

Increasing the Rigor of Storyboarding

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We usually think of a three-panel storyboard as a tool used in primary classrooms to teach about the structure of narrative stories (beginning, middle, and end). However, storyboards can be used by older students and with informational texts (biographies, procedures, historical events, or any other text with a chronological/sequential text structure). All that is needed are the modifications suggested below. Teachers should note that the number of squares used is totally discretionary.

Storyboard Example

Instead of three panels, a 9-square template can be used to storyboard *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. We can break down the story into three sections: beginning, middle, and end. Each section will have three squares highlighting key events.

Beginning

1. Square 1: Ponyboy Curtis, a member of the Greasers, introduces himself and his life in a small town divided by social class between the Greasers and the Socs.
2. Square 2: Ponyboy and Johnny are attacked by a group of Socs in the park, leading to Johnny killing Bob Sheldon in self-defense.
3. Square 3: Fearing repercussions, Ponyboy and Johnny seek help from Dally and go into hiding in an abandoned church.

Middle/Body Paragraphs

1. Square 4: While in hiding, Ponyboy and Johnny bond and reflect on their lives, reading *Gone with the Wind* and discussing Robert Frost's poem "Nothing Gold Can Stay."
2. Square 5: The church catches fire during a school picnic, and Ponyboy and Johnny heroically rescue the children trapped inside, but Johnny is severely injured.
3. Square 6: The Greasers prepare for a rumble with the Socs as tensions between the groups escalate, with both sides determined to assert dominance.

End

1. Square 7: The Greasers win the rumble against the Socs, but the victory feels hollow as they grapple with personal losses.

2. Square 8: Johnny succumbs to his injuries in the hospital, leaving Ponyboy devastated and questioning the cycle of violence.
3. Square 9: Inspired by his experiences and Johnny's final message to "stay gold," Ponyboy decides to tell his story through writing, finding hope and purpose.

This storyboard format helps organize the narrative into a clear chronological sequence, making it easier for students to understand and analyze the story's progression from beginning to end.

How this works!

Using a 9-square storyboard instead of just 3 squares for beginning, middle, and end offers several academic, learning, and cognitive benefits:

Enhanced Detail and Depth

Deeper Understanding: A 9-square storyboard allows students to explore more details and nuances within each section of a narrative. This encourages a deeper understanding of the story's progression and the relationships between events.

Complex Concept Breakdown: By expanding the number of panels, students can break down complex concepts into smaller, more manageable parts, facilitating comprehension and retention.

Improved Cognitive Engagement

Chunking Information: The additional squares help students organize information into logical sequences, which aids in moving information from short-term to long-term memory.

Metacognitive Skills: More squares provide opportunities for students to reflect on their thinking and learning processes, enhancing metacognitive skills.

Creative and Critical Thinking

Creative Expression: With more panels, students have greater freedom to express creativity in how they depict each part of the story. This fosters imagination and critical thinking skills.

Problem-Solving: Students can explore multiple pathways or solutions within a narrative, encouraging problem-solving and decision-making abilities.

Collaborative Learning

Teamwork Opportunities: A larger storyboard can be divided among groups, promoting collaboration and communication as students work together to complete the narrative.

Enhanced Engagement and Motivation

Active Participation: The visual and interactive nature of a detailed storyboard keeps students engaged and motivated to participate actively in their learning journey.

Overall, using a 9-square storyboard provides a richer educational experience by allowing for more detailed exploration of content, fostering higher-order thinking skills, and enhancing student engagement.



Primary Template , K -2

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Modified Template, Grades 3 and Up

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