Today:

1. **Why?**   *Writing is hard!*

2. **What?**   *Foundational principles*

3. **How?**   *Practical ideas!* (lots of them)

Writing is hard!

Why

Writing is hard!

reading ✔ generating ideas ✔ prioritizing ✔
planning/outlining ✔ organizing thoughts ✔
self regulation ✔ focus/task orientation ✔
time management ✔ attention to detail ✔
research ✔ physically creating letters/words ✔
format ✔ spelling ✔ figures of speech ✔
fact vs. fiction ✔ spacing ✔ capitalization ✔
sentence structure ✔ paragraph structure ✔
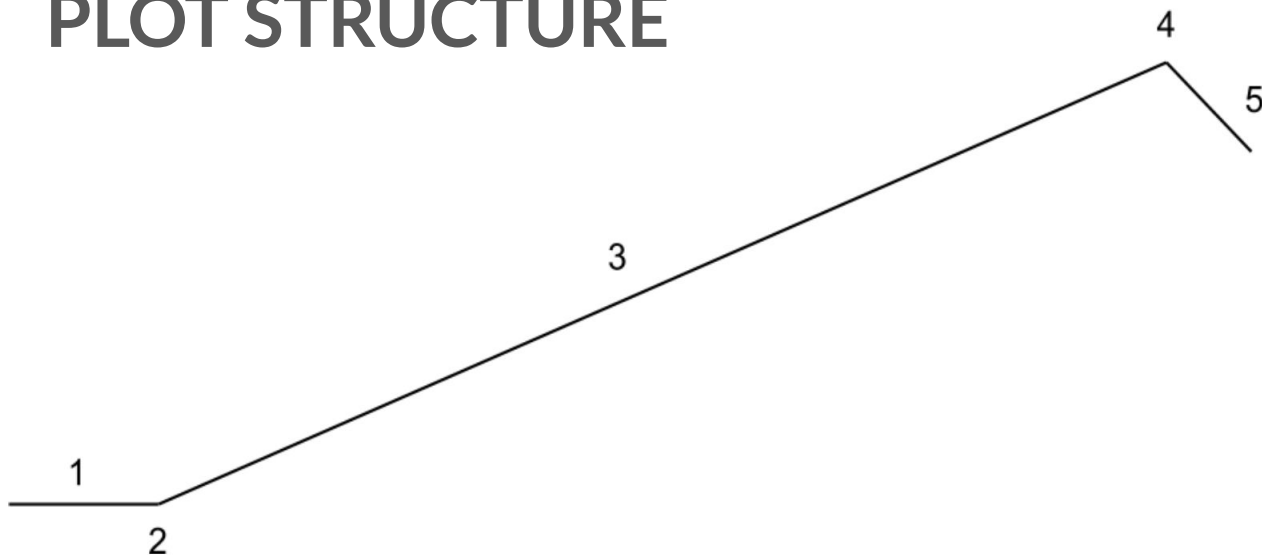syntactic variation ✔ punctuation ✔
grammar ✔ editing ✔ revising ✔

Our Focus:

From **Stuck** to *Story*

PLOT STRUCTURE

1 - *Beginning*
- introduce characters
- show "normal life"
- What do we need to know for the rest of the story to make sense?

2 - *Inciting Incident*
- Problem kicks off the story

3 - *Rising Action*
- problem gets a little bigger 2 or 3 times

4 - *Climax*
- problem resolved
(we find out how it works out)

5 - *Ending*
- show return to life afterwards
(result/consequences)

VARIED APPROACHES

How can we approach writing instruction such that all students are afforded their best opportunity to succeed?

VARIED APPROACHES

FIT, FAIRNESS, AND FLEXIBILITY

HOW CHILDREN LEARN
By Joanne Foster, Ed.D.

When we understand how children learn best, parents and teachers can be more responsive to young people's needs as students and lifelong learners.

FIT

You can improve how children learn by creating a good fit between a child and the available learning opportunities. Consider these questions:

- Is the activity aligned with the child's level of readiness?
- What kinds of assessments have been done?
- Are instructions clear? Muddles lead to mayhem.
- Is there choice?
- What incentives might help to sustain momentum and motivation?
- Where's the fun?

FAIRNESS

How children learn involves fairness. Consider these questions when assessing your child's potential learning opportunities:

- Is the activity meaningful?
- Is the activity appropriately challenging?
- Is it risky? And if so, is there some kind of safety net to help mitigate fear or concerns?
- Does the child have the necessary resources and tools?
- Is the goal reachable in the allotted time frame?

