

Provincial Outreach  
Program for the Early Years

**"Do you see me?"**  
Nurturing Young Storytellers & Their Craft Through  
Authentic Writing Experiences

Date: January 22, 2025 Time 8:30-2:30

Presenter:  
Jacquie Anderson

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**Today's learning objectives**

Today we will share strategies, resources and ideas to build Story Workshop and Bookmaking opportunities in your classroom:

- Nurture curiosity and joy as students build their identity as storytellers
- Extension strategies for Story Workshop to deepen and expand thinking and learning
- Extend story telling and story reading into bookmaking and building a writing community

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**Where are we coming from?**

How would you describe your prior experience and comfort level with Story Workshop?

1. Haven't tried it yet
2. Have tried it a bit
3. Pretty comfortable with it
4. Very comfortable and looking for extension opportunities.

What are you curious about?



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**Why Story Workshop?**

Story Workshop is an approach to supporting young children's literacy built upon on four pillars:  
**the sharing of stories, immersion in the arts, time for play, and a focus on meaning-making**

"What is the connection between literacy and the arts?  
 That question took us from a practice of Writer's Workshop into new terrain, and a focus on meaning-making."

"I think you probably came to school with stories..."  
 Then she asked the children to take a piece of paper and markers or colored pencils and use them to "create a summer memory" they could share.  
 She let children sit where they wanted to sit, and to help themselves to the markers or pencils, which were arranged on shelves in various places in the room.

Teaching Preschool Playwrters, Getting Started with Story Workshop [www.popey.ca](http://www.popey.ca) @popegbc @POPEYEC POPEY

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**Why Story Workshop?**

Consider the unspoken messages to these children:

- I know you have stories to tell.
- Your stories will be listened to here.
- The things we do in school rely on your stories.
- I trust you to make choices.
- I am curious about you.
- I am ready to meet you where you are.
- I expect you to listen to other people's stories.
- I know you will find connections because I know you want to make sense of things.
- You belong here.

These messages are intentional, and the experience in the classroom is designed to deliver them. A structure that prioritizes story can do that.

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**Why Story Workshop?**



✓ Honours the lives of children: student voice at the centre  
 ✓ Inclusive and accessible  
 ✓ Practices agency

"Story making creates an inclusive community, as each student has unique experiences, families, histories, and stories. No one is without a story."  
*Compton and Thompson, p. 16*

Storymaking: Michelle Kay Compton and Robin Chappelle Thompson, 2018 [www.popey.ca](http://www.popey.ca) @popegbc @POPEYEC POPEY

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**Why Story Workshop?**

"Through thinking routines students are enculturated into thinking, developing both their ability and their inclination to think."  
Ron Richhart

- ✓ Responsive
- ✓ Nurtures metaphor
- ✓ Contributes to a learning community
- ✓ Assessment tool: nudges thinking

The inquiry teacher is regularly inquiring into his or her students as learners and asking, "what are they revealing to me?", "how might I respond?", and "what next?"  
Kath Murdoch, *Power of Inquiry* p. 135

Kath Murdoch, Power of Inquiry, SeaStar Education, 2015

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**Why Story Workshop?**

**Language Comprehension**  
Background Knowledge  
Vocabulary Knowledge  
Language Structures  
Verbal Reasoning  
Story Knowledge

**Word Recognition**  
Phonological Awareness  
Decoding (and spelling)  
Sight Recognition

**Skilled Reading**  
Fluent recognition and comprehension of word recognition and text comprehension

Oral language  
Builds syntactical skills, Language structures  
Language comprehension  
Elements of story  
Accesses cultural Funds of knowledge

What have you noticed in your experience?

DATE and CHALLENGE, 2021

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**What might it look like?**

So many options!

- A particular activity, with its own boundaries
- An extension of play, with the intention of building stories around their activity
- A retelling of a meaningful read-aloud
- A summative representation of what they've been learning
- A process with discrete stages culminating in a written product
- Other ideas?

