

Story Narrative Directions

I use this story square diagram (see picture below) to teach students (grades 3-5) the four elements that make up a story as well as corresponding “wh” questions that walk them through the elements. The shapes in each part serve as a visual cue for each story element and associated questions. I introduce each shape by asking students what it reminds them of and then relate each one to the corresponding question. After these elements are taught and students portray a good grasp of the concepts/questions, I use the *Story Square Worksheet* and the *Story Narrative Worksheet* (copy front and back) in a story retelling writing activity, where students show what they have learned and use it meaningfully by writing about a short story we have read.

Character:

Heart – represents **PEOPLE** and **ANIMALS** because people and animals have hearts.

Question answered – **WHO** is the story about? *or*
WHO are the characters?

Setting:

Triangle – represents **PLACE**: a mountain top, roof top, pyramid, or tent are all **place** words.

Question answered – **WHERE** did the story happen (or take place)?

Star – represents **TIME**: what we see when it gets dark or at night time.

Question answered – **WHEN** did the story happen (or take place)?

Problem:

Square (with question mark) – represents something that puzzles or a **PROBLEM**.

Question answered – **WHAT** went wrong? *or* **WHAT** was the problem?

Solution:

Circle (which comes last or at the end) – represents the **END** of the story or the **SOLUTION** to the problem.

Question answered – **HOW** was the problem solved in the end?