FLEXIBILITY

Employ practical strategies to maximize flexibility and match experiences with how children learn best. Consider these questions to optimize learning:

- Is there involvement?
- Are emotions in check?
- What about skill sets? Help children develop better work habits.
- Have kids thought about previous adaptability strategies?
- Why not get creative? Help kids think in new or innovative ways about how to make a mismatched situation more conducive for learning.
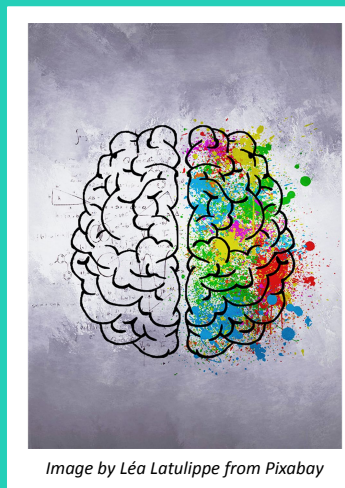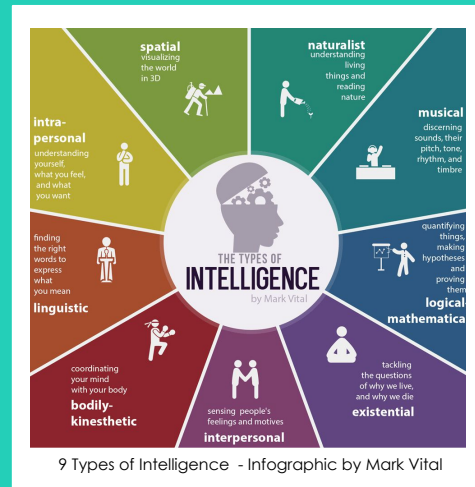
SOURCE: HTTPS://WWW.ROOTSOFACTION.COM/HOW-CHILDREN-LEARN/

Image by Léa Latulippe from Pixabay

Learning Styles

Visual	Aural	Read/Write	Kinesthetic
Visual learners are those who prefer learning by observing things. These students can easily visualize information, have a good sense of direction, and usually likes to draw and doodle.	Sound and music are a strong suit for these types of learners who typically have a good sense of rhythm. Aural learners normally learn best through verbal presentations like lectures and speeches.	Students who work best in the reading/writing modality demonstrate a strong learning preference for the written word. They have a vast vocabulary can easily express themselves and usually love to read and write.	Whether it's by using their body or hands, these learners are all about the sense of touch. Physical activities and sports play a big part in these student's lives.
Learn by seeing	**Learn by hearing**	**Learn by reading& writing**	**Learn by doing**
• Charts, Graphs • Graphic organizers • Lesson outlines • Picture aids • PowerPoints	• Read-aloud • Listening centers • Verbal instructions • Discussions • Repeat to a friend	• Book & texts • Dictionaries • Note-taking	• Incorporate body movement • Tactile- touch, feel • Hands-on

https://blog.visual-paradigm.com/learning-styles-infographic/

spatial visualizing the world in 3D

naturalist understanding living things and reading nature

musical discerning sounds, their pitch, tone, rhythm, and timbre

intra-personal understanding yourself, what you feel, and what you want

finding the right words to express what you mean
linguistic

THE TYPES OF **INTELLIGENCE** by Mark Vital

quantifying things, making hypotheses and proving them
logical mathematica

coordinating your mind with your body
bodily-kinesthetic

sensing people's feelings and motives
interpersonal

tackling the questions of why we live, and why we die
existential

9 Types of Intelligence - Infographic by Mark Vital

VARIED APPROACHES

Interestingly, I find that much of the writing process involves **little to no actual writing**—*which can be very good news for those who struggle with writing, per se.*

So here's a challenge for you as a teacher:

To what extent are you able to teach writing without having your students actually write?

Today:

1. **Why?** Writing is **hard!** ✔

2. **What?** Foundational principles ✔

3. **How?** Practical ideas! (lots of them)

Practical Ideas: Storytelling Games

Fortunately/Unfortunately
partner game, one takes each role
(switch roles so each gets a turn)

One-Word Story
- group of 4(ish)
- must tell a story with each person, in turn, saying 1 word
- Who can create a complete story, with a beginning, middle and an end

Story, Story
- Group of 5(ish) in a circle with 1 in the middle
- moderator (in the middle) determines kind of story, then points to someone in the circle to begin story
- without notice, moderator points to someone new, who must continue story

Alternate Version: Story, Story, Die
- *Moderator is the king/queen*
- *If you falter, or displease the monarch, you are killed*

Excuses: see next slide

Excuses:

- Partners
- Teacher assigns a bad situation that students need to talk themselves out of

  Examples:
  - your homework isn't done
  - you're babysitting and your parents come home to find your younger sibling locked in a closet
  - you just totaled your parents' car
  - all of the the (freshly baked) cookies are gone
  - you're late for school for the 29th time this month

