times being recorded and thus, leading to deeper understanding in conjunction with the awareness of how the key elements of a story are the base line of a story's flow.

2. Explain the Rationale of Teaching this Lesson.

As students advance in their reading capabilities in the first grade, it is important to teach them how to identify story parts. As the New Jersey Learning Standards expect first graders to be able to “[d]escribe characters, settings, and major event(s) in a story, using key details” (2016, p.

2), it is a goal to teach these new readers how to identify these main story parts. Identifying these story parts also provide students the opportunity to recall the story and comprehend more due to the focus on how a story develops from start to finish. “Identifying story grammar elements (characters, setting, goal/problem, actions to obtain goal or attempts to solve problem, and the resolution) supports the recounting of the story. Students use the story grammar elements to retell key ideas and details, while also learning the goals of craft and structure” (Price & Bradley, 2016, p. 60). These story elements illuminate key parts of a story that a beginning reader may not be fully aware of when reading the first time. Although teaching these elements does begin in kindergarten, it is especially important to emphasize these for first graders. Overall, first graders are beginning to read more intense books to comprehend on their own than in the kindergarten, thus the first graders are improving in their reading of the written English found throughout their books. As this occurs, it is important they recognize story parts as key ways to comprehend different stories. “Exposing students to a wide array of story structures will teach them to understand and enjoy different formats” (Price & Bradley, 2016, p. 60). By teaching the elements of the story, the students also become aware of the story structures common in narratives. In summation, teaching the story elements to first graders aids in their comprehension of narrative stories by becoming aware of the structure of a story, reinforcing the story by retelling, and providing insight on how structures differ throughout different types of narratives.

Dean, J. (2016). *Pete the Cat Storybook Collection*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

New Jersey State Board of Education. (2016). New Jersey Learning Standards for English

Language Arts. Retrieved from <https://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela/g01.pdf>

Price, L. H., and Bradley, B. A. (2016). *Revitalizing Read Alouds: Interactive Talk About Books*

With Young Children, PreK—2. New York: Teachers College Press.

3. List NJ Learning Standard(s).

NJ.ELA. RL.1.3. Describe characters, settings, and major event(s) in a story, using key details.

NJ.SL.1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1

topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

A. Follow agreed-upon norms for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

4. List the Objective of the Lesson.

Students will be able to identify the character(s), setting, problem and solution in a story by using a story map graphic organizer with 80% accuracy.

Students will be able to express their thoughts about the story and its elements by providing input at least five times throughout the lesson in whole or small group settings.

5. Academic Language.

Discourse: Effective readers need to be able to talk about the characters, setting, problem and solution within a narrative text with and without guidance from the teacher. To open, the lesson begins with review of the terms from previous lessons to connect learning and activate prior knowledge. Further, they can engage in these terms through whole group discussion with the teacher, in partners for turn and talks, in small groups for application, and independently through use of the terms. These progressive opportunities to speak and use the terms will

improve their understanding and application to be more successful in their reading comprehension.

Syntax: When discussing the stories, the students may say “the character is” and use the character’s name (Pete) throughout the story map to connect changes and explain reasoning for filling out the story map. In addition, this use will also be applicable when discussing the setting, problem and solution as they students will justify their thinking for how these occur in their stories.

Vocabulary: Readers must know the terms character, setting, problem, solution, and story to identify main story parts in narrative texts.

6. Materials.

- a) Story Parts Anchor Chart
- b) Easel
- c) Marker(s) for Teacher
- d) Story Map Graphic Organizer
- e) Pencils for Students
- f) Pete the Cat Books (Pete’s Big Lunch, Construction Destruction, Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons, Cavecat Pete, Too Cool for School and Sir Pete the Brave).
- g) Student Independent Reading Texts
- h) Computer and Projector or iPad for Youtube Video

7. Technology

For students who have difficulty with the concept at the end of the lesson, they may come together to watch a YouTube video clip of a short but concise PowToon for a review and shortened version of the lesson. This video discusses the characters, setting, and main events—which focus on the problem and solution, rather than the beginning, middle, and end. This video also provides visuals for the students to learn through and is a short connection to what the teacher activity was. The addition of a short and clear story also reviews the terms taught by the teacher and discusses how these are the parts that make up the story. This video can be used to engage the students and provide another opportunity for the students to practice and learn what the teacher taught in a more simplified story line before moving on to their independent texts. Finally, the teacher can also pause with the group to ensure they are understanding and answer any specific questions they have. The video is https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b--Ndkp9_40.

8. Prior Knowledge.

For this lesson, students will need to have background knowledge of what characters are, what a setting is, and what the events can be based on the problem and solution. With this, most students should have limited background knowledge from kindergarten for what these terms are and how they are parts of a story. The Kindergarten New Jersey Learning Standards specify “RL.K.3. With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story” (2016). Thus, this background learning will be applied with previous learning.

