Using Stories to Teach

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Introduction:
Storytelling is an ancient practice that spans across cultures. Stories, in many different forms, play an important role in the way we communicate and make sense of the world. My goal in completing this honors project was to explore ways to use stories as a tool to enhance engagement, understanding, and memory in the classroom. I began the project by exploring what cognitive scientists, psychologists, communication scholars, and educators already knew about stories. I then applied this knowledge as I created a portfolio of lesson plans. I implemented some of these plans as a student teacher this year, and others I plan to use or modify in my future classroom. Though some of the materials I have included are traditional lesson plans, others are PowerPoints, worksheets, and other instructional materials. What follows is an explanation of how I applied my research to each lesson plan or instructional material in my portfolio.

Lessons #1 and #2: Introduction to Commas and Why do Poems Rhyme?
Fisher (1984) argues that historical and cultural context give events, objects, facts, and symbols their meaning. All information is part of a bigger story, and without this context, information is meaningless. These first two lessons seek to situate language arts content in a larger historical context in order to make it more meaningful. Based on Fisher’s ideas, these lessons don’t simply begin with the isolated skills of identifying rhyme or using commas correctly. Instead, they establish the historical background of why punctuation became essential for communication, and why rhyme was developed in poetry in the first place. Finally, these lessons not only provide a historical context for academic skills, but also challenge students to see where these elements of language arts fit into the world today (Students explore the questions “Which advertisers use rhyme in their slogans and why?” and “How can misuse of commas result in legal or personal problems today?”)

Lesson #3 and #4: Mildred D. Taylor and George Orwell Writing Assignment
These two lessons build from the ideas of Combs (1994) and Haven (2014). Combs highlights the idea that when students hear stories about historical figures, especially stories that reveal these figures’ fears or frustrations in a relatable way, students connect with the content on a personal level. Because of this connection, students are more likely to engage with and appreciate what is being taught. Transferring this idea to language arts, I created lessons three and four to provide students with personal stories about the central figures of language arts: authors. Haven found in his meta-analysis of story research that one of the key elements that transforms a list of facts into a story is motivation (the reason why a character does what he does). Because of this insight, I focused the information I provided on motivation—why the author chose to become a writer and what he (or she) hoped to accomplish. In lesson four, students are asked to take the idea of authors’ stories one step further and analyze how an author’s own experiences and motivations may influence his or her work.
Lesson #5: Introduction to Medieval Research

This lesson is based on Atkinson’s (2018) guidelines for creating a presentation based on story structure. It begins with a hook slide (mine connects doing research to going on an exciting quest). Next, it describes a challenge, and finally, it describes the steps students can take to overcome that challenge. In my PowerPoint, I also included an underlying connection to the narrative of climbing a mountain through the images I chose for each slide. The purpose of this connection was to make the steps of the assignment more concrete and easier to remember. By describing the assignment in the form of a quest with various steps, my intention was to spark students’ interest in the project through a story structure with which they are likely to be familiar.

Lesson #6: Introduction to Inventors

Moon (2010) writes that stories have a unique ability to “capture the holistic and lived experience of what is being taught” (96). In order to introduce an upcoming informational writing assignment where students choose an inventor to research, I wanted to first spark engagement in the project. My instructional goal was to support students in their knowledge of what an inventor truly is—not just someone who invents something, but someone who is a problem solver, a creative thinker, and often a helpful, caring person who wants to make people’s lives better. This understanding will establish an interest and value for the project, and based on Moon’s argument that stories can capture the reality of what it’s like to be a nurse or a first responder, I hypothesized that it could do the same for inventors.

Lesson #7: Organizing an Argumentative Essay

This instructional material is based on the ideas of Szurmak and Thuna (2013). They recommend that when explaining an unfamiliar concept, teachers should connect the concept to something that students already know about to reduce cognitive load and aid in processing. They recommend using extended metaphors to connect academic concepts to real-life situations or stories. I adapted this idea as I created a PowerPoint connecting each step of writing an argumentative essay to the process of cleaning out a closet.

