

# BEARY TALES

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

A short and collaborative narrative writing lesson for students in grades 2–8, or a 60- to 90-minute creative writing prompt for high school English/Language Arts.

Uses the *Bear in Mind*  game.



### OBJECTIVE

- Students will be able to create a series of events for a story using visual prompts as inspiration.
- Students will be able to incorporate transitional elements to link each event in their story.
- Students will be able to collaborate effectively with a partner to develop a cohesive narrative.

### ABOUT THIS LESSON

This lesson transforms *Bear in Mind* from a memory game into a collaborative narrative writing and reading lesson with just a few modifications to the rules of the game. This activity can be used to supplement any narrative writing lesson for a variety of grade levels and is scalable for any size group. This can also be a series of short writing prompts over several days that culminates in a complete story at the end.

The narrative writing portion of this lesson takes place during the “First Stories” phase of the game. Instead of a single face-down draw pile, flip five of the image tiles face up to allow more freedom of choice when placing a tile on each scene. Once each story board picture has an image tile next to it, this phase is complete.

The reading portion of this lesson replaces the “Remembering the Stories” phase of the game. The story boards and image tiles that were used

### ELA COMMON CORE STANDARDS CORRELATIONS

#### Kindergarten to 2nd Grade

W.K.3: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

#### 1st and 2nd Grade

W.1.3 and W.2.3: Write narratives that recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events; include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal event order; and provide a sense of closure.

#### 3rd Grade

W.3.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

#### 4th Grade

W.4.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

#### 5th Grade

W.5.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

*Standards correlations continue at the end of the document.*

are shuffled, and the written story with the boards and tiles are given to another player. They read the story to try to piece together which image tile goes with each story board. Alternately, if there is only one student using the lesson, simply wait a few days and have the student read their own narrative to help them recall the arrangement of tiles.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Hook

Begin the lesson by explaining the rules of the game, showing a story board and an array of items. Tell an example story where Bobby interacts with a story board character, activity, and item. Have students play a round of the game if time allows, to get a little practice telling stories that link the images printed on the image tiles and story boards.

### 2. Instruction

Review with students the elements of good storytelling by reviewing the five main questions to answer when writing a narrative scene:

- **Who** is the character?
- **What** is the character doing?
- **When** did this happen?
- **Where** does this scene take place?
- **Why** is it important to the bigger story?

Then, if applicable for the grade level, review with students the importance in narrative writing of a story to have a beginning (conflict/rising action), a middle (climax), and an end (falling action/resolution), as well as transitions that connect each of the scenes.

### 3. Activity Introduction

Introduce the students to the main character of their story, Bobby Bear, who just woke up from hibernating, and how his friends are ready to tell stories about the places they went and the things they did over winter break. The students' task is to write the story of each friend's adventures and how they link together.

#### 4a. Student Activity Part 1: Tell Your Story (Writing a Narrative)

- Working in pairs (or solo), place the five story boards on the table in view of each player, then make a face-down pile of at least 20 image tiles. Reveal five of the image tiles. Feel free to use more if students get writer's block.
- The first player starts putting any of the image tiles face up next to any story board picture. Then the student tells a scene of a story based on the tile and the picture they chose. Then they fill in the handout prompts to describe the character, setting, and activity of the scene.
- Once the scene is complete, flip up an additional image tile for the next player. They repeat the process, choosing an image tile and picture and creating a scene based on their choices. Each scene after the first should contain some connection to a previous scene in the answers to each of the prompts.

- Continue this process until each story board picture has an image tile next to it. By the end of this process, students will have a rough draft of a narrative to work from. For higher grades or more advanced students, encourage them to weave a conflict for Bobby to resolve at about scene 3 or 4, and then to explain how Bobby resolves the conflict at about scene 7 or 8.
- Now have students work together to compile and edit their story into a unified narrative. Encourage them to swap events if it helps with the flow of the story. For lower grades, allow them to simply cut out what they have written and paste the segments into one story.
- Take a picture of the image tiles next to the story board pictures for reference later.

#### **4b. Student Activity Part 2: Remember the Story (Active Reading)**

- Have the students shuffle the image tiles and story boards they used. For more than one pair of students, have them swap narratives and image tiles with other pairs. For solo or a single pair of students, wait a few days for this phase; the delay will help students rely on what is written rather than their short-term memory.
- Have students read the full written narrative and attempt to identify the correct picture on each story board and place the correct image tile next to it based on what is written.
- Compare the placements with the picture you saved from earlier to see if they were correct.

### **5. Conclusion**

Take some time to debrief with students and talk about what kinds of details were the most helpful in the written narratives when trying to match up the pictures and tiles in the reading phase. Discuss what was easy and what was difficult about writing each scene, and how the process could be made easier.

## **Assessment**

The narratives that students write can be turned in as a writing assignment, keeping in mind that the goal was answering the five questions from each scene and linking scenes together.

## **Extension Activities**

Consider the following extensions to enhance the utility of this lesson.

- Include a second round of image tiles like in the normal game rules to create a series of call-back scenes.
- Have one student describe each scene while the other writes the story without seeing the image tiles or story board.
- Revise the tense or point of view of the story. Instead of third person past tense, for example, write the story in first person present tense, or in future tense.

