

STORY TELLING



**PRACTICAL
STRATEGIES TO
HELP CHILDREN IN
THE CLASSROOM**

Telling stories is an essential part of our everyday communication. We tell stories when we talk about what happened at school or on holiday, or what we have watched on T.V. Children with speech and language difficulties often find it hard to develop age-appropriate narrative skills. This can be due to:

- Limited vocabulary
- Lack of imagination
- Difficulties sequencing their ideas
- Difficulties understanding language
- Difficulties formulating sentences

Narrative skills will develop throughout life and typically develop as follows:

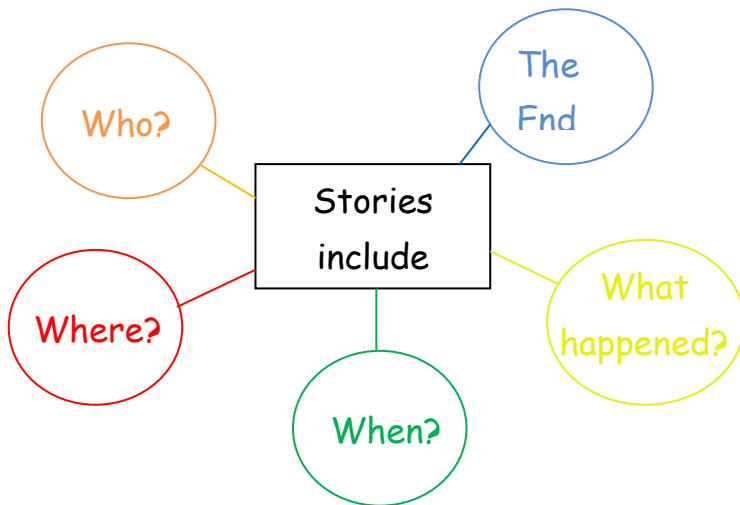
2 - 3 yrs	Children begin to make reference to past events and begin to sequence events.
3- 4 yrs	Begin to link ideas with "and then..." Tend to refer to 'where' but often leave out 'who'.
4-5 yrs	Stories better organised - include an introduction, sequence of events and basic emotions.
6 yrs	Most children can produce complete and structured narratives.

Strategies to help children in the classroom

Work through the stages of imitation, innovation and invention (Pie Corbett, 2008)

- Imitation - re-telling a story
- Innovation - changing aspects of a familiar story, e.g. the characters, the setting, the ending
- Invention - creating a new story

Teach children how to structure a story using visual cues for each component.



Introduce each component using a coloured card. Begin with the most concrete i.e. 'who' and 'where' before moving on to those requiring more abstract thinking. Older children can place these on a grid or bookmark.

Activities to develop story telling skills

- Story sacks
- Act out stories from books, starting with repetitive and familiar stories
- Act out stories with puppets
- After role play in the home corner, encourage the child to say what they did, and say it in order
- Telling stories with sound effects/musical instruments as this facilitates memory
- Picture sequencing activities



Remember: children with language difficulties need extra time and support to tell their news or make up stories. Be patient!