

Set the Scene

Purpose

Students will identify characters, setting, and important events in a story.

Materials

For the teacher: *A Bargain for Frances* by Russell Hoban, chalk, chalkboard

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Tell students that something tricky will happen in the story that they are about to hear.
2. Explain that they will need to pay close attention to the characters and events.

B. Read *A Bargain for Frances*

1. Begin reading *A Bargain for Frances* to students.
2. Periodically stop the story to ask: “What do you think of Frances?” “Would you like to have her for a playmate?” After Frances’s mother warns her about Thelma, ask students to talk about what they think Thelma will be like.
3. When Thelma is trying to convince Frances to buy her plastic tea set, ask the class what they think she might be doing. Ask students if they think she is telling the truth.
4. Make predictions with the class about what might be in the sugar bowl of Thelma’s old tea set.
5. Ask the class if they like the way the story ends.

C. Make Story Charts on the Board

1. Draw a chart with columns labeled for the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Talk about what happens during each part, and write students’ responses in the chart.
2. Make a chart labeled with the three main settings of the story: Frances’s house, Thelma’s house, and the candy store. Ask students to describe each place, and write students’ responses in the chart. Talk about what happens there. Ask: “What does Frances see at the candy store that makes her decide to call Thelma? Does she go back there again?”

(continued)

EXTENDING
THE



ACTIVITY

Make a story spinner wheel with four pictures representing plot, character, location, and wild card (anything you choose). Read a story. Direct students to take turns spinning the wheel and telling something about that category in the story.

connecting
across the
curriculum



Visual Arts

Direct students to draw pictures of their favorite story settings.

Standards Links
K.2.2, K.2.4, K.7.4

Activity (continued)

3. Make a chart about the characters in the book: Thelma, Frances, and Gloria. Ask students to describe each one, and write their responses in the chart. Ask students: “Does anyone change during the story?”


D. Apply What Students Have Learned


Have students talk about a favorite aspect of the book with partners, and have them tell if it is part of the story, a setting, or a character.

Questions for Review


Basic Concepts and Processes


After you read a story to students, use the following questions to assess students’ knowledge of the story’s characters, setting, and events:

 Who were the characters in this story?

 Who would you like to be? Why?

 Where did the story take place?

 What was your favorite part of the story?

 Why did you like that part?