- 1 student takes the role of the guilty party, who must explain themself, avoiding responsibility at all costs.
- The other student takes the role of authority figure, interjecting as often as necessary to ensure that the task is as difficult as possible for the accused.
- Repeat, switching roles each time

Fortunately/Unfortunately
partner game, one takes each role
(switch roles so each gets a turn)

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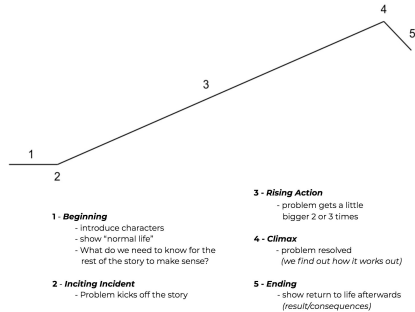• Who can create a complete story, with a beginning, middle and an end

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Excuses: see next slide

Plot Structure

4
5
3
1
2

3 - *Rising Action*
 - problem gets a little bigger 2 or 3 times

4 - *Climax*
 - problem resolved
 (we find out how it works out)

1 - *Beginning*
 - introduce characters
 - show "normal life"
 - What do we need to know for the rest of the story to make sense?

5 - *Ending*
 - show return to life afterwards
 (result/consequences)

2 - *Inciting Incident*
 - Problem kicks off the story

PLOT STRUCTURE

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

THE TYPES OF **INTELLIGENCE**
by Mark Vital

spatial visualizing the world in 3D

naturalist understanding living things and reading nature

musical discerning sounds, their pitch, tone, rhythm, and timbre

intra-personal understanding yourself, what you feel, and what you want

linguistic finding the right words to express what you mean

logical mathematical quantifying things, making hypotheses and proving them

bodily-kinesthetic coordinating your mind with your body

interpersonal sensing people's feelings and motives

existential tackling the questions of why we live, and why we die

Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences by Howard Gardner

adioma

VARIED APPROACHES

Practical Ideas: Act Out/Write Out

Students act out a simple story, then write down what they acted out.

. . . example on next slide

Practical Ideas: Act Out/Write Out

A Meeting

Basic Requirements:

random groups of 3   1-2 minutes long   no violence

Scene:

- 2 (or more) parties meet (new kid at school, job interview, secret meeting, blind date, etc.).
- Of course, there must be a problem (something goes wrong, conflict, etc.).
- problem grows 2 or 3 times
- problem resolved

Let's Talk!

We've talked about storytelling games & using drama to inspire story writing.

How do you feel about implementing some of this in your classroom?

What might work especially well in your classroom?

What obstacles would you anticipate? Solutions?

* Please _share_ anything that's worked well for you in the past!

Practical Ideas: Random Story

Students create a story based on 3 random things.

There's a _description_ on my website.
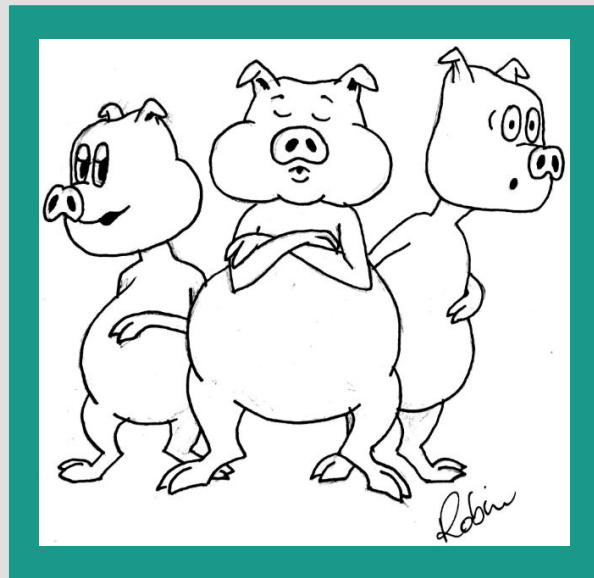
Practical Ideas: Characters & Settings

Students *brainstorm*:

- A list of types of characters for a potential story (criminal, doctor, student, professor, etc. . . . There's also a <u>list</u> you can download from my website.)

- A list of interesting characteristics for potential story characters (short-tempered, clumsy, shy, etc . . . . There's also a <u>list</u> you can download from my website.

- A list of possible settings for a story (hospital emergency room, grocery store checkout, an elevator, etc.)

Using the 3 lists generated, students create 2 characters and place them in one of the settings, then write the story that might ensue.

Practical Ideas: The End

Give your students the *last* line of a story and have them write the story that precedes it.

Example:

"Finally, upon reaching the top of the mountain, I raised the tuba to my lips and gave a mighty blast."

