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Storytelling

I Went to the Store

Seat students on the floor in a circle. Begin by selecting a sound you want to target. For example, you may select the sound /b/. Choose a word beginning with /b/ and say, "I went to the store and I bought a bat." The next student must repeat what you have said, plus add his or her own item beginning with /b/. For example, "I went to the store, and I bought a bat and a ball." Continue around the circle with each child adding to the list. Try to get all the way around the circle. If a student cannot think of a word beginning with the targeted beginning sound, stop, play with that sound and help the student select a new word. If it is a student's turn and he or she cannot remember what a student has said, have the student who stated the word help by providing his or her word again when the time is right.

An alternative to this game is to use the phrase, "I am going on a trip, and I am packing a . . ."

One-Word-at-a-Time

In this activity, the class will collectively create a story, one word at a time. Seat students on the floor in a circle. The teacher will begin the story by stating, "Once upon a time." Then say the first word of the story. The student seated to the right of the teacher then adds the second word. The next student adds the third word. Continue around the circle so that all the students have a chance to add a word to the story. You may even want to go around the circle several times so that the story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The only rule to this type of storytelling is that the word a student adds has to make sense in the sentence. An example of how this works is below.

- Teacher: Once upon a time, there
Student 1: was
Student 2: a
Student 3: boy
Student 4: who
Student 5: had
Student 6: a
Student 7: puppy.
Continue around the circle.



Sentence Stories

Sentence stories are similar to one-word-at-a-time stories (see above). Create a story by having each student add a whole sentence rather than just a single word. Once students are familiar with this type of storytelling, challenge them to an alphabet story. In an alphabet story, the first word of the sentence a student adds must begin with the next letter of the alphabet. For example:

- Student 1: **A** dog ran away from home.
Student 2: **B**y the time he got to the corner, he was hungry.
Student 3: "**C**ome here, little doggy," called a girl.
Student 4: "**D**o you want a bone?"
Continue the story around the circle and through the alphabet.

Mystery Object Speech

Introduction

A Mystery Object Speech will become one of your students' favorite types of oral language presentations. The speakers love the mystery aspect of bringing a hidden object. The audience loves to participate in the presentation by guessing the contents of the bag. An additional benefit of this type of speech is providing students with an opportunity to practice giving appropriate clues that will guide the listener to the correct answer without actually telling them the mystery object.



Assignment

Students begin this speech by presenting basic introduction information, including their complete names and the date. Additionally, students will bring a mystery object hidden in a bag and provide three clues as to the contents of the bag. The class will be asked to guess the contents of the bag based on the clues that are provided. Finally, students will provide a few sentences explaining why they chose the object that they brought to school.

Speech Components

- ❖ Student's complete name (first name and last name, middle name if desired)
- ❖ Today's date (the date of the speech)
- ❖ Three clues about a mystery object
- ❖ At least two sentences describing, explaining, or telling more about the object once it is revealed

Tips for Student Success

Students often struggle with providing appropriate clues that will help the audience correctly identify the mystery object. For example, if the mystery object is a stuffed frog, a clue that would help is, "The object is green." A clue that would not help is, "The object's name is Simon." Help students practice identifying the three most important clues that will lead the audience to identify an object prior to assigning the speech.

Play the game "I spy" with your students. In the game "I Spy," the speaker identifies an object that he or she can see, and then provides students with clues for guessing the object. For example, the speaker could say, "I spy something in our classroom that is blue. It has four legs, people sit on it, and each child has one at his or her desk." Students try to guess that the object is a chair. This is an excellent way to spend those five minutes before recess or while waiting in the lunch line.