As these parts of the story must be known for the students to be able to understand and use the story map tool as they must notice the multiple story elements, these terms are to be taught prior to this lesson. Specific lessons on identifying characters, setting, and problem and

solution must have occurred so that the students understand these terms and will be able to implement them altogether.

In addition, many students have had experiences with narrative texts as they are commonly read to young children and can also be recognized by verbal retelling of stories from family, friends, and/or self. These experiences will also help students connect their prior knowledge to identify and recognize these terms in their narrative texts.

The Teaching Sequence

Beginning/Link

Teacher: “Good morning readers, we have been learning about story parts, like character, setting, problem, solution. First, I want to review our story parts anchor chart. First, we have the character, who you know who the most important character or characters are when they are through the book on almost every page. Raise your hand if you remember a character from a book that you read, or we read together.” Teacher is pointing to character on anchor chart.

Students: raise their hands to answer with appropriate wait time by the teacher. If a minor character in a story is said, the teacher can review that a main character is the person through the whole book and guide the student to that answer.

Teacher: “Now think about where the character goes for the biggest part of the book. That will be your setting.” Teacher is pointing to setting term on anchor chart.

Teacher: “Turn and talk to your partner to share some ideas of what a setting can be in a book.”

Students: Turn and talk with partner.

Teacher: “Now that we remember we have a character and a setting, there is always a problem and a solution. The problem is an issue or conflict that the character is going through.” Teacher

points to problem on the anchor chart. “I want you to think about a time when you or a character in your book had a problem. Turn and talk to your partner about a problem.” Teacher will listen to students as they share with partners.

Students: Share a problem they had with their partner.

Teacher: Call on 1-2 students and review problems. “And if we have a problem, we always try to solve it. So the solution of a story, the way the problem is fixed, is another important part of our story.” Teacher points to solution on anchor chart. “Think about how you or your character solved the problem that you told your partner. Turn and talk about it.”

Students: Recall the solution to the problem they told their partner as the teacher listens to a few partners.

Teacher: Calls on 1-2 students to review solutions and transition into “I Do.”

Middle

I. Modeling and Explanation “I Do”

Teacher: “Now that we have talked about character, setting, problem and solution, I want to use these to understand stories better. To help, I have this chart (place story map graphic organizer with these terms in boxes onto the easel). I can write on this tool during my story. There is a box for character, setting, problem and solution, all the terms we just reviewed. I’m going to show you how to use this with one of our stories, Pete the Cat: Pete’s Big Lunch. While listening, you will hear my thinking to fill out our chart for the character, setting, problem and solution.”

Teacher: takes out book to read. Begins reading title page and then stops at the following pages:

Page 8-9: Teacher reads: “Here comes Pete. It is lunchtime. Pete is ready to eat.” (Dean, 2016, p. 8-9). Teacher says, “I’m noticing that the author introduced us to our character here, and

he is Pete. He said, “here comes Pete” so I think Pete might be our character. I also see he is on the first two pages. Let’s see if he is on the next page, because then I think he can be our character in the story.”

Teacher reads page 10-11: “What should Pete eat? A sandwich would be nice.” (Dean, 2016, p. 10-11). Teachers thinks aloud: “Pete has been on the first three pages and the story so far is about Pete thinking about lunch. This makes me think he is the character, so I will write his name in my character box.” Teacher writes Pete in the character box on the story map.

Page 12-13: Teacher reads, “Yes, Pete wants a sandwich. Pete opens the fridge.” (Dean, 2016, p. 12-13). Teacher thinks out loud, “I am noticing we are in a room now. We have a fridge, and food, and a counter.” Teacher points to each object as it is named. “I think we are in the kitchen because that’s where you cook in a house. And he wants to make a sandwich so I would go to the kitchen. I’m going to read some more to see if this is the setting.”

Pages 14-17: Teacher reads these four pages discussing food that Pete is using for the sandwich then stops. (Dean, 2016, p. 14-17). “I see Pete is collecting all this food to make his sandwich and he is at the table. This makes me think Pete is in the kitchen making his sandwich at the table. I am going to write kitchen under setting because I’ve noticed that is where Pete is staying to make the sandwich.”

Pages 18-23: Teacher continues reading about Pete making his sandwich bigger and adding more foods. (Dean, 2016, p. 18-23). May interject to notice how large the sandwich is getting with all the foods added to retain student attention.

Pages 24-25: Teacher reads, “Pete’s sandwich is too big to eat. Pete wonders what to do. Pete thinks and thinks.” (Dean, 2016, p. 24-25). Teacher thinks aloud, “I notice something important on this page. I think Pete now has a problem: his sandwich is too big to eat by himself!

