

Storyboard Writing Strategy

Purpose of Storyboards

A Storyboard is a graphic organizer used in writing generally a set of identified spaces which are places for the writer to put pictures, symbols, and text related to their topic. According to Roger Essley in *Visual Tools for Differentiating Reading and Writing Instruction*, it seems that the logical sequencing power of Storyboards, combined with the hands-on engagement of drawing, makes this strategy work for learners. Storyboards can be a successful tool when working with students who are primarily visual learners as they grasp the more abstract ideas in writing. This strategy can be helpful to aid flexible thinking by students as they add and/or delete ideas. Teachers and students use Storyboards as a thinking tool, helping their ideas to grow. Storyboards help many writers think and plan as they develop ideas during their writing.

How Storyboards Can Be Used

One way this strategy can be used is for the teacher to bring in her example of a Storyboard she previously created—with pictures or with pictures and written notes focused on her chosen topic. As she talks to the students about purposes of the Storyboard, she would cut it apart and move the sketches around. Students can contribute their thoughts as to how the story sketches might be placed. The activity demonstrates flexible thinking in organizing ideas.

Using the same Storyboard example, the teacher can have students hold up the sketches as she had produced them. The teacher will then have the students actually move these around to show how the story can be told. In the discussion, the students might determine that there are some sketches that don't work well in a particular line of thinking. These can be discarded leaving spaces that need to be filled in with more appropriate sketches based on the topic of the writing assignment. This activity demonstrates how the students can add or delete ideas as they determine the focus of the story.

Also, students can be asked to bring in their own Storyboard which will be used in a class discussion. Students can be asked to give feedback as to how the sketches might be manipulated to determine the different approaches a writer might take in developing the writing piece. This tool makes building a story or essay easier because the writer has hands-on capability like a word processor.

Conclusion

The Storyboarding strategy can be used for many tasks, from prewriting to composing to revision and conferencing—making them more engaging and effective.

Using the Storyboard strategy can allow those students who need the visual in order to help organize their ideas. Also, some students who may already be good writers may find this an effective way to plan their writing piece thoroughly before they write. This strategy can also provide a breakthrough for students who hit a writer's block during the writing process.

Works Cited

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Essley, Roger. 2008. Visual Tools for Differentiating Reading and Writing Instruction. Scholastic, Inc: <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id+3750735>

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Using Storyboards: Thinking Through Visual Storytelling
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