Practical Ideas: Musical Stories

- Each student gets a laptop and 3 minutes to begin writing a story.
- After 3 minutes, all students must STOP (even if they're in the middle of a sentence) and move to the next chair.
- They have 3(ish) minutes to read and add to the story in front of them.
- Repeat.
- When you get near the end, let them know. ("Start wrapping up your story. This is the second last turn.")
- At the end, students return to their original chair and read (and react!).

Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Brainstorm simple, everyday situations.
Then ask, "What could go wrong?"

Reinforces *Inciting Incident* & *Rising Action*

Plot Structure

4
5
3
1
2

1 - Beginning
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- show "normal life"
- What do we need to know for the rest of the story to make sense?

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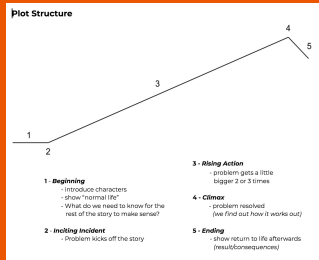
Classic example: Mr. Bean

(see next slide)

Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Step 1A

*Students **brainstorm** simple, everyday activities, such as . . .*

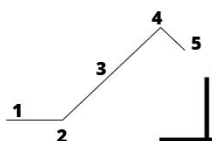|		
making a meal	ordering food	siblings doing chores
doing homework	playing a game	putting on makeup
sewing	fixing something	meeting someone new
getting a dog/cat into a crate		buying/returning an item in a store
trying an activity for the first time		lessons (dance, singing, karate, etc.)

Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Step 1*B*

Students **choose** 1 option to develop.

making a meal	ordering food	siblings doing chores
doing homework	playing a game	putting on makeup
sewing	fixing something	meeting someone new
getting a dog/cat into a crate	buying/returning an item in a store	
trying an activity for the first time	lessons (dance, singing, karate, etc.)	

Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Step 1*C*

Students **record** their choice.

1- Beginning	2- Inciting Incident	3– Rising Action
- introduce characters - show "normal life" - what do we need to know for the rest of the story to make sense?	- problem kicks off the story	- problem gets a little bigger 2 or 3 times

4- Climax	5- Ending	PLOT STRUCTURE
- problem resolved (we find out how it works out)	-show return to life afterwards (result/consequences)	

