



**AUNT ISABEL TELLS A GOOD ONE
and AUNT ISABEL MAKES TROUBLE**
by Kate Duke

Introduction

Create a memorable storytelling unit for your class with the help of this teacher's guide and two lively little mice! Curious Penelope and her beloved Aunt Isabel, the stars of **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One** and **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble** by Kate Duke, introduce children to the elements of a good tale. Using the lessons here, you can enhance your students' appreciation of these books and familiarize them with the process of creating a story. The Aunt Isabel books can be enjoyed by a broad age group (preschool through early elementary), and the activities presented here can be adapted for the different grades. They also include suggestions for use with ESL and other special needs students.

And now, it's storytime...

Lesson Plan

Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One

Story Elements: *Giving the Solution a Twist!*

Goals

By isolating basic story elements - setting, characters, problem, and solution - **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One** shows students the building blocks of a story. This lesson gives them an opportunity to identify and modify these elements as a first step in creating a story of their own. A graphic organizer is provided to assist the lesson. Students should be encouraged to share their work as they develop their ideas. A large-group sharing time provides teacher and students with an opportunity to discuss and assess the final products.

Objectives

1. Students will learn about the construction of a good tale through a reading of **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One**.
2. Students will be able to identify the setting, main characters, problem, and solution of **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One** with the assistance of your graphic organizer.
3. To develop their own skills as authors, students will be able to modify the tale by creating a new solution to **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One**.
4. Students will be able to share their work with the class.

Materials/Resources

- **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One** by Kate Duke
- Large paper and marker for webbing ideas (optional)
- Photocopies of your graphic organizer (optional)
- Pencils and crayons (optional)

Procedure & Methodology

1. Prior to introducing **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One**, ask students to share with you what they know about making a good story. You may wish to list or web their ideas.
2. Read the story pausing intermittently to ask questions and discuss story elements. For example, *Who are the main characters?*, *Why is it important for Aunt Isabel to add a problem to the story?*, or *How do you think Lady Nell will solve the problem?*
3. Using your self-created graphic organizer, assist the students in listing the setting, main characters (you can list good characters and villains separately), the problem, and the solution. Some students may wish to do this independently.
4. Have the students brainstorm a new solution to the story and write it down on a story graph. They can come up with more than one! As they work, encourage them to share their ideas. End the activity with a large-group sharing time. Don't forget to display their great ideas!
5. For ESL and other special needs students: Rather than writing their ideas, they can draw pictures to depict each of the story elements, including their new solution. They can exercise their oral language skills when they share their work!

Evaluation

Students' work can be evaluated throughout the lesson as well as during sharing time. The lesson provides assessment opportunities in all areas of language arts - reading, writing, listening, and oral language.

Possible topics for your Graphic Organizer:

Main Characters

Good / Evil

Setting

Where

When

Problem

Solution

New Solution

Lesson Plan #2

Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble

Goals

Students will be introduced to more complex issues of story development through an analysis of the story element "the problem." Through a reading of **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble**, students observe and appreciate how a story without trouble is a story without excitement! Each time Penelope "but-but-butts" in, Aunt Isabel adds bits of trouble to create the problem and to keep the story full of surprises! Students will strengthen their understanding of the importance of the problem through an activity that requires them to eliminate the trouble from the tale! A group discussion gives students the chance to share their opinions and ideas about this story element.

Objectives

1. Students will listen to and be able to discuss the story element "the problem" through a reading of **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble**.
2. Students will develop a problem-less story by deconstructing **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble** and eliminating the trouble.
3. Through large-group sharing and discussion students will understand that a story without a problem lacks excitement and appeal.

Materials/Resources

- **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble** by Kate Duke
- Overhead projector, transparency of a graphic organizer you design, and dry erase marker
- Pencils and paper (optional)

Procedure & Methodology

1. Review with students the four basic story elements - setting, characters, problem, and solution.
2. Show them the cover of **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble** and ask them to make predictions about the story. Read the story pausing appropriately for questions and discussion. Be sure to ask students how it makes them feel each time Penelope says "but" and Aunt Isabel adds trouble! Direct the discussion to the importance of problems to a good, interesting story.
3. You can create a graphic organizer that provides a chart in which the story with trouble and the story without trouble can be compared side by side! This allows students to see the importance of this story element. Begin by working with the students to retell the story on an overhead projector. Encourage the students to summarize the plot points with brief statements in the left column. Be sure to highlight the bits of trouble and corresponding solutions. (You may wish to write some of these beforehand, leaving gaps for the students to fill in.)
4. In the right column have the students work individually or in groups, using paper and pencil to summarize the story leaving out the trouble. For example, Penelope looks at her calendar and realizes that it is Prince Augustus' birthday and she has forgotten it! Eliminate this bit of trouble. Instead Penelope looks at her calendar and sees that Prince Augustus' birthday is a week away, with plenty of time for her to find a gift and deliver it! Once the students are finished, have them share their work and decide as a class which story is more interesting and why.
5. For ESL and other special needs students: Use the same procedure, but have them dictate the new story to you working in a small group. Let them use the illustrations as cues.

Evaluation

Students' work can be evaluated throughout the lesson as well as during sharing time. The lesson provides assessment opportunities in all areas of language arts - reading, writing, listening, and oral language.

Extension Activities

Giving the Solution a Twist!

1. Students can develop their own Aunt Isabel tale using a graphic organizer. They can write two different solutions!
2. Have students work in groups of four to create progressive Aunt Isabel stories. The first student creates the setting, the second adds the main characters (both good and evil), the third the problem, and the fourth the solution. Have four stories going at once to keep the creativity flowing!
3. Have students apply the same lesson and extension activities to **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble**.

Playing with Trouble!

1. Have students work in pairs to make up a new Aunt Isabel story. Have one student play the part of Aunt Isabel and another the part of Penelope. Using a tape recorder, have them say the story aloud, beginning with Aunt Isabel. Penelope must keep "but-but-butting" in with problems to be solved! Students can share their recordings.
2. In the Aunt Isabel stories, trouble frequently arrives in the form of quirky insects or animals with ominous names. Students can have fun with language making up villains for future Aunt Isabel stories. For example, Leering Lizard or Meddling Beetle.
3. Students can design "Wanted" posters for the Aunt Isabel villains or their own villains. On the poster they must describe the character, explain why they are wanted, and outline the reward.

Internet Resources

Graphic Organizers

Ready-to-use selection of graphic organizers.

<http://teachervision.com/tv/curriculum/printables/graphics.html>

Duke, K. Lesson Plans: **Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One** and **Aunt Isabel Makes Trouble**. Penguin , Inc.

Find more teaching guides and tips at: <http://us.penguinroup.com/youngreaders>.