

Making Your Own Story

We need to have a **Beginning**, a **Middle**, and an **Ending**.

The Beginning

We might say where the story happens, and when the story happens: "Once upon a time".

Then we might say who the story is about - the main character, or hero. The hero might have a friend who helps them.

What kind of character might you like to put into a story?
Can you say what they might be like or perhaps draw a picture?

The Middle

Something goes wrong, or there might already be a problem at the beginning of the story, which then becomes worse. Having a problem helps to make the story more interesting.

There might also be a bad character.

What might be the problem for your character?
What might a bad character be like?
How might the characters try to solve the problem?

Then comes the most exciting part. This might be a journey, an adventure, a battle, a mission, a quest. Sometimes there might be dangers. How is the problem solved?

Can you think of ideas for what might happen in this part of the story?

The Ending

The heroes may have learned something, or grown in some way, their lives are better, happier: "happily ever after."

Can you think of ideas for a good ending? Will it end happily?

How we planned our story 'Storm in a Teapot'

Our Beginning

Introduced Grandma Kettlepot and her friend, Willoughby Wordsearch; they both love stories. Grandma Kettlepot would like to write stories of her own.

The Problem

Whenever Grandma Kettlepot tries to write a story she can only think of a beginning.

The Middle of our story

The Decision

Inspired by a traditional Zulu story, 'Where Stories Come From', they decide to go on a story-finding adventure.

The Battle (The Climax- the most exciting part)

The Goblin tries to steal their story ideas. Rags (the dog) becomes the hero of the story, and comes to the rescue, chasing the goblin away, and the stories are saved.

The Ending

Grandma Kettlepot has completed a story, and gained confidence, and belief in her ability to write. Will has become braver and more adventurous.

How we can divide the Zulu Story 'Where Stories Come From' into parts:

The Beginning

Where the story is set - A village in the Old Zulu Kingdom of Africa.

When the story is set - Before stories ever came to be.

Who the story is about (the characters) - A mother and her children.

The Problem -

The children want stories, but there aren't any.

The Middle

The Decision - (Journey; Adventure)

The children have only the wind to listen to. Manza decides she must do something to try to find stories. She sets out on a journey and asks every creature she meets if they know thing about stories, or where they might be found. Some of the creatures are not interested, but the elephant, the eagle, and finally the turtle help her towards her goal.

The Most Exciting Part - (The Climax)

The turtle carries Manza on the final part of her journey, under the sea. She meets the Mer-people, who are mysterious and, maybe a bit scary. Manza has to do a deal with them to get what she wants. The pictures her children drew are just what the Mer-people need.

The Ending

Manza returns to the Zulu Kingdom, bringing the Story Shell the Mer-people gave her. Her children and the whole village are waiting for her. Manza has now discovered stories; she returns to her village, and tells her children and to the whole village about her adventure. Manza has learned how to make stories and has brought happiness to her children and to the whole village.

The 'happily ever after' -

And that's how stories came to be.

Where Stories Come From - (A Traditional Zulu Story)

Long ago, in Africa, there lived a mother, Manza, with her two children. Each evening they would sit round the fire before bedtime. "Tell us stories! Tell us stories!" - the children would ask. But there were no stories, no dreams, no magical tales: so they drew pictures and listened to the wind.

One day Manza decided she must go in search of stories. She brought with her the pictures her children had drawn to remind her of home. She asked every creature she met if they knew where she might find stories.

First, Manza met a hare. "Stories, indeed!" replied the hare, and scurried quickly away.

As Manza continued on her way, she saw an owl sitting in a wild fig tree. "Please tell me stories," she called.

"You dare wake me for stories?" hooted the owl, And off he flew to another tree.

Next, she met an elephant. "Do you know any stories?" She asked.

"My dear, I do not," replied the elephant, "but the eagle, who flies higher than all other birds, might know where to find some."

Manza found the eagle by the river. Excitedly she ran toward him, calling out as he swooped down from the sky to grab a fish. The eagle was so startled, he dropped the fish!

"What is so important that you make me lose my supper?" Cried the eagle.

"Oh, eagle, do you know where I might find stories?"

“I know only things of the earth, or the sky”, replied the eagle, “but the turtle knows secrets of the ocean: wait here! I’ll bring him.”

“Climb on my back and hold onto my shell” - said the turtle, in a deep voice - and down they dived to the bottom of the ocean, where the Mer-People lived.

“We have many stories,” said the Mer-People, “but you must give us something in exchange.”

“But, what can I give?” - Asked Manza.

“We can never leave the sea, but would love to see what the dry lands are like.”

“I have pictures of our home, that my children drew!” Exclaimed Manza.

The Mer-People gave Manza a beautiful shell. “Whenever you want a story, hold this shell to your ear, and listen!” Manza thanked them, and headed back to her own world.

“Tell us a story! Tell us a story!” The children called, and they sat down, together with all the people of the village. Manza put the shell to her ear, and told them about her adventure. And that is how stories came to be!

This is our version of the Zulu tale, which we abridged for our show. You can read the full version via this link:

<https://www.canteach.ca/resources/social-studies/society-and-culture/african-folk-tales/where-stories-come-from/>