



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
POETRY CENTER

Making a Magical Story
by Erin Armstrong
Elementary School Writer-In-Residence

Grade Level: 4th – 5th

Time Frame: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:

- To have students use their knowledge of character, dialog, and setting, based on three previous lessons, to form a cohesive story
- To introduce students to the construction and format of a story
- To give students the opportunity to write a story

Prior Skills: Complete three previous magical creature lessons

Required Resources: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis, Chapter 2, “What Lucy Found There” pp. 10-12, handout (included)

Sequence of Activities:

- I. Introduction: Read the excerpt from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*
 - Discuss the basic elements of a story: beginning, middle, end, character, conflict, description
 - Ask students about their favorite stories: Why do they like them? What’s going on in the story that makes it fascinating? What are the characters doing that they can relate to?
 - Brainstorm different stories they might be able to tell using the previous lessons:
 1. Magical creature discovers their magical power and saves others with their power.
 2. Magical creature discovers a new place, maybe somewhere they might live.
 3. Magical creature meets someone new, maybe they get along with that new being, or maybe they don’t. What happens in either case?
 4. Magical creature falls in love with another magical creature, but maybe they are different.

5. Magical creature gets into a fight with their friend.
6. Magical creature leaves their family to go on an adventure.
7. Magical creature gets a new pet.
8. Magical creature learns how to do something, maybe cook, be a great scientist, tell peoples fortunes, learn to drive
9. Magical creature saves the world.
10. Magical creature meets someone that doesn't speak the same language and has to communicate.

II. Decide the story

- Have students describe the story they want to tell in one sentence.
- Once they've finished the sentence, have them think about what parts of the previous lessons they are going to use. Have them use at least one thing they have already written about: place, magical friend, or magical land, or they can use all three.
- Once they've had some time to think about their story, either hand out the template and have them start to write their own story, or just give them a blank sheet of paper.
- Have them write whatever they can think of for the next thirty minutes. Tell them to write what comes to their mind and to worry less about having all the elements of a story. Explain that, often, it's important just to get the initial ideas down. If you do use the template, you can ask students to write a certain amount of sentences in each section.
- When they are done, make sure they give their story a title. Have them do this after the story has already been written.

III. Share with the class

- Have students share their stories with one another and emphasize the practice of reading their stories out loud. Explain how you can hear things when you read aloud that you might not be able to see when you are writing.

IV. Extension Activities:

- Have students illustrate their story. They can use previous illustrations from the last three lessons or they can illustrate each section.

Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis
Chapter 2, What Lucy Found There pg. 10-12

“Narnia? What’s that?” said Lucy.

“This is the land of Narnia,” said the Faun, “where we are now; all that lies between the lamp-post and the great castle of Cair Paravel on the eastern sea. And—you you have come from the wild woods of the west?”

“I—I got in through the wardrobe in the spare room,” said Lucy.

“Ah!” Said Mr. Tumnus in a rather melancholy voice, “if only I had worked harder at geography when I was a little Faun, I should no doubt know all about those strange countries. It is too late now.”

“But they aren’t countries at all,” said Lucy, almost laughing. “It’s only just back there—at least—I’m not sure. It is summer there.”

“Meanwhile,” said Mr. Tumnus, “it is winter in Narnia, and has been for ever so long, and we shall both catch cold if we stand here talking in the snow. Daughter of Eve from the far land of Spare Oom where eternal summer reigns around the bright city of War Drobe, how could it be if you came and had tea with me?”

“Thank you very much, Mr. Tumnus,” said Lucy. “But I was wondering whether I ought to be getting back.”

“It’s only just round the corner,” said the Faun, “and there’ll be a roaring fire—and toast—and sardines—and cake.”

“Well, it’s very kind of you,” said Lucy. “But I shan’t be able to stay long.”

“If you will take my arm, Daughter of Eve,” said Mr. Tumnus, “I shall be able to hold the umbrella over both of us. That’s the way. Now—off we go.”

And so Lucy found herself walking through the wood arm in arm with this strange creature as if they had known one another all their lives.

They had not gone far before they came to a place where the ground became rough and there were rocks all about and little hills up and little hills down. At the bottom of one small valley Mr. Tumnus turned suddenly aside as if he were going to walk straight into an unusually large rock, but at the last moment Lucy found he was leading her into the entrance of a cave. As soon as they were inside she found herself blinking in the light of a wood fire. Then Mr. Tumnus stopped and took a flaming piece of wood out of the fire with a neat little pair of tongs, and lit a lamp.