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**What might it look like?**

Some consistent features:

A prepared environment: choices of materials and spaces

A provocation: mini-lesson, experience, materials, story or text

Building the story

Sharing the story: "going public"

Reflecting on the process

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**Materials and options**

Thinking with materials...look for high affordance materials

- Loose parts
- Art materials
- Formal/informal
- retelling/creating

- Story workshop is different than play centres, and distinct from writer's workshop
- High affordance materials help develop the mental image for reading (Constance Kamii)
- It is a platform from which to leap!

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**What do you need?**

- **Variety of loose parts**
  - Man made and natural
  - Textures, shapes and sizes
- **Background piece**
  - Felt square
  - Construction paper
  - Neutral image
- **Provocation**
  - Video or story
  - Curricular content
  - experience
- **Time**
  - attention
  - Reflection or extension

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**Loose parts as provocations**



When children interact with loose parts, they enter a world of "what if" that promotes the type of thinking that leads to problem solving and theoretical reasoning. Loose parts enhance children's ability to think imaginatively and see solutions, and they bring a sense of adventure and excitement to children's play.

—Daly & Beloglovsky in  
Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children

Daly and Beloglovsky, Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children, Redleaf Press, 2014

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**What do you need?**



- Materials could also be:
  - Art materials
  - Blocks/construction
  - Wire
  - Foil
  - Paper collage
  - Clay

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**A progression**

**Needs to be taught explicitly:  
guided discovery and interactive modeling**

- Whole group, partners, individual
- Timeline will depend on how often you use it
  - Is an instructional routine

*Teaching with intention: what am I hoping for here?*  
*Teaching with openness: what am I learning here?*  
*Teaching with reflection: where can I go from here?*

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**A progression**

**The unfolding**

<p><b>exploration</b></p> <p>Giving children the chance to try out the materials, observe others and gain confidence in the value of their expression.</p>	<p><b>construction</b></p> <p>Story scribing and class editing places value on both the teller and the listener. Story Grammar Marker™ builds common language and scaffolding.</p>	<p><b>extension</b></p> <p>Into writing, thematic content, story reading and art.</p>
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**Build a story**  
**Tell a story**  
**Listen to a story**

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**Story making is world making**

What **three words** do you feel are most important when it comes to supporting your students as **story tellers** and **world makers**?

Equity	Inventiveness	Meaning making	Creativity
Voice	Innovation	Emotional literacy	Generosity
Agency	Problem solving	Compassion	Hope
Empathy	Leadership	Humour	Care
Collaboration	Engagement	Interdependence	Power
Listening	Vision	Perspective taking	Uncertainty
Imagination	Trust	Community	Reading
Inquiry	Play	Connection	Writing
Curiosity	Art	Flexibility	Self-efficacy

What questions do these words inspire you to ask?  
 Discuss & share your three words with your table group

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**Reflect and Discuss**

What are you **noticing** or **wondering** about, in relation to these five elements of story workshop?

1. Preparation
2. Provocation
3. Invitation & Negotiation
4. Story Creation
5. Story Sharing



Reflect on the information just shared and connect it with your own personal **story workshop** experiences, and share your **thoughts, questions, ideas** etc. with your table group.

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**Extensions**

### Story Grammar Marker (SGM)



Each of the symbols in the visual represent a story grammar element.

- The **Character** icon represents a person, animal, or other being.
- The **Star** was chosen as the icon for the **Setting**. The star is a good center for a semantic map or web.
- The **Blue** represents the **Inciting Event** because it is the "kick-off" of the story.
- The **Black** represents the "Badly" a Character has in response to the initiating event.
- The **Plan** is represented by a **Head**.
- Each of the **beads** represents a sequence or lists of actions.
- The **direct consequence** of the story is represented by a **bow** because it ties the story together.
- The **Resolution** of the story is how the character feels about the **Direct Consequence**. It may include a mood or a lesson learned. It is represented by three small hearts.

