

Organizing Details in a Story

Companion Text: The Jakry Kids: Curiosity Shop, by Lin Jakary & illustrated by Ryan Olson

Subject Area & Grade Level: Language Arts, 2nd Grade

Materials: Multiple copies of the book, if possible.

Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between the main idea of a story and supporting details
- Explain why details are important in a story
- Organize supporting details around a main idea

Pre-Reading

Write “What you like to do for fun” in what will become a center circle on the board. Ask students for some suggestions, and choose a few answers, writing each one in its own, smaller circle connected to the center one by a “spoke.” Then, focus on each answer one at a time, and solicit details that could support it. For example, if “playing board games” was an answer, the names of specific games could be supporting details. Fill in the details for each answer, and then identify them as “supporting details,” and “What you like to do for fun” as the “main idea.”

During Reading

Read the story once through without stopping. Then, return to page 8 and ask students how they would feel walking into a shop that looked like the Curiosity Shop. Excited? Overwhelmed? Eager to explore? Tired? Ask them to imagine what it would be like if, instead of looking the way it does, the shop had everything neatly organized into labeled boxes, and you were simply given a list of all the items in the store and which bin they were in when you walked in? Which way would you prefer to shop? Why do you think the author and illustrator were trying to show by presenting the shop the way they did?

Post-Reading

Explain that details have many purposes in story, and that one of them is to add depth to the meaning. Tell students that the specific way an author organizes details helps us to know where to focus our attention when reading, and that if there are too details that are unorganized, it can be frustrating to the reader.

Tell them that this last activity is designed to show that organizing the same information in a different way can make people see it from a new perspective. Still looking at page 8 in the book, (distribute multiple copies if you have them), break students into group, and challenge them to organize the items in the shop as many different ways as they can, following the model on the board from earlier, and making the center circle read “Items in the Curiosity Shop.” When groups are finished, have them share their interpretations, and discuss the different emphases.



Point out how whatever attributes you emphasize in your “smaller circles” (i.e. color, core material, use, likeability, cost, etc.) guides your understanding of the items as a whole.

