

What's in a Story?

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Why do we love stories?

- Stories live in your blood and bones, follow the seasons and light candles on the darkest night—every storyteller knows she or he is also a teacher... —Patti Davis
- People are hungry for stories. It's part of our very being. Storytelling is a form of history, of immortality too. It goes from one generation to another. —Studs Terkel
- People did not wait until there was writing before they told stories and sang songs. —Albert Bates Lord

There are so many different kinds of stories to love... these are called genres.

The word *genre* means a particular type of category or art.

What kind of stories do you like?

Mystery

Science Fiction

Fantasy

Fairy Tale

Historical Fiction

Story Elements

All of these stories have something in common. They have elements, or parts, that work together to build the story.

Let's discover these elements! We will use a fairy tale that many of us have heard before to prove the authors were thinking of these elements when they wrote their stories.

After we practice thinking about the elements in stories we know, it will be easier to use them in the stories we write.

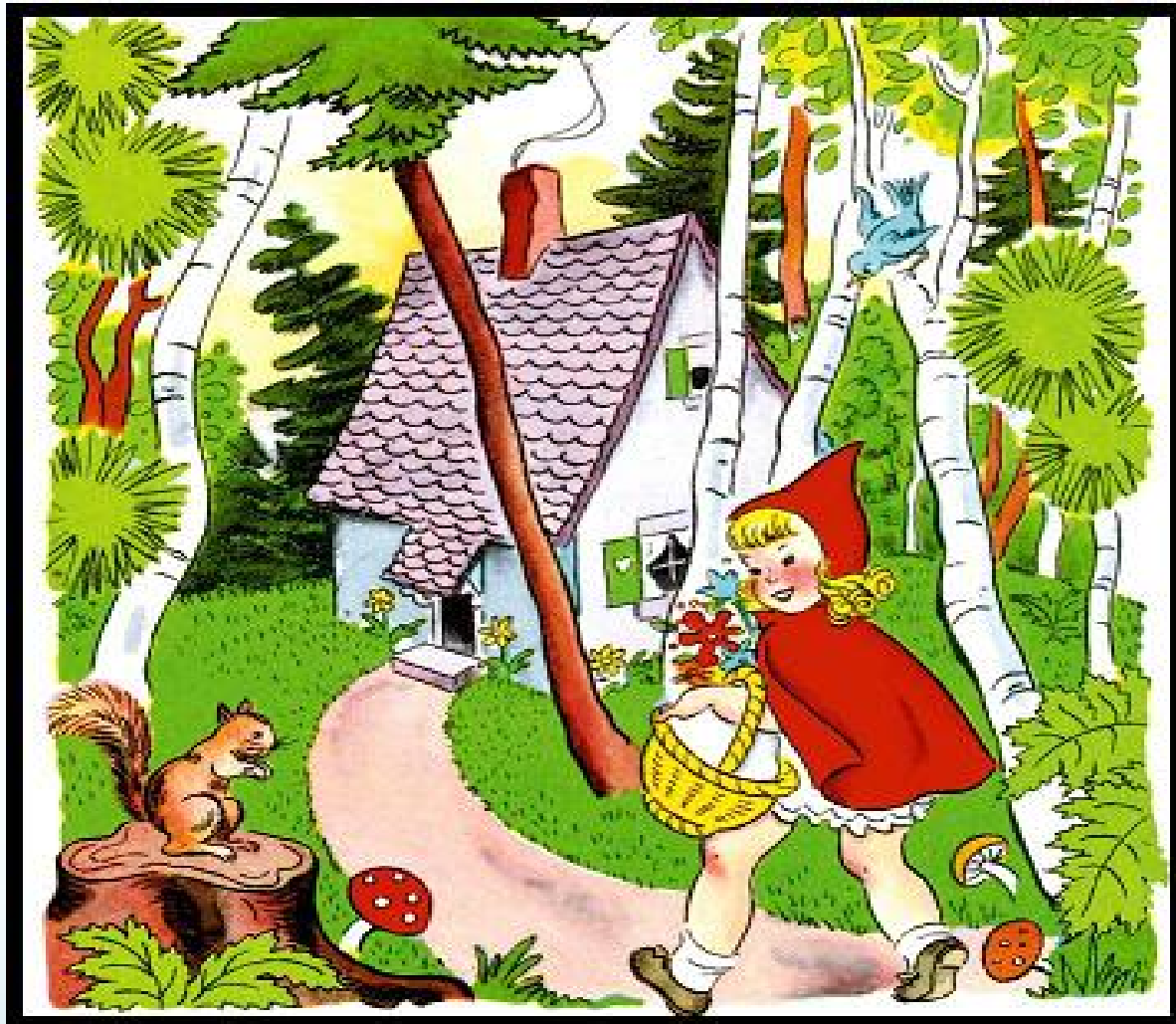
Have you heard the story....

“Little Red Riding Hood”?