<https://mindwingsconcepts.com/collections/story-grammar-marker> | [www.popegc.ca](http://www.popegc.ca) | @popegc | @POPEYEC | POPEY

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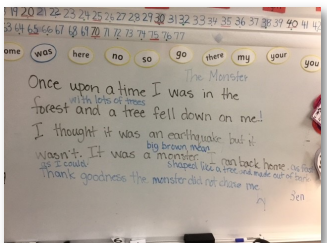
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**Extensions**



**Class editing**

- Details
- Elements
- Community
- Thinking
- Comprehension
- Modeling Oral Language structures

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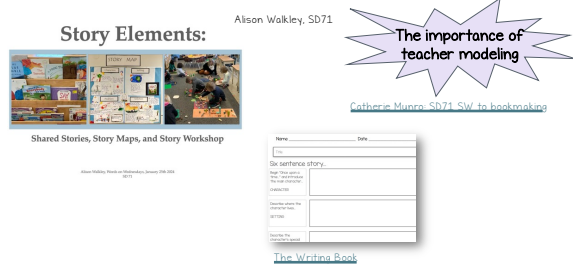
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**Other options**

### Story Elements:

Alison Walkley, SD71



Shared Stories, Story Maps, and Story Workshop

[Catherine Munro, SD71 SW to bookmaking](#)

[The Writing Book](#)

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**Other resources**

[Project Zero: Thinking With Materials](#)      [Thinking With Materials Resources SD23 \(Central Okanagan\)](#)





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**Connections: small fires**

**Foundations of Learning**

<p><b>Continuum of Play</b></p> <p><i>For a long time, educators used the terms 'play' and 'free play' synonymously. Teacher involvement in play, however, can substantively change the nature of that play and foster academic learning... p. 24</i></p>	<p><b>Inclusion</b></p> <p><i>Active participation supports the healthy development and well-being of a child. It is essential that each child can participate in and throughout the learning activity and is not waiting for a different moment to begin. p. 31</i></p>	<p><b>Literacy</b></p> <p><i>All children's voices need to be heard and honoured in a classroom. Their stories, their passions and interests, and their questions guide our instruction and create a strong and supportive community of learners. p. 43</i></p>
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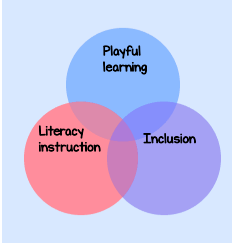
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**Connections: small fires**

- How does an instructional routine like Story Workshop amplify the ideas in this quote?
- Where do you see yourself in this quote?
- What new view have you seen today?

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**Connections**

How does Story Workshop connect to the ideas in this Literacy Fan?

Proficiency in these foundational skills is necessary to all students to be reflective, critical and independent readers

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**Bookmaking: Writing for Real**

**Agenda:**

- Gratitude
- Orienting ourselves: *Who are we and where are we on the journey?*
- Bookmaking: why and what?
- The Principles of Teaching Writing
- Why this workshop? *Orienting it within the Literacy Framework*
- What next?

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**Bookmaking: Writing for Real**

Beware of deferring the opportunities for working with complexity until later.  
Marie Clay

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### Why Writers' Workshop and Bookmaking?

**Language Comprehension**

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Semantic Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge

**Word Recognition**

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Encoding)
- Sight Recognition

**Skilled Reading**

Fluent, automatic, and coordinated use of word recognition and language comprehension.

- Encoding (the flip side of decoding)
- Expressive language is connected to oral language
  - Builds syntactical skills, Language structures
- Elements of story

**ACTIVE ORAL LANGUAGE**

**READING**

**LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION**

**Successful phonics learning requires at least half of instructional time spent on authentic practice**  
Wiley Blevins

Duke and Cartwright, 2011

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### Why Writers' Workshop and Bookmaking?