See next slide
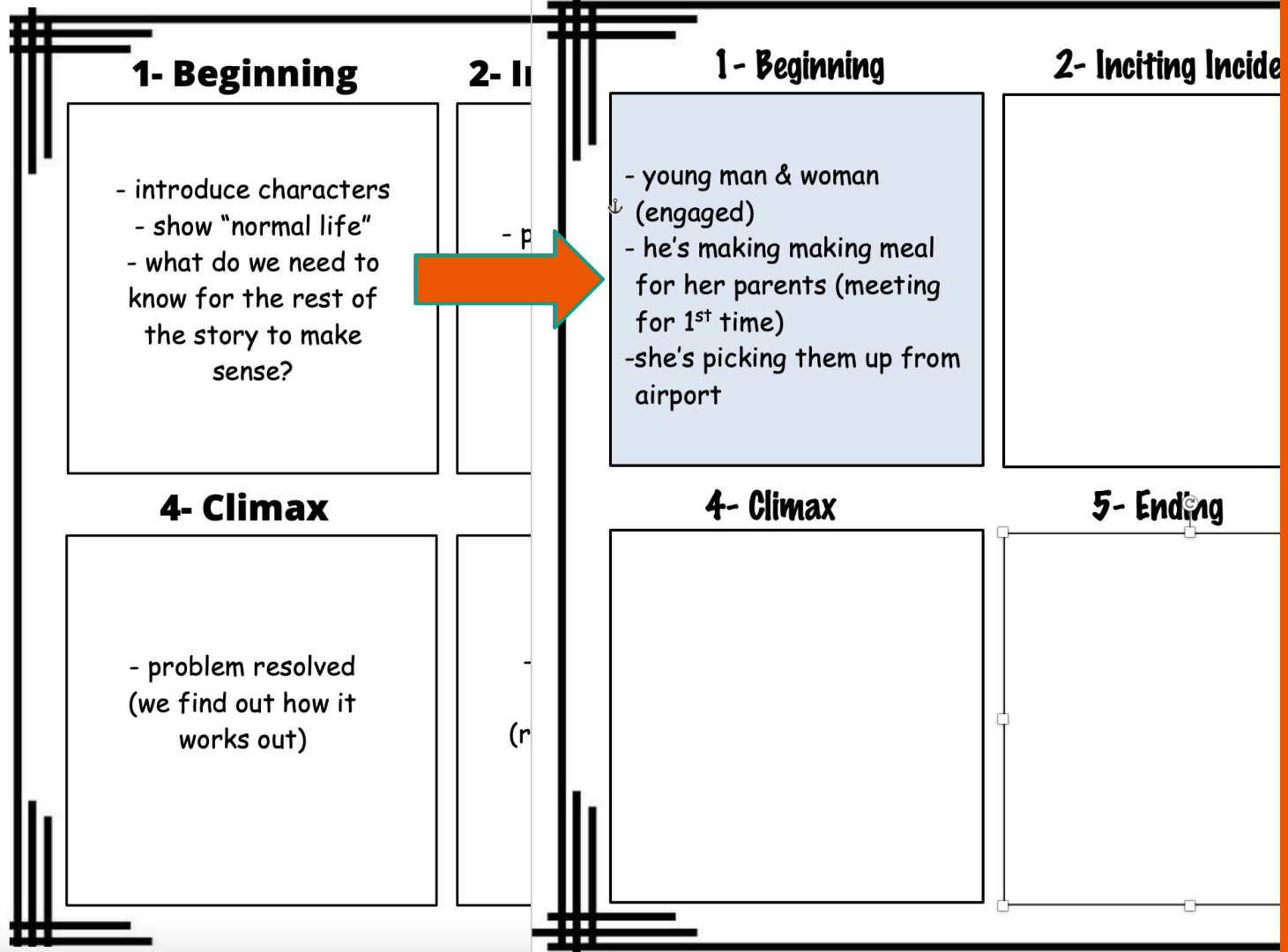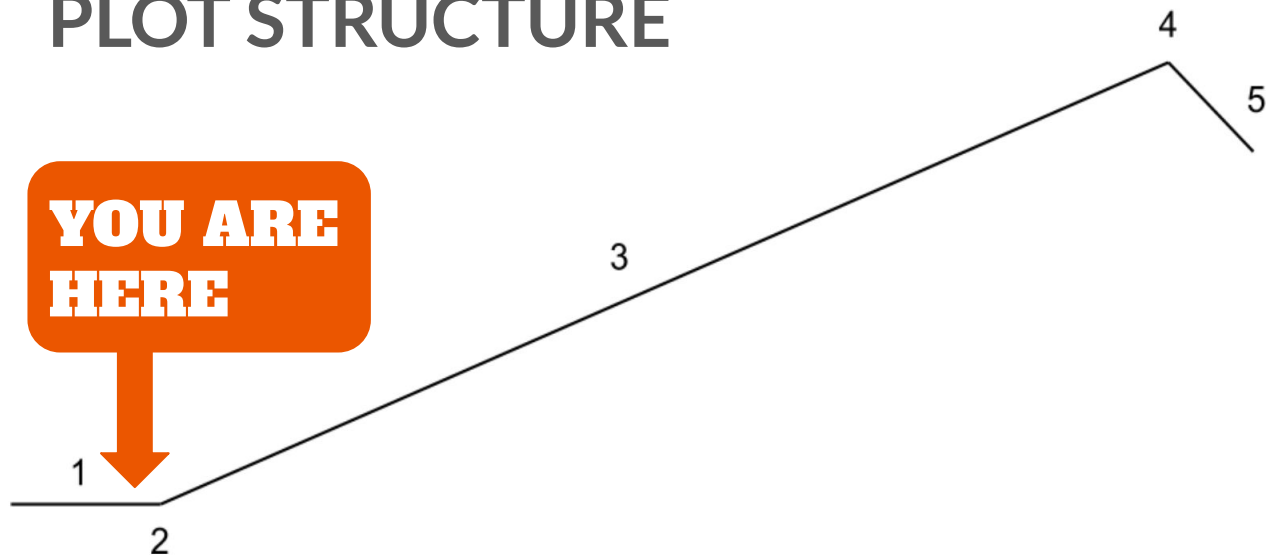
1- Beginning

- introduce characters
- show "normal life"
- what do we need to know for the rest of the story to make sense?

2- I

- p

4- Climax

- problem resolved (we find out how it works out)

1- Beginning

- young man & woman (engaged)
- he's making making meal for her parents (meeting for 1st time)
- she's picking them up from airport

2- Inciting Incide

4- Climax

5- Ending

Step 2

2nd round of *brainstorming*

Students create their **inciting incident** by asking the question, *What could go wrong?*

Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Step 3

Students *develop* 1 idea.