It says that his sandwich is “too big for Pete to eat” and shows him thinking. He’s not doing anything more yet but thinking. This is Pete’s problem: his sandwich is too big, so he is thinking about what to do. On my story map, in the problem box, I am going to write that Pete’s sandwich is too big. Next, I have to pay attention to how Pete comes to a solution.”

Pages 26-27: Teacher reads, “‘I’ve got it!’ Pete says. Pete calls all his friends. He asks them to come over.” (Dean, 2016, p. 26-27). Teacher thinks, “I see Pete is having his friends over. I wonder if this is going to help him with his sandwich problem. Let’s keep reading to find out.”

Pages 28-33: Pete’s friends come over, the teacher notices all the friends coming by pointing to them on each page. (Dean, 2016, p. 28-33).

Page 34: “Pete’s sandwich is all gone. Pete’s friends are full. They liked Pete’s big lunch.” (Dean, 2016, p. 34). Teacher thinks out loud, “The sandwich is all gone! The problem was that the sandwich was too big and now that Pete and his friends ate, it is all gone. This shows the problem is solved. So if the problem was that Pete’s sandwich was too big, and I see here that was solved by Pete having his friends help him eat the sandwich. On my paper now I am going to write in the solution box. I will write that Pete had his friends help him eat the sandwich. Now, let’s see if that’s the end of our story.”

Pages 35-36: Teacher finishes reading story. “That’s the end of our story. Now let’s look at our story map to see if I found all the important parts of my story. The character was Pete. I remember that Pete was in the whole story, so he was the important, or main, character. Pete was in the kitchen in his story because he was making his sandwich and eating with his friends, so the setting is the kitchen. Pete’s problem was his sandwich was too big to eat. And the solution was Pete had his friends come to help him eat the sandwich. I now have all the important parts of my

story written down and I could use this to tell a friend about my story and talk about what happened. Now that I showed you how to fill out the story map, I want us to do one altogether with another Pete the Cat story.”

II. Guided practice with the teacher “We Do”

Teacher: Takes out a new story map to put on the easel and opens to the next story, Pete the Cat: Construction Destruction. “As I read this story, we are going to find the character, setting, problem and solution together just as I did in Pete’s Big Lunch. Let’s start by figuring out who our character is. “

Teacher: takes out book to read. Begins reading title page and then stops at the following pages:

Pages 38-41: Teacher reads, “‘Recess!’ Pete shouts as the bell rings. But when Pete gets outside to play—oh no. The playground is a disaster. The swings are broken, the slide is rusty, and the sandbox is full of weeds. Pete makes plans for a new playground.

“Wow!” says principle Nancy. “Can you really build that?”

“Not by myself,” says Pete. “I’m going to need some help.”

“Whatever you need, Pete, it’s yours.”

The next day, Peter arrives at the playground before school. The construction crew is already there. He gives them the go-ahead to tear down the old playground.” (Dean, 2016, p. 38-41). Teachers stops here. “Let’s stop and look at these two pages. Think about who you think the most important character is so far. Who’s important for the story to go on?” Wait time. “Turn and talk to your partner.”

Students: turn and talk about the main character.

Teacher: Calls on 1-2 students to explain that Pete is the main character. He goes outside to see the playground and talks to the other people in the story. "I am going to write down Pete as the character on our story map." Write down Pete on story map in the character box.

Pages 42-47: Read about the old playground being taken down and the new one being built up. (Dean, 2016, p. 42-47). "Class, I notice we are staying in one place. Who can raise their hand and tell me where Pete is? What is our setting?"

Students: raise hands to answer for setting.

Teacher: Call on 1-2 students. "We are at the playground. It was the old playground spot and is the new playground spot so I will write playground for setting on our story map." Write playground for setting on story map. "Next, we should have a problem coming up. Let's see what happens in our story."

Pages 48-49: "The new playground is cool, but it's not cool enough.
 'What do you think?' Pete asks, holding up his latest plans.
 'It will be too hard to build,' says one of the workers.
 'And everything is almost finished,' says another.
 'But it will make this the best playground ever,' Pete says.
 'Then let's do it,' the workers say." (Dean, 2016, p. 48-49).

Teacher stops here and thinks out loud, "I am noticing that the workers aren't very sure about Pete's new plans. Construction workers are people who build a lot and are practiced at building, so I wonder if something will happen to Pete's plans because they seem nervous. Let's read and see if a problem happens."

Pages 50-53: read the pages of the playground being built and created. (Dean, 2016, p. 50-53).

Pages 54-55: “‘Oh no!’ says Principal Nancy as the new playground crashes to the ground. ‘The pieces are all mixed up.’ Everyone is disappointed—except for Pete.” (Dean, 2016, p. 54-55). “I am noticing something big happen here. Turn and talk to your partner what happened and what this could be on our story map.”