**Expressive stance**

In order to read, one must internally speak and hear the sounds.

**Receptive stance**

In order to write, one must internally hear the speech.

The Six Shifts: Burkin and Yates

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### Why Writers' Workshop and Bookmaking?

**The Reading Brain**

Children need multiple opportunities to establish the neuropathways that connect the parts of the brain, and form new pathways, or shortcuts, with consolidation.

The Reading Brain: How We Learn to Read

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**Why this model?**

**Writers Workshop and bookmaking**

- ❖ builds resilience
  - ❖ overcoming the fear of the blank page
  - ❖ building stamina
  - ❖ process over product
- ❖ builds identity
  - ❖ My voice
  - ❖ My passions
  - ❖ My thinking

*Beware of giving too many directions: this is a process not a procedure. What happens when we let them have the space to figure it out? - Kate Wood Ray*

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**Guiding Principles of Writing Instruction**

**The first three are foundations:**  
*"The basic necessities we provide our students every day in the classroom, the over-and-over elements that allow for composition, thinking, creativity, and problem solving." (Borner and Arens, 2020)*

**Time**

- Students need time, and lots of it, to practice writing

**Ownership**

- Students are more motivated when they have opportunities to make important choices about their writing

**Response**

- Students need frequent, timely, descriptive feedback and responsive teaching

Becoming a Better Writing Teacher, Anderson & Glover www.poep.ca @poepbc @POPEYEC POPEY

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**Guiding Principles of Writing Instruction**

Here are some more: *(Glover and Anderson, 2024)*

**Relationships:** knowing students as people, and knowing them as writers

**Engagement:** choice and engagement; authentic audiences

**Authenticity:** doers of the "whole" behaviour

**Knowledge Base:** teachers need to have extensive knowledge about writing

**Curricular Decision-making:** teachers know their students best

**Mentor Authors:** study what experienced writers do

**Differentiated Instruction:** using conferences to consider varied needs

**Starting with Strengths:** determining what they can already do

**Nudging:** zone of proximal development

**Explicit Teaching:** a writing teachers responsibility is to teach

**Independence:** helping students learn to write without the teacher

Becoming a Better Writing Teacher, Anderson & Glover www.poep.ca @poepbc @POPEYEC POPEY

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**A possible progression...**

**Getting started:**

**Session 1:** samples of genre: memoir, number books, information books, wordless books, teacher writing, etc. (*Immersion*)

- Choice of genre, choice of paper
- What will you be doing? Co-create criteria
- Reflection and share: what is your book about? What might you add/change next time?

**Session 2:** author moves: details and elaborations (*reading like a writer*)

- what do mentor authors do? Teacher samples and picture books
- Think about your book: how could you use some of these moves?
- Co-create criteria for books.
- Reflection: what did you change, add? How is it going?

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**A possible progression...**

**Session 3:** mentor texts and conventions

- Homing in on particular conventions your students need:
  - High frequency words and letters/sounds (*this is what phonics is for!*)
  - Punctuation
  - Reflection: what did you do to make your writing/book better today?

**Session 4:** revisit criteria for books: features of books (*writing like a reader*)

- How do you know your book is finished?
- Conventions: check your words...what do you know about sounds/letters? What could help you in the classroom?
- Reflection: who helped you or what did you do to make your writing better today?

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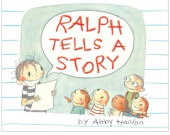
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**A possible progression...**

**Session 5:** what will you do next? Brainstorming new ideas

- Could introduce a new genre?

**Session 6:** Ralph Tells a Story. Now that you know about making books, what advice would you give kids just starting? How many different titles do we have in the class? Celebration!!



