Navigating the Narrative:
Learning the Language of Stories

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Why Stories?

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”

- Maya Angelou

* Build on students’ assets and value their experiences
* Leverage oral language
* Use text as mentors
* Amplify the language
Diversity in Children’s Books 2015

Percentages of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds. Based on the 2015 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children’s Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison. ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pstats.asp

0.9% American Indians/First Nations
2.4% Latinx
3.3% Asian Pacifics/Asian Pacific Americans
7.6% African/African Americans
12.5%* Animals, Trucks, etc.
73.3%** White

* About a quarter of the total children’s books published in 2015 were picture books, and about half of those depict non-human characters, like animals & trucks.
** The remainder depict white characters.
Stories are...

- Emotive and expressive
- Personal
- Brimming with sentence variety
- Often rich in description
- Structured with a sequence as their macrostructure
Narrative from a Reader’s Lens

I liked it!

That was sad.

That was a funny story!

I learned...

It reminded me of...

It made me feel...

I have a connection...

That happened to me! One time...

I think...

That was sad.

[The character] should have...
Impact the audience
Develop a plot to achieve a goal
Use craft & structure (i.e., words and sentences) for effect
Paint a picture (or use pictures) to enhance the story
A Focus on Form: Understanding & Producing Texts

Purpose (Genre)

Ideas

Organization

Typical language

Sentences/Clauses

Vocabulary

Spelling

Slide credit: adapted from Dr. Aída Walqui, WestEd, adapted from Walqui & Hernandez, 2001

ELD Standards, Parts I, II, II & CA Standards for ELA/Literacy
1. Explore the Genre: *Narrative Text*

2. Unpack the Language of *Narratives*

3. Choose Your Anchor Texts

4. Decide What Your Students Need

5. Sequence Instruction

6. Teach, Assess, and Adjust (Read, Talk, Write)
1. Explore the Genre: Narrative Text
ELD is the opportunity for students to learn and apply academic language.

**Language Resources**

- General academic vocabulary
- Discourse practices
- Domain-specific vocabulary
- Precision for meaning-making
- Audience, task, and purpose
- Grammatical structures
- Text structures

**Academic Language** is the language used in school to help students develop content knowledge and to convey their understandings of this knowledge.

*(CA ELA/ELD Framework, Ch. 2, p.80)*
2. Unpack the Language of Narrative

Like a whale-shaped moon,
The airship’s enormous balloon
soared above the busy city and out to
the countryside.
it sailed over green farms,
and cows and sheep,
high above the heads of excited
children
Who cried out, “Look, look--
It’s a girl, and she’s flying!”

Until Cesar Chavez was ten, every summer
was like a fiesta…

Cesar thought the whole world belonged
to his family. The eighty acres of their ranch
were an island in the shimmering Arizona
desert, and the starry skies were all their
own…

Cesar was so happy at home that he was
a little afraid when school started…The
teacher moved him to another seat—and
Cesar flew out the door and ran home.
2. Unpack the Language of Narrative

One day...
So...
One evening...
At dinner...
When...
On a clear summer day...finally...
Just then...

Like a whale-shaped moon,
The airship’s enormous balloon
soared above the busy city and
out to the countryside.
it sailed over green farms,
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Who cried out, “Look, look--
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transitions of time
noun phrases (adj + noun)
verbs
prepositions/prepositional phrases
simile and figurative lang
pronouns
conjunctions
3. Choose Your Texts

Text sets:

- Complementary narratives
- Similar structures
- Reflect the types of language students will learn to use
- Gradually increasing in complexity
### 4. Decide What YOUR Students Need

| Grade Level | CA ELD Standards | Listen to students talk  
Read students’ writing |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA/Literacy Standards &amp; Individual Learning Goals</td>
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</table>

**EX.**

*Writing simple sentences?*
Teach them to expand sentences with growing noun phrases or prepositional phrases.

*Repetitive verbs?*
Introduce them to new verb phrases

*Repeated proper or common nouns?*
Teach use of pronouns or embedded clauses using “who”
5. Sequence Instruction

- Language knowledge & skills
- Growing language in steps
- Language objectives
- Choose strategies & approaches with intention

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<th>Skill</th>
<th>Strategy / Approach</th>
<th>Part I</th>
<th>Part II</th>
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<td>Presenting (5 picture retail)</td>
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<td>Verb Process Chart</td>
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<td>Verb Sorting (Past Tense)</td>
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<td>Expanding Sentences with picture cards</td>
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Day 1: Temporal Words w/ 5 Picture Retell Presentation
- Use 5 pics printed from text; T posts and Ss partner to retell the story, T listens to Ss talk and reviews transition words they are using to connect parts of the story, then invites students to level up their language by asking questions, referencing the original text, or implementing new vocabulary to elevate the language Ss are using. Ss then present their revised retell with more sophisticated temporal words.

Day 2: Verb Process Chart

Consider beginning the lesson sequence with a Draw & Label / Pictorial Input Chart that can be referenced along the way.
6. Teach, Assess, and Adjust

- Anticipate scaffolds
- Address the genre through oral and written language experiences
- Listen to student talk & read student writing
- Respond to student needs
Integrated ELD

Immerse Students in Narratives

- Narrative read alouds
- Watching narrative video
- Students reading narratives
- Students telling stories
- Students listening to others’ stories

Choose narratives that align with class goals.
Teach Purpose of Narrative

Share stories to...