Lesson #8: Escape the Labyrinth

This breakout game begins with a story to engage students in the activity. Cron (2012) writes that when we read stories, we experience what the characters are feeling. In the introduction to the game (which is designed to help students practice Greek and Latin root words), the characters experience a feeling of urgency—they are worried that they will be attacked by a monster before they are able to escape the maze. The story is meant to inspire these same feelings of urgency and determination to succeed in students as they participate in the activity. The story is also written in second person to encourage students to put themselves in the place of the characters.

Lessons #9 and #10: Vocabulary Word Stories and Adapted Frayer Model

Lee, Roberts, and Coffey (2016) found evidence to support their hypothesis that using stories to teach vocabulary words is an effective strategy for enhancing memory. In lesson nine, I created vocabulary stories based on their recommendations—the stories are short, and they feature the same vocabulary word, used in context, multiple times throughout. In lesson ten, I modified the Frayer vocabulary model. Instead of asking students to include a non-example of the word, I added a box asking them to tell about
a personal experience they have had that could demonstrate the word. This extends on the work of Lee, Roberts, and Coffey by asking students themselves to engage in the task of creating stories to illustrate words.

Communication Skills:
This project challenged me to improve my ability to communicate with others. I prepared a twenty-minute oral presentation to share my findings and applications for teaching at the 2019 BGSU ECCO (Educators in Context and Community) conference. I also created a poster to display at the 2019 Research Symposium at BGSU. I had the opportunity to summarize some of the highlights of the project for the people who attended the event, then answer their follow-up questions clearly and thoughtfully.

Application of Critical Thinking Skills:
This project required me to apply critical thinking skills. When I first began working on the project, I was willing to accept without reservation that teachers should use stories to teach as much as possible. However, this project helped me to consider this more carefully, challenging my initial assumption that because I personally enjoyed stories and learned from them, they were always the best way to teach. My advisors encouraged me to seek out scholars that were suspicious of stories, or saw disadvantages associated with using them. This led me to the work of Cowen (2009) and Dahlstrom (2014). These writers note that stories are incredibly persuasive—when we hear a story, we tend to accept it with much less critical thought than we accept other pieces of information. These sources led me to think carefully about the ethics of using such a powerful tool, as well as the concerns that stories tend to simplify life into a neat structure that does not always accurately reflect the complexities of reality. I am continuing to reflect on whether or not a conflict arises between the two conclusions that my research has led me to: 1.) That teachers should use stories to help students connect with and internalize the content they are teaching, and 2.) That students should be taught to think critically about the persuasive messages of the stories they encounter.

Conclusion:
Stories are not just a form of entertainment or a diversion—they are an essential means through which we make sense of events, learn about the world around us, and connect with others. Though I have now formally completed my honors project, this opportunity to research and reflect has left me with more questions to explore. I am looking forward to continuing to investigate questions surrounding this fascinating and important topic as I begin the next stages of my career as an educator.
Works Consulted


Lesson #1: Introduction to Commas
Introduction to Commas

Overview:
Modern writing has a variety of features that most people take for granted, including spaces between words, capitalized letters, and punctuation. In this lesson, students will explore how and why writing conventions evolved through time. They will discover that the punctuation marks we use today were originally intended to help make writing easier to read and to preserve the writer’s intended meaning—the same reasons why we learn to use punctuation marks today.

Rationale & Big Question:
Why do we need punctuation marks?

Learning Objectives:
By the end of the lesson, students will explain why punctuation marks are necessary, including how punctuation marks make writing easier to read and preserve the writer’s intended meaning.

The Lesson:
-HOOK
- Project the following on the board:
  Commas, semicolons, and question marks are so commonplace it seems as if they were always there— but that’s not the case. Keith Houston explains their history.
- Ask one student to try to read it out loud to the class.
- Project the same passage on the board with spaces and punctuation: “Commas, semicolons, and question marks are so commonplace it seems as if they were always there— but that’s not the case. Keith Houston explains their history.”
- Transition: “Thousands of years ago, writing looked like the example we just read—there were no spaces and no punctuation marks. Today we’re going to learn more about how and why our writing system became the way it is today.”