Ralph Tells a Story Abby Hanlon

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**Getting started: late primary**

*a sample progression*

**Week 1:** samples of genre: memoir, information books, teacher writing, etc. (*Immersion*)

- Choice of genre, choice of paper: **purpose, audience, passions**
- What will you be doing? Co-create criteria
- Reflection and share: what is your book about? **What genre did you choose and why?**

**Week 2:** author moves: details and elaborations (*reading like a writer*)

- what do mentor authors do? Teacher samples and picture books
- Think about your book: how could you use some of these moves?
- Co-create criteria for books
- Reflection: what did you change, add? How is it going?

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**Getting started: late primary**

**Session 3: mentor texts and conventions**

- Honing in on particular conventions your students need:
  - High Frequency words and content vocabulary
  - Punctuation
  - Reflection: what did you do to make your writing/book better today?

**Session 4: revisit criteria** for books: features of books (*writing like a reader*)

- How do you know your book is finished?
- Reflection: who helped you or what did you do to make your writing better today?

Abdul's Story www.popeg.ca @popegbc @POPEYEC POPEY

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**Getting started: late primary**

- Session 5: what will you do next? Brainstorming new ideas
- Could introduce a new genre?

Session 6: **Abdul's Story**: Now that you know about making books, what advice would you give kids just starting? How many different titles do we have in the class? Celebration!

Abdul's Story Jamilah Thompson-Breeloh www.popeg.ca @popegbc @POPEYEC POPEY

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**Foundational Skills for Reading**

How does Bookmaking connect to the ideas in this Literacy Fan?

Proficiency in these foundational skills is necessary to all students to be reflective, critical and independent readers

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**Extra notes:**

- Not everything needs to be published
- Writer's notebooks
- Writing continuum
- Immersion, immersion, immersion
- Conferencing (principles of writing instruction)
  - How? When? What?
- Peer feedback—community of writers
- **How can you see this pedagogy crossing curriculum lines?**

“Getting to know your students as writers and as people is one of the most important things you can do as a writing teacher.”  
Matt Glover

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**One more reason...**

**Writer's workshop and bookmaking:**

- ❖ Allows for the Model–Practice–Mastery cycle of instruction (WWC)
  - ❖ Explicit instruction
  - ❖ Time and practice (10–40–10 lesson timeline)
  - ❖ Sharing and publishing
  - ❖ Mentor texts
- ❖ Teaches students how to use the writing process for a variety of purposes (WWC)
  - ❖ Flexibility: *repertoire and adaptability*
  - ❖ Purpose: *urgency and investment*
  - ❖ Audience: *who is it for and why does it matter to them?*

**Rec. 1:** Provide daily (1hr) time to write (K–30 mins)  
**Rec. 2:** Teach students how to use the writing process

Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers

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**Resources**

- [Reading Feedback Directives: Getting Started with Story Workshops](#)
- [popey.ca](#)
- Story Grammar Marker: <https://www.popecbc.ca/collections/story-grammar-marker>
- [Poetry Years: Think and Write Materials](#)
- [Learning in the Poet's Years](#)
- [Thinking With Materials Resources: SD23 \(Central\) \(Ontario\)](#)
- [Teaching Elementary Students to Be Effective Writers](#)
- [Anderson Story Workshop](#)
- [Landscape](#)
- [The Reading Brain: How We Learn to Read](#)
- [Storywork](#), Michelle Kay Compton and Robin Craythorn Thompson, 2018
- Story Workshop: New Possibilities for Young Writers, Susan Harris Mackay, Heinemann, 2021
- [Power of Inquiry](#), Kath Murdoch, SeaStar Education, 2015
- Daly and Beloslavsky, *Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children*, Redleaf Press, 2014
- *The Writing Book: The Literacy Place*
- *Becoming a Better Writing Teacher*, Anderson & Glover
- *Shifting the Balance*, Burkins & Yates
- *In Pictures and In Words*—Katie Wood Ray
- *Ralph Tells a Story*— Abby Hanlon
- *Abdul's Story*— Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow

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**Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years**



Thank you from the POPEY team!

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