Make the problem *bigger.*

- *Foolish decisions*
- *Added challenges*
- *Failed attempts to solve problem*
- Conflicts between characters
- Increased consequences
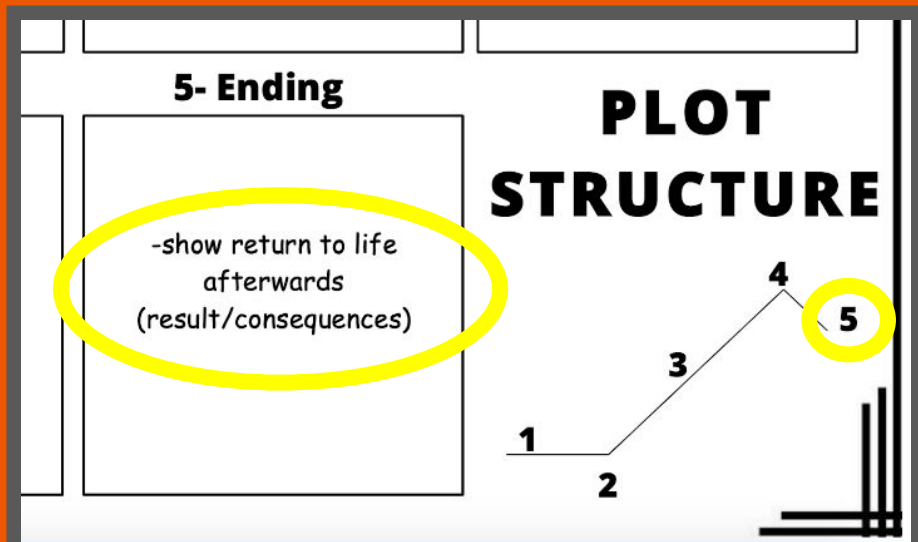
Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Keep recording!

1- Beginning	2- Inciting Incident	3– Rising Action
- introduce characters - show "normal life" - what do we need to know for the rest of the story to make sense?	- problem kicks off the story	- problem gets a little bigger 2 or 3 times

4- Climax	5- Ending	PLOT STRUCTURE
- problem resolved (we find out how it works out)	-show return to life afterwards (result/consequences)	
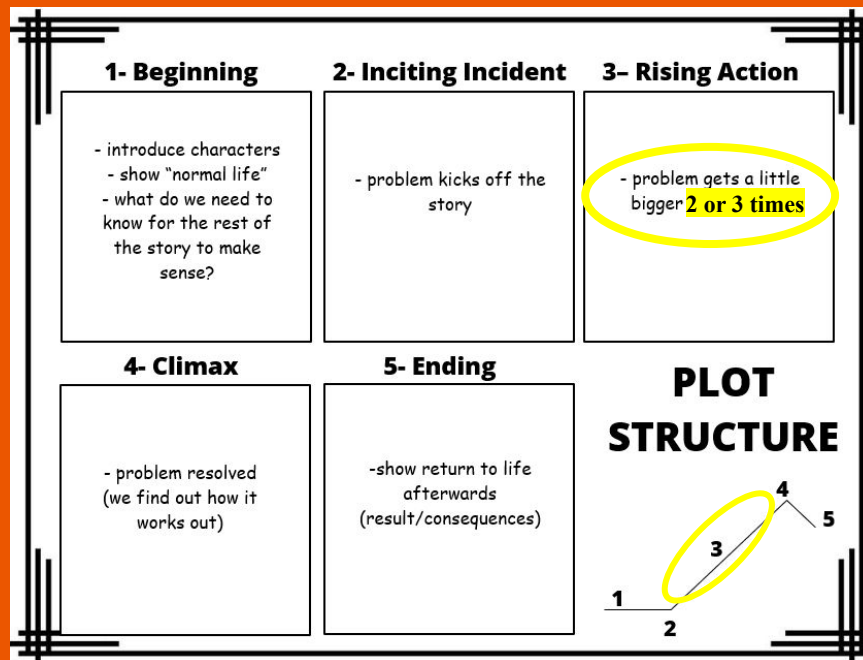
Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Step 4

Students **brainstorm** ways to resolve the problem.

- *Success*
- *Success, but new (or repeat) problem*
- *Fail/alternate approach*
- *Fail/give up*
- *Twist*

Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Step 5

Endings:

How do things end up for the characters?

What does "ordinary life" look like for them now?

1- Beginning	2- Inciting Incident	3- Rising Action
- young man & woman (engaged) - he's making making meal for her parents (meeting for 1st time) -she's picking them up from airport	- blah blah	- blah blah blah