-CENTRAL LEARNING TASK
- Students will read the short article titled “The Mysterious History of Punctuation” by Keith Houston. As they read, they will complete several guided reading questions including:
  o Why were texts in ancient Greece so hard to read?
  o How did Aristophanes address the issue?
  o How did Christianity impact the history of punctuation?
- Working in small groups, students will create a timeline of how texts might have looked at different points in history.

Common Core Standards
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.2
Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Materials
- Guided Reading questions
-CLOSURE

- Journal prompt: Based on what you’ve learned about how punctuation has evolved, why are conventions like spacing, commas, and periods necessary?

- Preview of next day: Tomorrow we will learn how we can use commas to make our writing easier to read and to make sure people don’t misunderstand our meaning.

- With extra time, students find a news story about how a comma or other punctuation error created a serious problem, misunderstanding, or lawsuit. Share findings with the class.
Lesson #2: Why do Poems Rhyme?
Why do poems rhyme?

Overview:
In this lesson, students will analyze the rhyme scheme of a poem. The lesson will be contextualized by providing students with a brief history of the use of rhyme in poetry.

Rationale & Big Question:
Why do poems rhyme?
How do authors of poems use rhyme for specific purposes?

Learning Objectives:
By the end of the lesson, students will analyze the impact of rhyme on a specific stanza of the poem “Father William” by Lewis Carroll.

The Lesson:

-OPENING
Divide the room in half. Half of students memorize Poem #1, half memorize poem #2.
Poem #1: “I saw a little frog, he was cuter than can be. He was sitting on a log, I’m sure he smiled at me.
Poem #2: “I stare into the garden pond, wondering On the theory of evolution How it applies to frogs Why their life changes so quickly”

One student from each side recites the poem. These poems are the same number of words, but which poem was easier to memorize and why?

-CENTRAL LEARNING TASK
1. Explain that rhyme in western poetry dates back to the Medieval period with poets called troubadours. (Display medieval artwork depicting troubadours.) These poet/musician/storytellers traveled from village to village. Many people could not read at this time, so listening to these troubadours was an important form of entertainment. Troubadours had to memorize the poems they shared, and poems that rhymed were easier to memorize. The troubadours were some of the first people to add rhyme to poetry.

2. Quickwrite: Why did troubadours write poetry that rhymed? What are other reasons poets today might use rhyme in poetry? Discuss answers to quickwrite with a partner, then the full class.

3. In partners, students read the poem “Father William” by Lewis Carroll. One partner reads the first stanza, the other summarizes it out loud. Alternate jobs for each stanza.

Materials
- Copies of poems 1 and 2 to memorize
- Copy of the poem “Father William” for each student
- Slideshow with artwork depicting troubadours.

Common Core Standards
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4
Analyze the impact of rhymes on a specific verse or stanza of a poem.

Supplementary Materials (Appendix B)
4. Demonstrate how to label the rhyme scheme of a poem using stanza one (projected on the board). This stanza’s rhyme scheme is ABAB.

5. Students label the rhyme scheme of stanza two.

6. Why did Lewis Carroll use this rhyme scheme in his poem, and what is the effect of the rhymes? Students discuss with a partner, then with the full class. (Possible answers may include that it makes the poem more musical to listen to, the end rhymes make the lines feel complete and satisfying, the rhymes add humor to the poem).

7. How do we use rhyme today? Through brainstorming or research, students find two examples of company jingles or slogans that include rhyme.

