Story Planning

The structure of a story has been described as a story grammar. A narrative is centered on three basic elements of setting, plot and ending. Underlying these elements is an intricate chain of events: initiating event, an internal response, an attempt or action, an outcome or consequence and a resolution. As each of these events leads to the next a causal chain is formed.

The story grammar also allows students to identify how the general framework of a story works. This identification leads to deeper understanding of the text as students explore both explicit and implicit elements in the story. Comprehension and retention of information are also enhanced.

The story grammar components, in the following appendix is based on the concept of “Braidy- The Story Grammar Marker” ® (Moreau & Fidrych, 1994, 2002), a manipulative tool that allows students to plan their ideas and translate their ideas in words and sentences to convey the content of each element in the story.

Story Grammar Elements and Icons:

Setting

Character: Who? “☺”
This icon represents the character in the story. It can be a person, animal or other being.

Setting: Where/When- “STAR”
The star represents the setting of the story: location, time and habitual state or characteristic i.e. ‘he was always hungry”

Plot

Initiating Event: “KICK-OFF”
The shoe represents the initiating event or the “kick-off”. The “kick-off” signals the event that sets off the story’s event i.e. a problem which cause the main character to respond is some way.

Internal Response: “HEART”
The heart represents the main character’s feelings to the “kick-off”
Plan: “HAND”
The hand means ‘stop!’ - the main character makes a plan or sets a goal and attempts to solve the problem.

Attempts/Actions: How?
The icon represents the sequence of actions carried out in attempt to achieve the goal or solve the problem.

ENDING

Direct Consequences of actions- what?: “BOWTIE”
The bowties represents the outcome of the story i.e. success or failure of the main character’s actions. The direct consequences is represented by a bowtie because it “ties it the story together”.

Resolution: “HEART”
The heart represents how the main character feels about the direct consequence. It may include a lesson or moral learnt about