Narrative Writing: Seed Ideas

Third Grade | Writing | 55 minutes | Standards: W.3.3.A
by Emily Wakabi | June 27, 2015

Give your students a chance to share some interesting anecdotes with this simple lesson. By brainstorming ideas about past experiences, young writers will learn to develop their own personal narratives.

Learning Objectives
Students will be able to think of small ideas to use for writing personal narratives.

Materials and Preparation
- Lined paper

Key Terms:
- personal narrative
- seed idea

Lesson

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Ask the class, "Don’t you love listening to a good story? Have you ever listened to your friend or family member tell a good story and were so amazed by the story that you didn’t want it to ever end?"
- Tell the students to put their thumbs up if they have ever experienced that before.
- Tell your students, "I love listening to good stories! All good stories have key ingredients that make you want to listen to them."

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Explicit Instruction/Teacher Modeling (10 minutes)

- Explain that today, the students are going to write personal narratives, which are true stories that happened in their lives.
- Explain that personal narratives can be very interesting to write and read when they are about a small, specific moment that has happened in someone's life. In a short story, the speaker can include how she was feeling, what she was thinking, and what she saw.
- Compare a personal narrative to a watermelon: the big event is a watermelon slice, and the details are seeds. Ideas about small moments can be called seed ideas.
- To confirm that students understand, ask, "What is a personal narrative?"

Guided Practice/Interactive Modeling (15 minutes)

- Say, "Let's make a watermelon and seed T-chart together."
- Draw a T-chart on the board. Label the columns with a picture of a watermelon and a picture of a seed.
- Say, "What are some watermelon ideas you can think of? As in, what are big moments that have happened in your life?"
- Ask, "What is a small moment that happened within that big moment?"
- Record the students' big and small moments on the T-chart. Collect at least 3-4 ideas from students.

Independent Working Time (15 minutes)

- Tell students to come up with their own T-charts of watermelon and seed ideas in order to be able to write their personal narratives.
- Challenge students to come up with at least three big moments and three small moments.
- Have them complete this assignment on lined paper.
Extend

Differentiation

- **Enrichment**: Students who are finished with writing the three big and small moments may go on to choose their favorite moments and start writing their first rough drafts.
- **Support**: Students who need extra support may need sentence stems left on the board: *A big event that happened in my life was when... I can remember the moment when...*

Review

Assessment *(5 minutes)*

Before Independent Working Time, stop and ask students to turn and tell one another about personal narratives and the difference between watermelon and seed ideas.

- Walk around and listen to their conversations, then call on two students to share their responses with the rest of the class.
- Assess students based on their discussions.

Review and Closing *(5 minutes)*

- Tell students that creating stories can be a fun experience, since it helps them remember events from their own lives.
- Ask students, "Why is it important to pick a small or seed moment in order to write a personal narrative?"