**CLOSING**

Exit Ticket: In a few sentences, explain the purpose of rhyme in poetry from the middle ages to modern advertising.
Lesson #3: Mildred D. Taylor
Original Slide

The following slide emphasizes significant dates, locations, and events in the author’s life.
Mildred D. Taylor: Background Information

- Born in Jackson, Mississippi, 1943
- Grew up in Toledo, Ohio
- Graduated from Scott High School in 1961
- Graduated from the University of Toledo in 1965, then moved to Los Angeles
- Won the Newbery Medal for *Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry* in 1976
Revised Slide

The following slide emphasizes motivation: why the author writes, and what she hopes to accomplish with her stories
When Taylor was a little girl, her father told her and her siblings stories as they sat around the fire in the evenings. She wanted to be a storyteller when she grew up, just like her father.

Though she lived in Toledo, Ohio, she visited her family in the South. This was in the 1950s, when black and white people were segregated, and black people were often mistreated, just because of their race. Taylor was troubled by what she saw, and wondered what she could do. Back in the North, life wasn't perfect either. When her class studied history, they learned about historical heroes like George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, but she and the other students never heard stories of black Americans they could be proud of. Taylor wanted to write books that would show children a black family that was strong and loving—an image that she felt was missing from books that she read as a child.
Lesson #4: George Orwell Writing Assignment
George Orwell: From Poet to Political Writer

George Orwell is an author who is best known for writing *Animal Farm* and *1984*, two novels that bring to light the dangers of totalitarian governments in a clear and powerful way. Though Orwell is known for writing books with political themes, he wasn’t always a writer with such a focused mission. Read the following passage from his memoir *Why I Write*:

“In a peaceful age I might have written ornate or merely descriptive books... As it is I have been forced into becoming a sort of pamphleteer. First I spent five years in an unsuitable profession (the Indian Imperial Police, in Burma)... The job in Burma had given me some understanding of the nature of imperialism: but these experiences were not enough to give me an accurate political orientation... The Spanish war and other events in 1936–37 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood. Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic Socialism, as I understand it. It seems to me nonsense in a period like our own, to think that one can avoid writing of such subjects.”

--George Orwell, 1946

Assignment Instructions:

In a five-paragraph essay, explore the following questions:

How does a writer’s life experiences impact his or her work? Specifically, how did Orwell’s life impact the kind of stories he told and the way he told them?

Make sure to include:

- An explanation of Orwell’s purpose for writing
- At least three connections between his purpose for writing and the work he created (You might look specially at writing style, characters, plot, literary devices, or themes of his work)
- A conclusion reflecting on how an author’s background can impact the work they create
Lesson #5: Introduction to Medieval Research
Using Narrative Structure to Introduce a Unit:

This introduction to a Medieval research project is based on Atkinson’s (2018) approach to using stories for communication. He recommends beginning with a hook to engage the audience, then presenting the information in the structure of a narrative (goal, obstacles, and steps to achieve the goal).
The past is filled with exciting stories, interesting people, and ways of life that our sometimes very different than what we're used to today. In this project, you have an amazing opportunity. You will get to explore the Middle Ages and discover information that will bring this time period to life. You never know what you will discover on your research quest...
During this project, your task will be to choose a specific topic related to the Middle Ages. This can be any topic that interests you. Castles, knights in shining armor, or the types of clothing people wore during this time period are just a few possibilities. You will design and create your own project to showcase what you’ve discovered about your topic.
At the end of this unit, you will be a little bit like an expert on your topic. You will have researched carefully, learned many interesting facts that you’re excited to share with others, and created a project to present at the Medieval Festival that you can be proud of.
But how will we get there? There will be challenges along the way. Researching is hard work; you have to be determined, patient, and creative to find the very best facts to include in your project. Sometimes it can be hard to even know where to start working on a project like this.
We will reach our goal in three steps:

1. Choose a topic
2. Gather research
3. Read carefully

We will complete the project one step at a time, beginning with choosing a topic.
Lesson #6: Introduction to Inventors
Overview:
This lesson is an introduction to a small research project on inventors. Students will select an invention, then write a short essay after gathering research. This lesson is designed to spark students’ curiosity in inventors and build their background knowledge about the process of invention through four reading stations.

