

Mapping Personal Narratives

Purpose

Students will write a brief personal narrative describing the setting, characters, problems/goals, and events in detail.

Materials

For the teacher: transparency of Black Line Master (BLM) *Story Map*, overhead projector, transparency of blank story map

For each student: copy of BLM *Story Map*

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Inform students that they will be writing personal narratives, which are stories that have actually happened to them.
2. Share a short personal narrative that you or somebody else has written.
3. Explain to students that story maps are often made before stories are written. Authors use story maps to help organize their ideas and define the elements in detail of the story, such as setting, characters, problems/goals, and events. Point out that everything on the story map should also be in the story.
4. Have students help you fill out a story map for the personal narrative that you read aloud. Stress the use of descriptive details.

B. Activity

1. Ask students to brainstorm and list events that have really happened to them that they think would make good stories.
2. Give each student a copy of the BLM *Story Map* to fill out prior to writing his or her story.
3. Allow students to write their personal narratives, using the BLM as a guide.
4. This activity may take up writing time over the course of a few days. Have the students continue the writing process and publish their stories as a class book.

(continued)

EXTENDING
THE



ACTIVITY

Allow students to publish their stories as part of the complete writing process. Stories could be made into picture books, shared with younger students, or placed in your classroom library. Stories could be presented by one writer in an "author's chair" each day.

INCORPORATING



TECHNOLOGY

Have students use word processing software for producing stories in final form and for publishing their books.

Standards Links
2.5.2, 2.5.5, 2.5.6

Activity (continued)

C. Close the Activity

1. Tell students that a story map is a type of graphic organizer that is often used for pre-writing.
2. Promote a discussion about how their story maps helped them write a better story.

Classroom Assessment

Basic Concepts and Processes

At the end of the activity, ask students the following questions:



What is the purpose of a story map?



How can using a story map make you a better writer?

Name: _____

Story Map

Setting
Main Character
Other Character
Problems/Goals
Main Events
Beginning
Middle
End

Story Map

Teacher Directions

Give each student a copy of the BLM *Story Map* and ask them to fill it out. Have them compose a narrative based on the information they have written on the BLM.

Answer Key

Answers will vary.