GETTING STARTED

Set the Mood

Learning objectives
• Tell a story using relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas.
• Identify and describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
• Explain how specific aspects of a story contribute to the mood, character, or setting.
• Maintain consistency in tone and style.
• Write a narrative using descriptive details and feelings to develop events or the responses of story characters to different situations.

Setting the scene
• Ask the students to form a group with one StoryStarter Core Set between them.
• Build the spinner and attach the mood spinner card. Spin once to determine whether the story should be happy, sad, angry or violent, or romantic.
• Then substitute the mood spinner card with the category spinner card.
• The spinner now has four colored sections that correspond to the element tray compartment colors. Students take turns spinning the spinner. When the arrow stops, it will point to a color. The student who spun the arrow then picks two bricks from a compartment with the corresponding color.
• The students are also allowed to randomly pick two complete characters of their own choice.
• Each student uses the spinner five times before gathering his or her bricks together and collecting a building plate.

Building the story
Ask the students to build a story on their building plate.

• Make sure they are aware of the three Ws: “Who” (characters), “Where” (setting), and “What” (mood).
• Where does the story take place? How is that communicated?
• Ask the students to practice their stories with a partner before presenting it to an audience.

Reflecting
Have the students reflect and talk about each of their characters as they build. What are they doing? What are they saying? How do they feel? Have the students demonstrate how the model helps them express their ideas.
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Sharing and documenting
• Stories can be presented in groups or to the whole class. Allow students to pose questions and to respond appropriately.
• Take a photograph of each scene structure and import it using the StoryVisualizer software. Choose a template from the layout template menu to suit each student's grade and ability level and have them write a story about what they have built.

Extending
• Allow the students to select extra elements for adding more details.

• Where appropriate, allow the students to exchange elements to suit the purpose of their story.

• Tell the students that their structure should be the beginning of a story and have other students create a middle and an end.

• Tell the students that they should only build the end of a story. Ask them to challenge their fellow students to come up with the beginning and middle parts.

• Have the students work in pairs or groups to create a story that combines all of their elements and building plates. Ask them to agree on the characters and the setting before starting the build. Explain that they should maintain continuity between each scene by having the appropriate number of characters, animals, and scenery on hand to complete the story.