

“Paper Bag Story”

Overview: This activity can be used to engage individual students during a whole group class reading and story time. It allows students to actively listen and participate in identifying characters, setting, and details relating to a fictional story. The activity can be differentiated so that it can be used with a wide variety of ability levels.

Procedure: The teacher should choose a fictional text to read. Choose a text that relates to a current theme in the classroom. For example, choose a book relating to a current event (seasonal/holiday related) or a text that connects to another content area (weather, community related, etc.). A list of a few examples can be found in the materials section.

First, the teacher reads the text to the class. Next, during a structured time allow the students prepare their paper bag story. The paper bag story can be composed of student illustrations or a teacher prepared handout. The handout can be gathered from various sources or simply illustrations from the text printed for students to color and/or cut out. The illustrations used should be related to characters, setting, and/or details found in the fictional text. There are various ways to create the paper bag manipulative, however student involvement in the making of it is important because it allows for ownership and allows for building familiarity with the characters, setting, and details related to the story.

After the paper bag stories are completed, the students can use their product when reading or following along with the reading of the fictional story. The teacher (or assistant) can model along with the reading. Students place the illustrations into the bag as they are presented in the story.

Student will become familiar with the fictional text as they are actively listening and participating in the paper bag story. Student can answer questions related to the text using their paper bag story illustrations, or by answering verbally or written.

ASOL Covered in this Activity:

3E--CF 1 b: The student will identify characters and settings in a familiar story.

Extension Idea: Students can compare two familiar stories by sorting the illustrations by each individual story or by characters and setting.

3E--CF 1 e: The student will identify the actions and feelings of the characters in a familiar story.

Extension Idea: Students can use familiar stories to make comparisons between characters and actions. They can identify similarities and differences among characters and discuss how actions could potentially change the outcome.

3E--CF 1 g: The student will use illustrations in print or digital text to identify characters and setting.

Extension Idea: Create a digital version of the fictional text (or other texts) using PowerPoint. Students can listen to the slides and answer questions on the computer, a worksheet, or verbally following the reading.

3E--CF 1 i: The student will identify parts of illustrations that depict a particular mood, setting, or character.

Extension Idea: Prior to reading a text the teacher can lead a “picture walk” to allow student to identify parts of illustrations that represent the mood, setting, and characters. This can be a strategy that students utilize before reading a book on their own.

3E--CF 2 f: The student will identify the traits, motivations, or feelings of characters in a story.

Extension Idea: Students can make connections between a variety of familiar fictional texts by sorting or matching characters based on their feelings (cheerful, anxious, excited, etc.) and character traits (honesty, bravery, helpfulness, etc.).

4E--CF 1 c: The student will use details from fictional text to describe a character in a story.

Extension Idea: The teacher can create a “game” or partner activity in which students are given two characters to describe using story details/events. Students can use a T-chart to compare and describe each character.

6E--CF 1 b: The student will determine the theme or central idea of a familiar story and identify details that relate to it.

Extension Idea: Select various themes that apply to multiple familiar stories that will be read by the class over a period of time or the entire year. As fictional stories are read, allow the class to post the title and author under the relating theme. Over time the students will have a visual that connects familiar stories through their theme.

7E--CF 1 b: The student will determine the theme or central idea of a fictional text and identify the details that relate to it.

Extension Idea: Allow the students to sequence a familiar fictional text using a graphic organizer.

HSE--CF 1 b: The student will determine the central idea of the fictional text and select details that relate to it to retell the text.

Extension Idea: Allow the students to sequence a familiar fictional text using a graphic organizer.

Materials Needed:

--- Fictional text; The following is a list of a few examples to use:

- The Mitten (by: Jan Brett)
 - The Very Lonely Firefly (by: Eric Carle)
 - If You take a Mouse to School (by: Laura Numeroff & Felicia Bond)
 - Miss Nelson is Missing (by: Harry G. Allard & James Marshall)
 - There Was a Cold Lady who Swallowed Some Snow (by: Lucille Colandro)
- Illustrations to be colored/cut out **OR** paper for students to create illustrations
 - Crayons, scissors, and paper bags
 - Three dimensional objects representing the story
 - Questions to be answered by students related to the paper bag book

Instructional Setting:

This activity can take place in a whole group setting. Small group or individual instruction may be used to collect data on individual responses to questions related to characters, setting, and relating details.

Community Connections and/or Peer Interaction:

Students can be paired to do this activity once they have become familiar with the steps. They can read to one another and take turns. Additionally, older students could use this activity to read a familiar fictional text to a younger class.

Functional Activity/Routine:

The teacher can make this a routine activity to engage student during group instruction and reading. As students become familiar with the steps of the activity, they can possibly complete it more independently.

Strategies to Collect Evidence:

The teacher can provide student responses to the questions asked relating to the paper bag book. Student responses can be given through written expression and other types of responses to be collected and describe in anecdotal notes.

Specific Options for Differentiating this Activity:

This activity allows for differentiating based on abilities and levels. Students can independently complete this activity. If a student has physical limitations, assistance may be required. Students can use visual aids to make choices by touching, answering yes/no questions, and/or eye gaze response.