

Creating the Story Arc: Beginning, Middle, and End

by Maria McConville

5 EASY STEPS!



STEP 1

Direct the students to listen to everything that is said. They will be called on at random and their idea must build upon what came before. Point to a student and have them finish your thought.

“Once upon a time there was...”

Then another student finishes: And every day they...

BUT one day...

That led to...

That led to...

So, finally...

STEP 2

Repeat the story they came up with back to them. Did it make sense? Was there a conflict? Was it interesting?

STEP 3

Try again. Now that they the students have experienced the format, they will be more successful.

“Once upon a time there was...”

And every day they...

BUT one day...

That led to...
That led to...
So, finally...

Repeat back this story and ask what worked and what did not work this time around.

STEP 4

Now have students apply this format to their own individual or group plays.

Their play should fit nicely into this story form. If it doesn't, perhaps they need to clarify a detail or the conflict to make sure it works.

STEP 5

Have the students share their play stories with the class!

Maria McConville is a native New Yorker who has lived in every borough...yes, even Staten Island. She started out at LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts and received her BA in Performance from Fordham University at Lincoln Center. Maria has performed all over New York City from Shakespeare in the Park-ing Lot to Theatre Row and across the country with Theatreworks USA. She also a member of AEA, writer, Army wife, proud mother, and an inspired teaching artist.



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