Big Question:
What is an inventor?

Learning Objectives:
By the end of the lesson, students will begin gathering ideas and building background knowledge to engage in a short research project.

The Lesson:
- OPENING
1. Students watch a short video clip: “Meet Molly, the kid who never stops inventing”
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sygqZWBcuKk
2. While watching the video, think about this question: What kind of traits does it take to become an inventor?
3. Discuss question with a partner after video.

- CENTRAL LEARNING TASK
1. Introduce assignment: Students will choose an invention, research how that invention was developed, then write an informative essay. Explain that today, we will be preparing for the project by building our knowledge of what it means to be an inventor.

2. Group discussion question: Why do people invent?
   List answers on the board.

3. Station Activity: Students visit each of the four learning stations, moving at their own pace. At each station, the students will read one of the four “Invention Stories” and answer these three questions: 1.) Summarize the story of the invention, 2.) What was the inventor’s motivation for inventing? 3.) What might someone admire about this inventor?

4. When students are finished with the stations, they will answer a final question: Everything we use on a day-to-day basis had to be invented or developed at some point, from the products we use to

Materials
- “Invention Stories” for learning stations
- Station Worksheets
- Paper Doll worksheet for students to create and label their inventor

Common Core Standards
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

Supplementary Materials (Appendix B)
the foods we eat. Make a list of inventions that you’re curious about the history of.

**CLOSING**

Students summarize what they have learned about inventors by drawing a diagram of an inventor. Students label various parts of their drawing (example: eyes that see problems in the world, brain that thinks of creative ideas, hands that work hard to perfect their inventions).
The Shopping Cart

They're everywhere - in almost every grocery store, department store, and bulk item superstore. Depending on where you live in the world, you might call them carts, trolleys, carriages, buggies, or wagons. The guys from MTV's Jackass practically built their careers on them. Yet most of us have never really considered just where the ubiquitous shopping cart came from. Come along as we take a trip through the fascinating history – and possible future – of the common grocery cart.

Sylvan Goldman had a problem. As was customary for grocery stores in 1936, his Standard/Piggly Wiggly locations in Oklahoma City supplied shoppers with a small wooden or wire basket for them to carry as they wandered up and down the aisles. Once the basket got too heavy, though, customers headed for the check-out line, a situation Goldman wanted to avoid. To keep them buying, Goldman was determined to figure out a way to make heavy baskets more manageable.

One night, he happened to look at a wooden folding chair and inspiration struck. He placed one shopping basket on the seat and another under the chair, then envisioned wheels on the legs, and a handle on the back. He was on to something. It took a few months of tinkering, but Goldman eventually settled on a design that was convenient and flexible. To use a cart, you took a folded-up frame from a row of them stacked side-by-side. In their folded form, they were only about 5” wide, so storage space was minimal — a factor Goldman knew would come into play for his invention to be accepted in other stores. Once unfolded, the shopper would grab two baskets and place them in two holders on the frame - one above and one below. When they...
Invention #1

were done shopping, the check-out girl simply put both baskets on the counter and rang everything up.

Unfortunately, the big debut of his big invention was a great big flop. Despite having a pretty young woman at the entrance to help customers set up the carts, the only people interested in using them were the elderly. Men were too proud to admit they needed help carrying a basket, and some younger women said they had pushed enough baby buggies that they weren't going to use one for shopping, too. Distraught, Goldman hatched another plan – he hired attractive men and women to push carts around inside the store and pretend to shop. When real customers came through the doors and refused the cart, the young woman at the entrance looked back into the store and said, “Why? Everyone else is using them.” Never underestimate the power of peer pressure.

By 1940, only three years after they were introduced, carts had become so popular, entire grocery stores were being designed around them with wider aisles and larger check-out counters to hold all the food people were buying.
While nearly everyone, everywhere knows the power of an adhesive bandage today, these convenient solutions haven’t always been around. In fact, it wasn’t until 1920, when a clever couple – Earle and Josephine Dickson – recognized an unmet need right in their own home, that adhesive bandages were born.

