

Independent Application

Browsing Bins

Provide your students with the resources necessary to develop familiarity with different types of texts by organizing bins of books by genre. Offer browsing time to the whole class, and discuss with students which bins they favor and why.

To encourage expanding tastes and preferences, take a little class time to allow students to make recommendations from the bins. This can be as simple as having every child show a book and tell what they liked about it. For upper elementary grades, you might set up a time for students to use the books to create bulleted lists of three things each that they like about reading fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

Plot Charts

A *plot chart* is a visual depiction of the rising and falling action of a story or drama. Plot charts can be created based on picture books, chapter books, scripts, or movies, as a way of helping students see the overall structure. To get started, choose a story with a well developed plot. Figure RL 5.7 provides a recommended starter list. Read the entire story aloud, and then work with your students to fill out the plot chart that best works for your grade level. See Figures RL 5.8 and RL 5.9 or use interactive materials from ReadWriteThink such as a plot diagram (www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/plot-diagram-30040.html) or a graphic map (www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/graphic-30039.html). If you are using a chapter book, work with your students to fill in the chart one chapter at a time. Help students understand that it will take careful thinking to choose just the key elements to describe. After filling out one or more plot charts with the whole class, your students can begin to work through plot charts on their own.

Figure RL 5.7

Recommended Literature for Plot Charts

K-2

The Three Snow Bears by Jan Brett
Strega Nona by Tomie DePaola
Mole's Hill by Lois Ehlert
Millions of Cats by Wanda Gag
The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
Shortcut by Donald Crews

3-5

Henry and the Buccaneer Bunnies by Carolyn Crimi
The Hickory Chair by Lisa Rowe Fraustino
Martin's Big Words by Doreen Rappaport
The Great Fuzz Frenzy by Janet Stevens
The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson
Precious and the Boo Hag by Patricia McKissack

Plot Chart for Story Highs and Lows (K-2)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

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Draw or write about four important events. Color the plot chart to show highs and lows.	Event	Event	Event	Event

Figure RL 5.9

Plot Chart for Story Highs and Lows (3-5)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

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Describe five to seven important events and rate each as a story high or low on the plot.	Event	Event	Event	Event	Event	Event	Event

Charting with Props

Charting with props involves students using character props or puppets to retell a story. To prepare the props, scour author websites for characters to print (see suggested sites below or photocopy and laminate cardstock characters from your students' favorite books). Before asking students to use the props, work with them to create a wall-size plot chart with sketches to cue them into key parts of the story. For example, with *The Three Little Pigs*, you might create four sketches: the exterior of the straw house, the exterior of the stick house, the exterior of the brick house, and the interior of the brick house. The high point of the story occurs in view of the brick house exterior, so this could be placed a bit higher than the other sketches.

Recommended Websites for Props

www.janbrett.com/

www.kevinhenkes.com/default.asp

www.patriciapolacco.com/

www.janetstevens.com/flash/images/Coloring_Pages.pdf

Important Parts

Important parts is a useful strategy for helping students build meaning across the pages of a chapter book. After reading a key chapter—or each chapter—students pause to consider the event that stands out the most for them. Choosing key events across chapters helps students think about how the parts fit together. Figure RL 5.10 provides a frame for analysis of four chapters.