

Plot Mobiles

Purpose

Students will study basic plots of folktales from around the world.

Materials

For the teacher: an international folktale (e.g., *The Enchanted Umbrella*, *A French Folktale* by Odette Meyers)

For each student: folktales from around the world (e.g., *The Star Maiden* from Ojibway, *The Stone-Cutter's Wishes* from Japan, or *The Golden Spear* from Ireland, all from *The Book of Fairies*, ed. Rose Williams); grade-level-appropriate picture books; wire hanger; tagboard cut into triangles, circles, and squares; string; markers

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Preparation

1. Gather a variety of folktales from around the world.
2. Make a plot mobile about one of the folktales using a hanger, tagboard, shapes, string, and markers.

B. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Explain to students that *plot* is the sequence of events in a story.
2. Tell students that they will be dividing the main events of the story into three parts (beginning, middle, and end) to create a plot mobile.
3. Reinforce with students the idea that making some type of plot map will help them comprehend the story sequence of events.

C. Activity

1. Tell students you will be reading aloud a folktale, such as *The Enchanted Umbrella*, and they should listen carefully to be able to retell the events in it.
2. Read aloud the first part of the story.
3. Have students recount the main events of the beginning of the story, and write each event down on a separate triangular piece of tagboard.
4. Continue reading the middle part of the folktale.
5. Have students recount the main events of the middle of the story, and write each event on a separate circular piece of tagboard.

(continued)

EXTENDING
THE



ACTIVITY

Have students create plot maps of their own stories. The plot map could be part of their prewriting activity to assist them in planning the sequence of events in their stories.

connecting
across the
curriculum



Social Studies

Have students use maps and atlases to locate the countries and regions of the world that are the sources for their folktales.

Standards Links
3.2.4, 3.5.1, 3.7.6

Activity (continued)

6. Read the ending of the folktale.
7. Have students recount the main events of the story's ending, and write each event on a separate square piece of tagboard.
8. Attach the triangular pieces together on string in sequence.
9. Do the same for the circular and square pieces.
10. Attach all three sequences to a hanger to create the plot mobile.
11. Have students read a folktale of their choice.
12. Require students to make a list of the main events in the story and divide it into the beginning, middle, and ending sections of the plot.
13. Give students time to assemble plot mobiles.


D. Close the Activity


1. Allow students to decorate their plot mobile with items, pictures, and scenes from their stories.
2. Have students share their mobiles with the whole class or in small groups.


Classroom Assessment

Basic Concepts and Processes

While students are creating their plot mobiles, ask them the following questions to assess their understanding:

 What is the plot of a story?

 What three parts do we divide the sequence of events into?

 What is the purpose of a plot map?
