

## Story Writing

**WebQuest Description:** A major challenge faced by many high school students is writing a well developed story/narrative. A narrative (or story) is any account of connected events, presented to a reader or listener in a sequence of written or spoken words, or in a sequence of (moving) pictures. A good narration tells a story in an interesting way by adding elements of suspense so that the reader will want to know how the story will turn out. This webQuest seeks to counter the challenges faced by high school students by exposing them to the various elements of a story and the relationship between these elements.

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Curriculum:** English / Language Arts

**Keywords:** narrative, elements, setting, characters, plot, theme, conflict, resolution, dialogue

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### Introduction

We all tell stories on a daily basis. We tell stories to our friends, our family members about our experiences, as well as stories about family members and friends. Thus, we interact with story writing on a regular basis. Another main way in which are exposed to story writing is through movies, movies generally tell a story. Through these informal and indirect interactions with story writing, we become aware of the elements that make up a story. We become cognizant that a story needs characters as someone has to be the 'star' (the protagonist) and someone has to be the 'bad guy' (the antagonist). Between these characters, a problem will develop and the problem has to be solved. The solution to the problem generally transcends a message to the readers, the listeners or the viewers or we find ourselves in a position saying "if only she has done...then this would happen or ...would happen". These characters has to be in a particular location at a particular time which will bring about the setting. This web quest will explore the interrelatedness between the elements of the story.

### Tasks

Step 1: Watch a video about the elements of a story. Step 2: Identify the five elements of a story highlighted in the video. Step 3: Use the interactive power point to complete an exercise on the elements of a story. Step 4: Use the elements to develop a story.

### Process

Step one: watch the YouTube video provided ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnmdCdKAss8&feature=player\\_detailpage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnmdCdKAss8&feature=player_detailpage)) and identify the five elements of a story. Step two: Discuss what you have learnt about each element orally and note key points. Step three: You will visit the website provided with an interactive power point, <http://www.learner.org/interactives/story/>. Then you will complete the exercise presented on the power point. You will be able to view your responses at the end. Step four: You will form groups of four. Each group will be allowed to choose a topic from the list provided and incorporate each element and write a short story comprising of 200-250 words.

### Evaluation

The story you write will be graded according to the rubric below. Students are expected to meet criteria for rules of writing to include correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. Close attention will be paid to how well students incorporate each element and develop the plot of the story. Students will also be graded for creativity and use of imagination to capture and maintain the interest of their readers throughout the story. All members of the group must give equal participation to receive full credit.

Category and Score	15	13	12	11	Score
Characterization	The main characters are named and clearly described using variety of direct and indirect techniques. Most readers could describe the characters accurately.	The main characters are named and described using some direct and indirect techniques. Most readers would have some idea of what the characters are like.	The main characters are named using few direct and indirect characterization techniques. The reader knows very little about the characters.	It is hard to tell who the main characters are and there is little or no use of direct or indirect characterization techniques.	/15

Category and Score	15	13	12	11	Score
Setting	Many vivid, descriptive words are used to tell when and where the story took place.	Some vivid, descriptive words are used to tell the audience when and where the story took place.	The reader can figure out when and where the story took place, but the author didn't supply much detail.	The reader has trouble figuring out when and where the story took place.	/15
Organization of Plot	The story is very well organized. One idea or scene follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions.	The story is pretty well organized. One idea or scene may seem out of place. Clear transitions are used.	The story is a little hard to follow. The transitions are sometimes not clear.	Ideas and scenes seem to be randomly arranged.	/15
Creativity	The story contains many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has really used his/her imagination	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has used his/her imagination	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they distract from the story. The author has tried to use his/her imagination.	There is little evidence of creativity in the story. The author does not seem to have used much imagination.	/15
				Total Score	60

## Conclusion

Congratulations, you have completed your lesson on story writing. Now that you have read and viewed all the videos and documents, and have completed the given tasks, you should be better equipped to compose effective stories. Remember that there are five major elements within a story- the setting, the characters, plot, theme and conflict (which is also a part of the plot) and each element is related to the other. In other words, one element cannot function effectively without the others. You must also keep in mind that a story requires an active imagination and creativity as you need to captivate and maintain the interest of your readers throughout the entire story. There are also a number of other sites available on the internet which can assist you with story writing. Let's go out, enjoy and write stories that will permanently stain the minds of all individuals who interact with it.

## Teacher Page

As teachers, we are all trying to find creative, interesting and innovative ways to reach our students and ensure that the content we teach is engraved in their receptive minds and brains and is relevant to their everyday lives. Today's children are technologically savvy, hence one way to reach them is through the integration of technology. This webQuest aims at guiding teachers in presenting the concept of elements of story to students in a manner that they can all appreciate and be engaged in the teaching learning process.

### Standards

Students are being prepared for the CSEC English Language examination in Jamaica. One crucial component of this examination is story writing. In order to write an effective story, students must be familiar with the elements of a story and how each element should be combined to create a story. At the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Define each element of a story in-depth
2. Explain the inter-relatedness of each element
3. Combine elements to create a well-written story

### Credits

This WebQuest would not have been possible without the assistance of the following sources.

Google images

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnmdCdKAss8&feature=player\\_detailpage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnmdCdKAss8&feature=player_detailpage)

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/story/>.

Many thanks to the creative minds of Oleiphia Williams and Samantha Miller who were instrumental in the creation of this webQuest.

### Other

I hope this WebQuest will offer a great level of assistance to teachers as they interact with the ever changing and fast developing children of this society