



Healthy Habits: Story Writing

Students collaborate on creative stories with a beginning, middle, and end that reinforce healthy habits.

LESSON PLAN

SKILLS & OBJECTIVES

- Uses the skills and strategies of the writing process
- Uses strategies to organize written work (e.g., includes a beginning, middle, and ending; uses a sequence of events)
- Writes for different purposes (e.g., to entertain, inform, learn, communicate ideas)
- Uses drawings to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas

1 **IN ADVANCE**, review some basic facts about how germs spread, the importance of washing hands, and other healthy habits that help you stay well. Refer to pages 10 and 11 in the **Healthy Habits Story Writing Contest Handbook** for helpful Q&A and tips on teaching good hygiene in the classroom. Consider sharing these points with your class and brainstorming other stay-healthy tips:

GERM FACTS

- ✓ Germs are too tiny to see without a microscope.
- ✓ Invisible, illness-causing germs can live for a long time (some can live for 2 hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks and tables.
- ✓ Germs can spread and make us sick when a person touches something that has germs on it and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth.
- ✓ Germs can also spread when a sick person coughs or sneezes into their hands and then touches shared surfaces.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAND WASHING

- ✓ Cleaning with soap and water removes dirt and most germs from hands and other surfaces.
- ✓ Wash hands for at least 20 seconds (long enough to sing Happy Birthday twice!)
- ✓ Wash hands before every meal, after using the bathroom, and after playing outside to get rid of germs.

HEALTHY HABITS THAT KEEP US WELL

- ✓ Practice the “elbow” cough and sneeze (using your elbows instead of your hands to cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze).
- ✓ Cover your mouths and noses with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and then immediately throw it away and wash hands.
- ✓ Leave book bags, shoes and coats at the door when you walk inside.
- ✓ Eat a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, calcium, and protein to help your growing bodies get the nutrients you need to stay healthy all school year.
- ✓ Eat a good breakfast to start the school day off right.
- ✓ Get plenty of sleep to help stay healthy.

2 Next, tell your class that you are going to create a class story that has a message about Healthy Habits like hand washing and preventing the spread of germs.

3 Review the elements of a good story with your class and tell them that their stories must have a beginning, middle, and end.

4 Divide your class into small groups of 3-5 students and have each person in the groups select a story starter. Students may also come up with their own “germ” of an idea!

ONCE UPON A-AH-AH-CHOO!

Whenever Mr. Fuzzle tried to bake bread, he ended up with flour dust everywhere. The problem was that the powdery flour made Mr. Fuzzle’s muzzle twitch, which made it itch. And that always made him sneeze. *[Hint: maybe the customers in the bakery find out about Mr. Fuzzle’s germ sneezes and stop buying his bread. What will Mr. Fuzzle do?]*

THE HAND MADE TALE

According to my cousin Bess, the only way to create something home grown, hand sewn, personally painted, or custom crafted is to make a giant mess! *[Hint: maybe Bess becomes so overwhelmed by her messes that she can’t tell a crayon from a carrot. It gets so bad that she creates a tissue paper flower bouquet from USED tissues and gets terribly sick. Who will help her out of this unhealthy situation?]*

THE ADVENTURES OF HEALTHY STEALTHY

It was a brisk October evening, when Henry wandered into his neighbor’s garden and spotted the oddest pumpkin he had ever seen.... *[Hint: maybe this pumpkin has magic powers and turns Henry into a Healthy Habits superhero who performs super secret feats of germ busting.]*

5 Ask questions that prompt students to think of ideas for their stories.

WHO? Think of possible characters to include in the story.

WHERE? In what setting does the story take place? Are there a variety of settings involved?

WHEN? What is the time period of your story: present day, the future, the past, or a combination?

WHAT? What is going to happen in the story? What is the problem or conflict?

WHY? What is the purpose of the story: to educate and inform, to entertain, or a combination? What response do you want from the reader: to make them laugh, cry, or understand a different viewpoint or opinion?

HOW? How is the problem or conflict resolved?

6 To start, instruct each student to write only the beginning of their story, using one of the story starter suggestions or their own original story idea. Once the beginnings are written, have students pass them on to the next person in their group who writes only the middle. The story is passed again to a third student who writes the end of the story. The completed story can be passed several more times so the group can draw illustrations, title page, etc. (Make sure each student has a chance to write a beginning, middle, end, and to draw illustrations.)

You may use a timer to keep things moving if necessary. You may also wish to modify the activity for younger grades, having them create a story in pictures rather than words.

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP YOU COMPLETE THIS LESSON, SEE PAGE 9 OF THE **HEALTHY HABITS STORY WRITING CONTEST HANDBOOK**.