While Earle spent his days as a cotton buyer at Johnson & Johnson, Josephine was a young, active housewife who spent her time working tirelessly to keep their home and family operating at top speed. As every stay-at-home mom can attest, housework is no easy task. Josephine would often suffer minor cuts and burns that she and Earle would then work to protect each night by wrapping in cotton gauze and pieces of adhesive tape. But what was a mundane and time-consuming task actually illuminated a brilliant idea.

Earle cut up many pieces of gauze and placed them at intervals on a long piece of tape so Josephine could simply cut off a strip and apply it herself throughout the day. It wasn’t long before they realized that others, too, could probably benefit from the convenience of an adhesive bandage, and Earle soon shared their invention with his boss, James Johnson.

Shortly thereafter, the first adhesive bandages were produced and sold under what is now the world famous BAND-AID® trademark. While sales were initially less than remarkable – only $3,000 were sold in the first year – a few improvements were made to their size and the bandages quickly took off. Earle, now a successful inventor, was rewarded with a role as Vice President until his retirement in 1957.

To date, more than one hundred billion BAND-AID® Brand Adhesive Bandages have been made and the BAND-AID® Brand has grown from producing strictly bandages to offering a wide variety of products that meet the dynamic needs of today’s active families around the globe.

From “Band-Aid Brand Heritage,” Johnson and Johnson  2017
The Ice Cream Cone

For over a century, Americans have been enjoying ice cream on a cone. Whether it's a waffle cone, a sugar cone or a wafer cone, what better way to enjoy a double scoop of your favorite flavor?

The first ice cream cone was produced in 1896 by Italo Marchiony. Marchiony, who emigrated from Italy in the late 1800s, invented his ice cream cone in New York City. He was granted a patent in December 1903.

Although Marchiony is credited with the invention of the cone, a similar creation was independently introduced at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair by Ernest A. Hamwi, a Syrian concessionaire. Hamwi was selling a crisp, waffle-like pastry -- zalabis -- in a booth right next to an ice cream vendor. Because of ice cream’s popularity, the vendor ran out of dishes. Hamwi saw an easy solution to the ice cream vendor's problem: he quickly rolled one of his wafer-like waffles in the shape of a cone, or cornucopia, and gave it to the ice cream vendor. The cone cooled in a few seconds, the vendor put some ice cream in it, the customers were happy and the cone was on its way to becoming the great American institution that it is today.

St. Louis, a foundry town, quickly capitalized on the cone’s success. Enterprising people invented special baking equipment for making the World’s Fair cornucopia cones.

Stephen Sullivan of Sullivan, Missouri, was one of the first known independent operators in the ice cream cone business. In 1906, Sullivan served ice cream cones (or cornucopias, as they were still called) at the Modern Woodmen of America Frisco Log Rolling in Sullivan, Missouri.

At the same time, Hamwi was busy with the Cornucopia Waffle Company. In 1910, he founded the Missouri Cone Company, later known as the Western Cone Company.

As the modern ice cream cone developed, two distinct types of cones emerged. The rolled cone was a waffle, baked in a round shape and rolled (first by hand, later mechanically) as soon as it came off the griddle. In a few seconds, it hardened in the form of a crisp cone. The second type of cone was molded either by pouring batter into a shell, inserting a core on which the cone was baked, and then removing the core; or pouring the batter into a mold, baking it and then splitting the mold so the cone could be removed with little difficulty.

In the 1920s, the cone business expanded. Cone production in 1924 reached a record 245 million. Slight changes in automatic machinery have led to the ice cream cone we know today. Now, millions of rolled cones are turned out on machines that are capable of producing about 150,000 cones every 24 hours.