4- Climax	5- Ending	
- Yadda yadda	Sometimes it helps to return to the beginning.	PLOT STRUCTURE
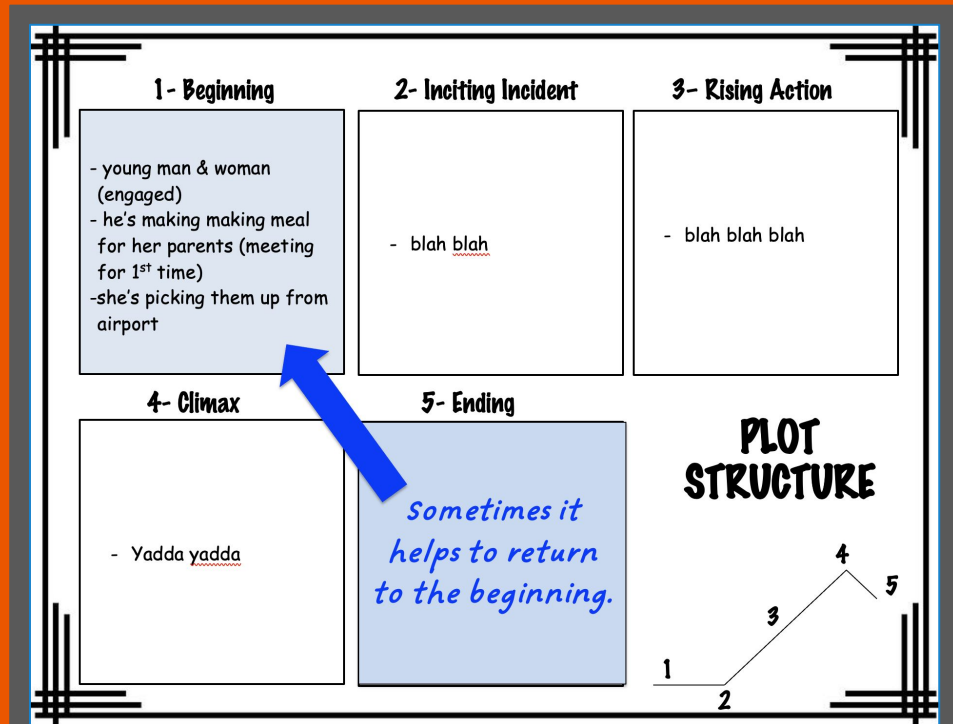
Practical Ideas: What Could Go Wrong?

Step 6

Students *write* the story!

Potential problems?

Getting started . . .
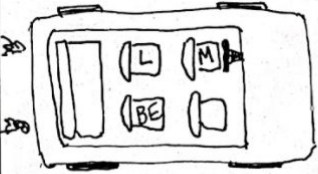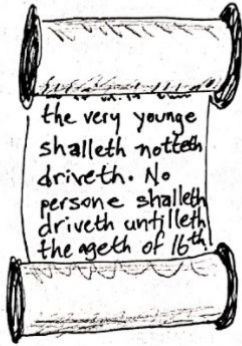
- At the beginning???
- **Teach each part!**
  - *Mentor texts*
- Talk time

Practical Ideas: Box Story

A story is a **character** who **wants something** and **overcomes conflict** to get it.

— *Donald Miller*

Title	Beginning	Problem	Look

The Adventures of Baby Edwin #3:

Baby Edwin Saves the Day

A ___baby___ named ~~Edwin~~ wants to drive the van.

The Law (etc.)

the very younge shalleth notteth driveth. No persone shalleth driveth untilleth the ageth of 16th

B.E. tries to tell his mom

She gives him a cookie
Last stop: bank

Look	Look	Solution	End

BE/L talk. Mom gets out & they spring into action.

Click

But... how to drive?

Teamwork

Just as they pull out ... bank robber.

Chase him!

Collapses exhausted & arrested.

BE & Lido are given the Order of Canada!

Title	Beginning	Problem	Make it Bigger
	A _____ named _____ wants _____ _____.		
Bigger!	**Even Bigger!**	**Solution**	**End**

Title	Beginning	Problem	Make it Bigger
- Last thing - Should be catchy, and . . . - Tell what the story is about (but not everything)	A _____ (a kind of person *{like boy, woman, etc.}*, or a job, *{like astronaut, plumber, princess, etc.}*, or an animal, or even a thing *{like a tree, a sock, etc.}* named _____ wants _____ (can be something very ordinary *{like lunch, or to be left alone}*, or something bigger *{like a friend, or fame}* or something within themselves, *{like courage}*.	Something that makes it difficult to get what they want.	Either: - Something that the main character tries to do to solve the problem, or... - Something that makes it even harder - Start small
Like last time *(maybe a little bigger)*	The final obstacle	Either: - They finally get what they wanted, or . . . - We find out what they got instead	Shows what happens after - Maybe things are exactly the same as before, or . . . - The character's life is very different
Bigger!	**Even Bigger!**	**Solution**	**End**

Title	Beginning	Problem	Make it Bigger
The Adventures of Bella	A fox named Bella wants to be a millionaire.	Broken leg & hospital bills	She robs a bank
Robbery fails: arrested	She steals a taser but accidentally tases herself	She gets a family!!!! (her old family saves her)	Show her with her family!
Bigger!	Even Bigger!	Solution	End

Review
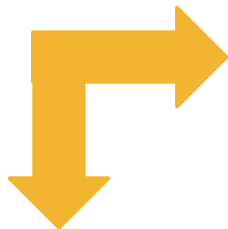
Plot Structure   Varied Approaches   Storytelling Games   Drama   Random Story   Characters & Settings   The End   Musical Stories   Box Story   What Could Go Wrong?

