Breaking Out News

Learning objectives

• Gather evidence from fictional or nonfictional texts to report on a topic/event or recount an experience.
• Depict the overall structure (cause, effect, problem, and solution) of events, ideas, and information in a text.
• Describe how a person’s point of view can influence reactions, events, comprehension, and narrative.
• Create dialogue around experiences, events, and the characters’ responses to given situations.
• Choose words, phrases, dialects, and punctuation that add expression and effect.
• Dramatize a real event to make it more interesting while communicating key issues.

Setting the scene

“He’s a veritable Jack Sheppard,” said old Mrs. Lopez.

Light-fingered Larry, a well-known thief, has escaped from the local jail several times. It happened again yesterday. This time he was caught red-handed with Mrs. Lopez’s dinner service!

There are some very unhappy people down at the jail today. Some are asking questions and vowing to stop it from happening again. Is Larry a modern Robin Hood, taking from the rich and giving to the poor? Is he just confused? Or is he a thoroughly nasty piece of work?

People are asking questions: “How did he escape this time? Where were the police? How was he caught? They want answers.”

Building the story

Ask the students to build their own very special jail, and to demonstrate Larry’s jailbreak.

• Who will be at the scene (reporters, police officers, Larry ...)?
• How will you depict Larry’s escape?
• How will you depict his capture?
• Add some local residents to the story. What do they think? What would they say? How would they react?

Reflecting

Have the students reflect and talk about each of their characters as they build.

• What are the characters doing? Is Larry in the scene, or has he disappeared again?
• How do the police officers react? What are the police officers saying?
• Is anybody angry about the situation? What are they complaining about?
• How do the characters interact?

DID YOU KNOW

Jack Sheppard, house-breaker and jail-breaker, was a well-known name in eighteenth-century England. And in America, Frank and Jesse James wrote letters to the Kansas City Star signed ‘Jack Sheppard.” Among English sailors, anyone with the surname “Sheppard” is still automatically called “Jack.”

The real Jack Sheppard escaped from jail four times and was caught five times. He was hanged in Tyburn on November 16, 1724, in front of a sad crowd of 200,000 supporters.


Common Core Standards

Speaking and Listening: 2-5.3

Reading for Literature: 2-5.3

Reading for Informational Texts: 2-5.5

Language: 2-5.3

Writing: 2-5.2

2-5.3
Sharing and documenting

Ask the students to use the StoryVisualizer software to make a newspaper article about the event. The students should create their own scripts “in character.” The narrator should use standard language; the story characters may use dialect.

Suggestions for scripts:

Police Officer: “We used the tracker dogs to follow the scent of Larry’s sweaty T-shirt. That’s how we caught him. He’s going to stay inside from now on.”

Reporter: “The question is, how did he break through the bars? Did he have an accomplice on the outside?”

Local Resident: “That villain will be caught within a day. He won’t be on the run for long!”

Sample solution

Extending

• Help the police to find Larry. Write a broadcast announcement to help catch Larry, including details of a reward.

• Use the StoryVisualizer software to customize a layout template for the announcement document. Work with the image style and effect clip art functions to enhance the document. Experiment with fonts, font sizes, effects, and image styles.
Light-fingered Larry escapes from jail AGAIN!
And is caught AGAIN!

Police can’t explain!
“He had a triple burger for dinner. We passed it through the inspection hatch. When we went to check the cell at lights out, he’d GONE!” said Officer Gurney.

Community outraged!
Mrs. Lopez, a local store owner and Larry’s latest victim, says, “We’ve had enough. When we catch him, he’ll wish he had never escaped from jail.”

STOP HIM!
OR WE WILL!