

Into the Wild

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Lesson Plan: Story Structure

In *Into the Wild*, Julie must venture deep into the heart of the fairy tale and outsmart wicked witches, feisty giants, and super-cute princes in the ultimate quest to save her family. She fights her way to the heart of the fairy tale and discovers she must risk everything or lose her chance to live in the real world...

She begins in the real world, heads into danger, and then must face a final challenge. All stories have this structure: a beginning, a middle, and an end. In this lesson, students will learn about plot through looking at famous fairy tales for inspiration in creating their own outline.

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GOAL: Construct a new story using the structure of an existing tale.

PROCEDURE:

1. Choose a well-known fairy tale, such as “Little Red Riding Hood.”
2. As a group, make a list of the key plot moments. For example:
 - a. Little Red’s mother warns her not to stray from the path on her way to Grandma’s house.
 - b. Little Red talks to the Wolf.
 - c. Little Red strays from the path.
 - d. The Wolf goes to Grandma, eats her, and disguises himself.
 - e. Little Red reaches Grandma’s house and enters.
 - f. Little Red notices differences between the Wolf and Grandma.
 - g. The Wolf eats Little Red.
 - h. The Huntsman arrives and slays the Wolf.
 - i. Little Red and Grandma are saved.
3. Generalize each plot point like this:
 - a. Hero leaves home and is warned not to disobey.
 - b. Hero is tempted to disobey.
 - c. Hero disobeys.
 - d. Villain sets trap.
 - e. Hero reaches trap.
 - f. Hero becomes suspicious.
 - g. Hero is caught.
 - h. Hero is rescued, and villain is defeated.

- i. Characters rejoice.
4. Each student should create a character based on the following criteria:
 - a. Male or female?
 - b. What age?
 - c. What does he/she most want?
 - d. What does he/she most fear?
5. For this character, students should write an outline following the structure from step 3. The villain should be or cause the thing that the hero most fears. The goal should be the thing that the hero most wants.

EVALUATE: Students share their outlines.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Students can write a story based on their outline. Or students could repeat the exercise for a variety of tales to discover more plot patterns.