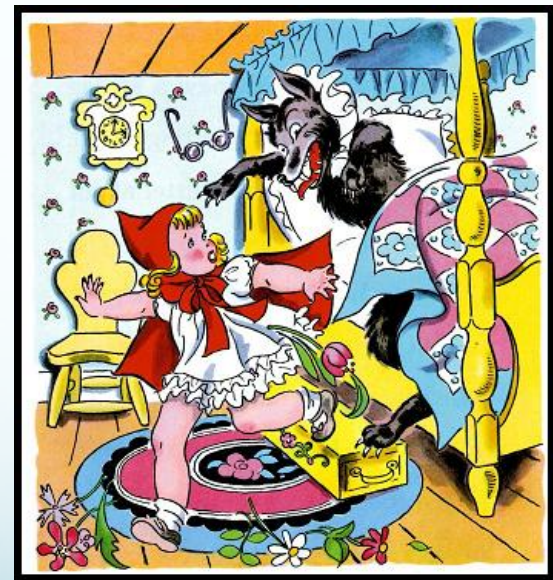
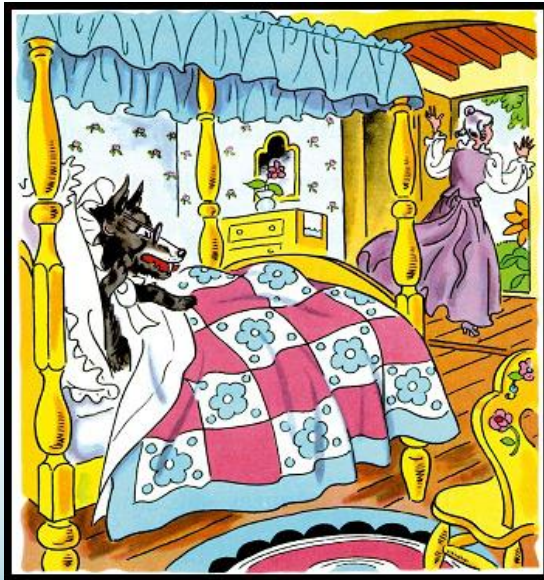
Who? = Character





Where? = Setting





Events
=
Plot
or
Problem



How is the problem solved? = Resolution



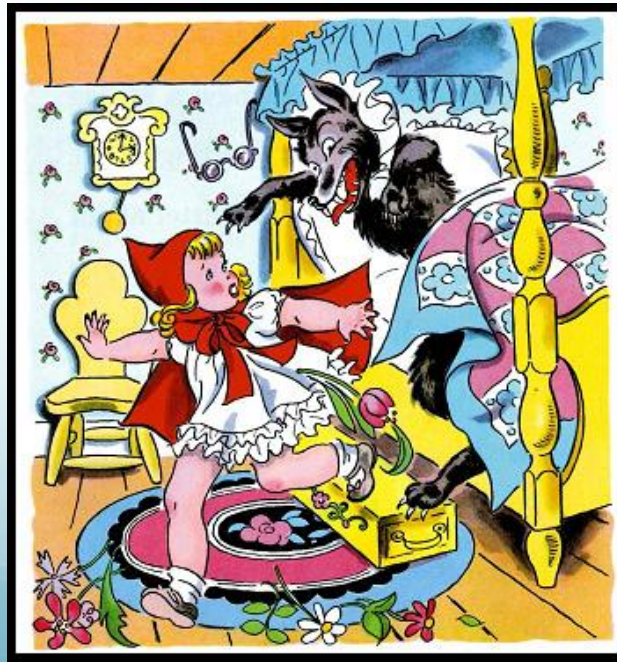
What did the character learn? = Lesson

There are 2 more important elements, or parts, that make stories:

- interesting & memorable
- build the characters' personalities

Describers & Dialogue

- Describers tell us the **size, shape, color, texture, personality, quality, function, age, appearance...**
- Dialogue tells us the **tone or manner the characters use when they talk.**



Do we agree that these elements exist in stories?

YES!

How can we make it easier to put these ideas in *writing*?

Story Outline

Topic Sentence

Setting

Where:

When:

Descriptors:

Character

Good Guys:

Bad Guys:

Descriptors:

Descriptors:

Plot

Problem:

First:

Next:

Then:

After That

Resolution

Finally:

Lesson

Deconstruction & Construction

(summarizing & creating)

- Use the Story Outline sheet to record the elements from short stories, novels, folktales, fairytales, movies, or poems
- Identify the main events that contribute to the plot
- Identify lessons learned by the main characters
- Use the Story Outline sheet to create elements for your own short story, novel, folktale, fairytale, movie, or poem
- Develop the main events that contribute to the plot
- Develop lessons learned by the main characters

Story Outline

Topic Sentence

Little Red Riding Hood set off to deliver some treats to her Grandmother who was not feeling well.

Setting

Where: In the woods, village, Grandma's house

When: one morning, spring, during the day

Descriptors: dark, sunny, yellow, full of flowers, warm,

Character

Good Guys: Little Red, mother,
Hunter, grandmother

Bad Guys: wolf

Descriptors: sweet, kind, loving,
helpful, strong

Descriptors: hungry, devious,
smart, mean

Plot

Problem: Little Red Riding Hood's mother told her not to stop and not to talk to strangers on her way to Grandmother's house.

First: Little Red thought Grandmother would like the pretty flowers, so she stopped to pick some flowers in the woods.

Next: A hungry wolf spotted Little Red and decided to trick her. Little Red told the wolf she was taking goodies to her ill Grandmother who lived in the woods.

Then: The wolf went to Grandmother's house to eat Grandmother and surprise Little Red. Grandmother escaped and ran into the forest.

After That: The wolf pretended to be Grandmother and tricked Little Red into coming closer to "her". Then the wolf tried to snatch Little Red.

Resolution

Finally: Grandmother found a hunter in the woods who was chopping trees. They hurried back to the house and the hunter captured the wolf. Little Red and Grandmother enjoyed the goodies.

Lesson

Follow directions. Don't talk to strangers.

A few more ideas...

- Record your ideas for characters, settings, plots, resolutions, and lessons in a journal
- Keep a portfolio of Story Outline sheets
- Combine your favorite characters, settings, plots, resolutions, and lessons to make a new story

Enjoy the magic of listening to stories, reading stories, and creating your own stories!