From “The History of the Ice Cream Cone” International Dairy Foods Association
Invention #4

The Stoplight

Driving home from a dinner party on a March night in 1913, the oil magnate George Harbaugh turned on to Cleveland’s Euclid Avenue. It was one of the city’s busiest streets, jammed with automobiles, horse-drawn carriages, bicyclists, trolleys and pedestrians, all believing they had the right of way. Harbaugh did not see the streetcar until it smashed into his roadster. “It is remarkable,” the local newspaper reported, “that the passengers escaped with their lives.”

Many others wouldn’t. More than 4,000 people died in car crashes in the United States in 1913, the same year that Model T’s started to roll off Henry Ford’s assembly line. The nation’s roads weren’t built for vehicles that could speed along at 40 miles an hour, and when those unforgiving machines met at a crowded intersection, there was confusion and, often, collision. Though police officers stood in the center of many of the most dangerous crossroads blowing whistles and waving their arms, few drivers paid attention.

A Cleveland engineer named James Hoge had a solution for all this chaos. Borrowing the red and green signals long used by railroads, and tapping into the electricity that ran through the trolley lines, Hoge created the first “municipal traffic control system.” Patented 100 years ago, Hoge’s invention was the forerunner of a ubiquitous and uncelebrated device that has shaped American cities and daily life ever since—the stoplight.

Hoge’s light made its debut on Euclid Avenue at 105th Street in Cleveland in 1914 (before the patent was issued). Drivers approaching the intersection now saw two lights suspended above it. A policeman sitting in a booth on the sidewalk controlled the signals with a flip of a switch. “The public is pleased with its operation, as it makes for greater safety, speeds up traffic, and largely controls pedestrians in their movements across the street,” the city’s public safety director wrote after a year of operation.

From “A Brief History of the Stoplight” by Megan Kate Nelson  Smithsonian Magazine, 2018
Lesson #7: Organizing an Argumentative Essay
Organizing an Argumentative Essay

Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry:
Would you sell your land?
As we have read *Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry* these last few weeks, we’ve gathered information about the central question of our unit: If you were an African American landowner living in the South during the 1930s, would you sell your land? Now that we’ve finished the book, we have a wide range of information and arguments that you might use to support the position you choose. Right now, our information is like a packed, messy closet.
When we organize a closet, the first step most people take is pulling everything out and organizing it. We will do the same as we find all of our worksheets, readings, and notes, and begin to organize our information into categories: Reasons to sell and reasons to keep the land.
Next, we need to decide what information we’ll include and what we’ll leave out.

As we begin to look more closely at our information, most of you will probably find that there is too much to fit into one essay. We’ll need to go through the information, just like you’d go through your closet, deciding what you really want to keep and what you’re willing to part with.
Finally, we put everything together in a way that makes sense.

The final step in organizing your essay is deciding what order you will explain your information. As you organize your closet, you might choose to put your favorite items in the front where you can see them and reach them easily. In your essay, you should use your best ideas at the beginning and end of your essay so that your reader will be more likely to remember them.
Lesson #8: Escape the Labyrinth
Greek and Latin Roots Digital Escape Room

https://sites.google.com/view/escapethelabyrinth/home?authuser=0

(Answers on next page)
Clue #1: micronym
Clue #2: aquagram
Clue #3: chron
(need to turn on speakers)
Clue #4: That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.
Lesson #9: Vocabulary Word Stories
Capricious

“Come on, it’s time to go,” Lucy’s mom shouted from the kitchen, “Stop being so capricious and hurry up!”

Lucy could barely hear her mother’s voice from her bedroom, but she knew what she was saying anyway. Lucy just couldn’t decide which shirt to wear to her grandma’s house for dinner. There were now seven shirts scattered around the room in messy, crumpled heaps. Finally, she settled on her navy blue t-shirt, but then remembered that the house was always drafty. Maybe a sweater would be better?

“Lucy, we’re going to be late!”

“Almost ready!” Lucy called back. I’m not being capricious, she thought defiantly. I’m just making an informed decision, and I have a right to change my mind a few times.

Twenty minutes later, they arrived at Lucy’s grandparents’ house. The table was set and the food was getting cold, so they came in and sat down at the table right away.