# BEARY TALES

## STUDENT HANDOUT

Bobby Bear, snug and cozy in his den, wakes up from a long winter of hibernation. He takes a deep breath of the fresh spring air, eager to hear all about the adventures his friends have had while he was asleep. From daring escapades to heartwarming encounters, Bobby's friends have stories to share, and you get to bring them to life!

### INSTRUCTIONS

For each scene, describe the character, the setting, and the activity Bobby's friend talks about, then write a short transition to the next scene. For each new scene, try to make a connection to a previous scene. Finally, write a conclusion and share your story!

### Scene 1

➤ **Character** - Who is the character in the scene? Give them a name and describe a little bit about them. How does Bobby know them? What is the character doing as Bobby meets them?

*After Bobby wakes up, he decides to visit his cousin Patrick the Panda first. Patrick is playing with his new camera when Bobby meets him.*

➤ **Setting** - Where did their activity take place? When did they do it? How long did it last? Who else was there?

*Patrick went on a week-long vacation to Canada and just got back. He got a souvenir red maple leaf while he was there. Patrick tried to take a picture of it, but couldn't figure out how to use his camera.*

➤ **Activity** - What activity, adventure, or story is the character excited to tell Bobby? How did the image tile play a part in the scene?

*Patrick shows Bobby all the pictures he took on his camera, but they are all selfies!*

➤ **Transition** - How does the interaction between Bobby and their friend end, and how does Bobby make their way to the next scene?

*Bobby knows his friend Freddy Frog is very smart, and might be able to help figure out how to use the new camera.*

## Scenes 2-8

### Scene 2: Character, Setting, Activity, Transition

Bobby goes to visit his old friend Freddy Frog in his pond. He finds Freddy right away because Freddy is singing very loudly while playing guitar on a rock. Freddy tells Bobby that he learned how to play guitar over the winter, and he offers the guitar to Bobby to try. When Bobby reaches for the guitar, he drops his backpack in the water. Now Bobby has find a way to get the backpack out.

### Scene 3: Character, Setting, Activity, Transition

Alan the Alligator knows all about finding stuff in the water, so Bobby goes to visit him in his favorite sunny spot. Alan tells Bobby that he got a new boat recently, and a new fishing pole too! But he hasn't caught anything in a while, and he's very hungry. If Bobby can help Alan get some food, like a delicious steak, then he will help Bobby fish the backpack from the pond.

### Scene 4: Character, Setting, Activity, Transition

In order to find a steak for Alan the Alligator, Bobby goes to the restaurant where he meets his friends Mindy the Squirrel and Sam the Mouse, who are already eating a meal. He sits down with them and orders a steak to go. Mindy offers to pay for the steak if Bobby can find her an acorn to store away for winter. Bobby knows just where to find one.

### Scene 5: Character, Setting, Activity, Transition

Bobby goes to find Sandy the Pigeon, who lives in an oak tree, and might be able to get an acorn for him. Sandy the Pigeon is at a bakery getting her favorite food, a loaf of bread. Sandy was planning on sharing her bread with Jamaal the Goat. She asks Bobby to deliver the bread to Jamaal.

### Scene 6: Character, Setting, Activity, Transition

Bobby finds Jamaal at a soccer field playing with Raul the Rhino. He gives Jamaal the bread, and Jamaal gives Bobby a baseball cap to use to scoop an acorn up. Now Bobby has an acorn to give back to his friend Mindy, and a steak to bring to Alan, so he will be able to get Freddy Frog's backpack.

## Scene 7: Character, Setting, Activity, Transition

*Bobby is running out of time, so he asks his friend Pierre the Penguin how he gets around so fast. Pierre the penguin is really good at skiing, but suggests Bobby use a skateboard to get around faster. Bobby borrows Pierre's skateboard and is able to deliver the acorn to Mindy, and the steak to Alan, and Alan is able to get the backpack out of the water for Freddy, who has been teaching Patrick how to use his camera.*

## Scene 8: Character, Setting, Activity, Transition

*After a long and busy day, Bobby decides to relax by the pool with Henry Rabbit and reflect on his adventures with his friends. He decides to write letters to send to each of the friends who helped him today.*

## CONCLUSION

Now it's time to wrap up the story. Explain some of the things that Bobby learned along the way, and describe what he plans to do next! You can include any of the image tiles or any of the story board cards to tie the story all together.

*Bobby is grateful for all his friends, and he is proud of how each of his friends were able to help during his adventure. Freddy the Frog was able to help Patrick the Panda use his camera. Alan the Alligator was able to help Freddy get his backpack from the water. Mindy the Squirrel was able to thank Alan with a delicious steak, then Sandy the Pigeon, Jamaal the Goat and Bobby worked together to thank Mindy with an acorn. Pierre was able to help Bobby get around to everyone quickly and smoothly for a rewarding day. The moral of the story is that when we work together, everyone gets to share in the happiness and rewards.*

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now you have a rough draft of an adventure narrative about Bobby Bear and their friends. All you need to do is put the scenes together in any order that you like into one complete story. Once you do that, give the story to someone else to see if they can find the story boards that match the image tiles you used!

## 6th Grade

W.6.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

## 7th Grade

W.7.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

## 8th Grade

W.8.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

## 9th and 10th Grade

W.9 and 10.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.



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