All Year:

- Plot structure

- Mentor texts

Important

Pathways into Writing:

- Games

- Drama

- Talking***

- Drawing

Let's Talk!

Plot Structure   Varied Approaches   Storytelling Games   Drama   Random Story   Characters & Settings   The End   Musical Stories   Box Story   What Could Go Wrong?

To what extent do you feel equipped to implement these ideas in your classroom?

Questions?

What obstacles would you anticipate? Solutions?

* What ideas or resources have worked well for you? Please <u>share!</u>

What Else?

Logistics?

?

Other aspects of the writing process?
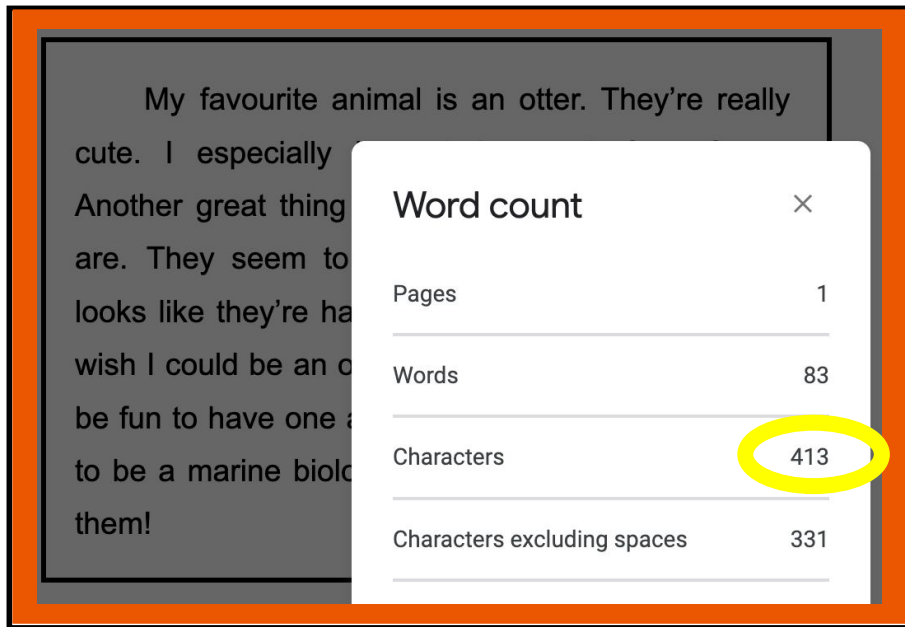
Editing is really hard.

My favourite animal is an otter. They're really cute. I especially love their round, furry faces. Another great thing about them is how playful they are. They seem to love the water, and it always looks like they're having so much fun. Sometimes I wish I could be an otter. Other times, I think it would be fun to have one as a pet. When I grow up I want to be a marine biologist so I can spend all day with them!

How many mistakes might a child make in writing this paragraph?

Editing is really hard.

My favourite animal is an otter. They're really cute. I especially _____ Another great thing _____ are. They seem to _____ looks like they're ha_____ wish I could be an o_____ be fun to have one a_____ to be a marine biolo_____ them!

Word count

Pages	1
Words	83
Characters	413
Characters excluding spaces	331

How many mistakes might a child make in writing this paragraph?

Editing is really hard.

Types of Editing

- ***Developmental/Structural (etc.) Editing***
  - big picture: plot development/structure, characters, themes, pacing, POV, tense, dialogue, plot holes, order, flow, etc.

- ***Copy Editing***
  - mechanical; grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.

- ***Line/Stylistic Editing***
  - *sometimes considered copy editing, sometimes separate*
  - stylistic; looks at manuscript line by line and considers word choice (incl. elimination of adjectives/adverbs in favour of strong verbs, & elimination of cliches/jargon/euphemisms), trimming/tightening prose, sentence/paragraph structure etc.

- ***Proofreading***
  - usually last, looking for mistakes that may have slipped through, considers every comma, space, page number (and other formatting), etc.

Editing _is really hard._

Editing Tips

- Resist your inner perfectonist. 🙂
- Teach/edit/assess **one** thing at a time.
- Peer editing is your friend, but it must be taught.
- Many mini edits vs. fewer monster edits

Thanks!

Connect with me at
robinpawlak.com

Or on socials