“Can I get out the drinks?” Lucy’s mom asked Lucy’s grandmother.

“Sure,” she said, “Maybe we can have lemonade? No wait, water would be healthier. Oh, who cares? Let’s just have root beer—that’s my favorite anyway. But then again, Lucy probably should have caffeine so late in the day…”

Hmmm, thought Lucy’s mom exasperatedly, I can see where Lucy learned her capricious ways.

1. What can you infer the word “capricious” means based on the story?

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

2. Explain how you drew that conclusion.

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________

3. Look the word up in a dictionary. What does it actually mean?

_____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________
Recapitulate

Ben had never stayed at home by himself before. He was twelve now, so of course he could handle the responsibility, but still his mother insisted on reminding him of some rules.

“Now remember,” she said, “You are not to answer the phone, you are not to use the oven, and you are not to let strangers or your friends into the house while I’m gone. So, to recapitulate, no phone, no oven, no strangers. Got it?”

“I know,” Ben yawned. Next time he could give the instructions; he had heard them so many times.

Ben breathed a sigh a relief when his mom finally left. Now, if he finished his homework quickly, he would have some time to play his video game before dinnertime. Suddenly, he heard a knock at the door. He peeked over the top of the couch to see who it was, then ducked back down again. Definitely a stranger. It was a short, angry looking old woman.

“Nope,” thought Ben, “I’ll pretend I’m not here.”

The woman continued to knock persistently, and Ben continued to not be home. Finally, Ben heard her get back into her car and drive away.

“How was your time at home?” Ben’s mom asked when she returned.

Ben briefly recapitulated his experiences: He had done his homework, ignored a stranger knocking at the door, fixed a snack without using the oven and played a video game.

“Perfect,” said his mom, “but next time it is okay to let Aunt Barb in. She wants to know why you kept peeking at her from behind the couch but wouldn’t unlock the door.”

1. What can you infer the word “recapitulate” means based on the story?

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2. Explain how you drew that conclusion.

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3. Look the word up in a dictionary. What does it actually mean?

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___________________________________________________________________________________________
Name:____________________________

Capitulate

“Capitulate!” said Bryan.

“Never!” said Emily.

It was 12:30 AM, and the game was still going strong. When Emily’s brother Bryan had asked after lunch if Emily wanted to play Monopoly, Emily had flatly refused. No way was she going to subject herself to that kind of ordeal! Bryan was very competitive, and just one game of Monopoly sometimes ended up taking hours. Finally, Emily capitulated.

“Okay fine,” she said, “But I get to be the shoe.”

Several hours later, Emily owned Boardwalk and Park Place, plus two railroads, and Bryan owned the rest.

“You cannot win,” he told her.

“Yes I can,” she said back, “and I will win if you will hurry up and take your next turn.”

Since both my brother and my sister are very stubborn, neither would capitulate and the game dragged into the night. I think they are still playing actually.

1. What can you infer the word “capitulate” means based on the story?

______________________________________________________________________________________

2. Explain how you drew that conclusion.

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Look the word up in a dictionary. What does it actually mean?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

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Lesson #10: Adapted Frayer Model
Instructions: Fill in each of the boxes for the word you are assigned. Box 4 should be written in two to three complete sentences. The illustration in Box 3 can be either a picture found online or your own drawing.
### Modified Frayer Vocabulary Organizer

Instructions: Fill in each of the boxes for the word you are assigned. Box 4 should be written in two to three complete sentences. The illustration in Box 3 can be either a picture found online or your own drawing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Definition:</th>
<th>2. Synonyms:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disobedient to authority</td>
<td>Defiant, unruly, mutinous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Illustration that represents the word:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Illustration of a child looking upset" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. When have you experienced this word in your own life?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My two-year old cousin gets in trouble all the time for being insubordinate. Last week, she refused to come inside when her parents asked her to. She wanted to do things her own way, not follow other people’s instructions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>