Students: turn and talk about the playground crashing.

Teacher: “Who wants to share with the class what happened?” Call on 1-2 students about the playground falling apart. “Now, do we think this could be our problem or a solution in our story?” Call on 1-2 students, Build off student input, “this is our problem. The playground has crashed and broke. Let’s write that in the story map for our problem.” Write the problem. “After our problem is a solution, so let’s see how we solve the broken playground.”

Pages 56-58: “‘It’s not how we planned it!’ Pete shouts. ‘It’s even better!’ This playground is filled with surprises and places to explore. The school playground is the most amazing playground ever. Sometimes you’ve got to dare to dream big.” (Dean, 2016, p. 56-58). “Look at the picture now, how did we solve the problem of our broken playground? Turn and talk with a partner.”

Students: turn and talk with a partner about how the problem was solved.

Teacher: “Our playground crashed and broke, and now if we look at this page it’s not anymore. How did we solve the problem?” Call on 1-2 students, guide students that the playground is mixed up, and highlight that the story says “It’s not how we planned it” so it is different, but they still love the playground and have fun. “On our story map, we will write that the playground got mixed up but was fun.” Write in solution on chart.

Teacher: “Now that I have shown you one story, and we practiced a story together, I would like you to get in your reading groups when I say go. First, you will find a spot together in

the classroom. Then I will give you a Pete the Cat Book and a story map. As a group, read the story out loud and write the character, setting, problem and solution. Now go!”

III. Guided practice w/each other “You do it together”

Students: Form small groups in the classroom.

Teacher: Hand out a Pete the Cat Book and story map per group. Groups will receive one of the following books: Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons, Pete the Cat: Cavecat Pete, Pete the Cat: Too Cool for School or Pete the Cat: Sir Pete the Brave.

Students: Take turns reading and filling out the story map through discussion.

Teacher: moves throughout the classroom to listen in on a few groups and answer questions or guide students in their groups.

End: Closure and Initiation of Independent Practice “You Do It On Your Own”

Teacher: Meet with each group as they finish to review the character, setting, problem and solution. For students who show understanding and success, say “Now you may go and practice this in your independent reading. Grab a paper from the back table and start.” For students showing difficulty, have them grab a paper in the back and have them meet on the carpet for the video portion described in the technology section.

For this activity, a small group of students will be selected that need extra practice. They will gather with the teacher and review the video. During the video, a discussion between teacher and students will begin and they will use the story map chart to record through the short story line in the video for comprehension assessment with the teacher.

Students: Practice using the story map to notice story parts in their independent reading.

Differentiation/Extension

As a support, students may be asked to identify just the character and setting to start in a story. Then, reread to determine the problem and solution that occurs. Reading the story again for the second time will aid in better comprehension for students to become more aware of the story layout prior to digging deeper into the plot line. Further, the check-ins will help identify students who can be supported and formally assessed during the video and story map portion of the end of the lesson.

As an extension, students can be involved in identifying story elements and then writing how the character responds to the events to build deeper understanding of the role of a character in a story.

Assessment

Throughout the lesson beginning and middle, students will be formatively assessment by their input for the whole group discussion, turn and talks, and their small group work. Their verbal input will be measured based on whether they contributed or not. No contribution will signal as in need of teacher attention to measure what the student is struggling with or succeeding with through the lesson.

Students will have a summative assessment in the form of their story maps from the time in small groups and independently. As this is an introduction lesson to their strategy, their work will be analyzed for completion and success by the rubric below.

Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Above Expectations
Completed less than four, story parts: character, setting, problem and solution, with	Completed all four, story parts: character, setting,	Completed all four, story parts: character, setting, problem and

80% or less accuracy in small group.	problem and solution, with 80% accuracy in small group.	solution, with 100% accuracy in small group.
Did not complete independent story map.	Completed at least two of the four, story parts on independent story map.	Completed at least one full story map independently.

Reflection

As this lesson will be an introduction to the reading strategy of noticing all four, story elements—character, setting, problem, and solution—I anticipate students having difficulty completing all areas correctly on their first attempts. Becoming aware of multiple story elements takes comprehension and cognitive effort for the students as they are also improving in their independent reading. Thus, I expect re-teaching to be necessary for students reading below grade level expectations and for students with disabilities as this strategy is of higher comprehension level than re-telling or learning goals focused on one specific story element. Thus, re-teaching of the elements for students who have difficulty recognizing these parts and understanding the story are skills which must be practiced alongside the goals. However, with practice and support over several days, the students can be expected to show improvement and become more improved in their progress.

Furthermore, overall the lesson can be continued over several days for all students to practice across various narrative text styles and stories to become more well-rounded in their knowledge of narratives and to become exposed to the multitude of writing forms of authors.