- Entertain
- Teach a lesson
- Impact the world
Integrated ELD

Teach Narrative Structure

Orientation

Complication

Sequence of Events

longer build up

quicker end

Resolution
Teach Narrative Elements

- Meet character
- Orientation
- Problems grow
- Complication
- Sequence of Events
- Turning point
- Character responds
- Resolution
- Character changed
- We learn something about life!

Character affected by setting, events & secondary characters.
Integrated ELD

Teach Micro Structures within Macro Narrative

If ____ then ______.

_______ but ________.

_____ was ______.

- If that young lady can fly then so can I!
- Aída wanted to fly but it was not acceptable for girls in those days.
- The day was clear.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWBST</th>
<th>Story Elements</th>
<th>In this story...</th>
<th>Text Evidence</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Somebody | Main character  
*Who was this story mostly about?* | Aída de Acosta | “On day, a girl named Aída was strolling on a lively street in a lively city…” |
| Wanted | Goal or motivation  
*What did the character want?* | to learn to fly an airship | “‘If that man can fly, so can I,’ cried Aída.” |
| But | Problem, obstacle or conflict  
*What got in the way?* | A long time ago, it was unacceptable for girls to fly and her father disapproved. | “Aída’s mother scolded, ‘No, no, no, silly girl, don’t be so bold. Ay, ay, ay, no one will ever marry a girl who dares to fly!’” |
| So | Character reaction  
*How did the character respond?* | She persisted and convinced Alberto to allow her to try. | “So, Aída asked the man to teach her the art of airship flight.” “Aída worked hard and soon learned…” |
| Then | Resolution  
*What happened in the end?* | Aída flew an airship and became an inspiration in history. | “‘You did it!’ he shouted. ‘You flew! You’re a hero, such a brave inspiration…”” |
“All words cannot be taught, but readers can be taught to be aware that writers use multiple ways to label basic concepts about communications, feelings, traits, and settings”.

- Analyses of narratives show narrative text may involve more unique words than informational text.
- Narrative texts are often built with synonym networks.

(Hiebert, E. & Cervetti, G., 2011 from TextProject.org)
### Integrated ELD: The Language of Character

| Does | • asked Alberto to teach her to fly  
|      | • worked hard  
|      | • went to an aerial dinner  
|      | • piloted the airship alone  
|      | • soared above the city  
| Thinks | • dreamed of soaring in the sky  
|        | • wanted lessons and a chance to learn  
| Says  | • “If that man can fly, so can I!”  
|       | • “Sometimes all it takes to change the whole world is one wild dreamer’s soaring example.”  

***brave… → courageous***

_______ was a _______ character.  
_____ was a brave character who ________.
Designated ELD: Could teach...

Teach the Language of Narrative

Narrative transitions of time

In the beginning...
Soon...
Not long after...
Eventually...
In the end...

Past tense verbs & verb phrases

Sentences with noun phrases

Manipulate sentences order

Expanded sentences with prepositional phrases

Swapping pronouns for common & proper nouns

Using conjunctions to join ideas
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<th>SAYING</th>
<th>THINKING / FEELING</th>
<th>BEING / HAVING</th>
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<td>realized</td>
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**Designated ELD: Verb Process Chart**
“She reached her destination: a green field where swift polo ponies twirled and leaped like dancers.”

Aída kept flying high above ____ roads and ____ rivers, completely alone, truly free.

- dusty
- winding
- narrow
- empty
- long
Designated ELD: Manipulating Sentences

Alberto invited Aída to an aerial dinner one evening

Alberto invited Aída to an aerial dinner one evening
Designated ELD: Cohesion w/ 4 Picture Retell

One day...

Soon...

Not long after...

Finally, on a clear summer day...
Designated ELD: Cohesion w/ Pronouns

Aída → ___ glanced up.

...asked the man to teach ___ to fly.

___ did not care.

she

her
Designated ELD: Connecting Ideas

Lessons on the ground weren’t easy, but Aída worked hard and soon learned...

Aída had a dream now, a wild dream of soaring, and she did not care to marry anyone who thought dreams were boring.

Aída smiled down at the children

she frowned at Alberto
Integrated ELD

Applying What We’ve Learned

Sharing Our Own Stories!

- Oral Storytelling
- Talk Across Fingers
- Draw & Label
- Sketch to Write
- Shared, Interactive & Independent Writing
Me and my family were going to the lake. We got in the car and we drove to the lake. When we were at the lake, we went in the water. So we started to get on the rope; it was very fun to go on.

I went out of the water to dry. Then I got lost so I walked around looking for my family.

One day I was jumping on my trampoline. And I was jumping so high that I said off. After my arm started to hurt. And that's when I found out that my arm was broken.

One day me and my family went out. I was excited because it was my first time going. Then I went on the black hole, it was scary. It was scary because it's dark and it's long. Then it was over and I went in the wave pool.

Then I got out of the wave pool. It was freezing cold when I got out. Then I went to our table. And I ate pizza for 30 min then I had to wait. Then I got past then I went in the wave pool again.
Visit commoncore.tcoe.org

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