

THE CLASSROOM STORY

The Classroom Story is a shared narrative experience that combines imagination, cooperation, game elements, and curricular outcomes (skills and content) centred on a constructivist model of learning. Think campfire stories mashed up with a roleplaying game and a notebook.

The teacher acts as storyteller and moderator; creating the setting, inciting event, general plot, curricular outcomes, and any game elements. Students engage with the story by becoming characters, authors, and actors. By responding to shared events in the story, students are stimulated, challenged, and encouraged to interact and cooperate. There are opportunities to create, mess-up, move around, talk, draw, write, act, code, or whatever! A Classroom Story is something each teacher - and eventually class of students - can do. It just "fits" with your style. The end result will be a shared experience that you could never totally plan out and will produce work you could have never expected.

- Brent & GM

Bio 1: Brent Schmidt

Educator, Coach, Writer

Skills: reading fiction, talking to humans, shooting and coaching hoops, scribbling and doodling, strumming guitars, gaming, consuming caffeine, making foods.

Bio 2: Gregory Chomichuk @gmbchomichuk

Writer, Illustrator, Educator

I build stories with words and pictures that are sometimes heart warming and sometimes blood curdling. I write and story break for animation, film, theatre, and a bit of TV. I design roleplaying games. I study and develop classroom material based on the idea that *interest creates rigor*.

FIELD NOTES

- we assume your classroom has a diverse set of backgrounds, SESs, ethnicities, and literacy and numeracy levels.
- student engagement and positive rapport are essential.
- constructivist model of learning. "learning is therefore intimately tied to experience and the contexts of experience, no matter how or where that learning takes place" (Swan)
- optimal learning model - "I do", "We do", "You do" (Regie Routman)
- a Classroom Story is not an acronym or ultra exclusive teaching methodology. It is an approach. As such, you can incorporate any other number of pedagogical strategies within a Classroom Story. You don't have to rework everything you do, it just "fits".
- information in our modern age is ubiquitous and ever changing. We need to teach students to safely access, critically assess, and stitch together the vast amount of knowledge available to them.
- students need a place to keep their writing, images, and ideas. A folder, binder, journal, or notebook all work suitably well. Use a system that works for you and your students.
- don't plan the whole thing! Resist the urge. The students need to contribute too!
- the students need to be working harder than you.
- inclusion of Game Elements and Game Mechanics helps keep things interesting and provides an element of chance and intrigue.

- Classroom Stories are symbiotic with existing teaching styles. It just "fits"

ISMS

- It only counts if you write it down!
- Collect the room with a shared activity.
- Shared danger moves the plot.
- Mystery evokes curiosity, curiosity creates interest, interest creates rigor + innovation.
- Acts, scenes, episodes, chapters, or parts keep things on topic and provide structure.
- Be dramatic - use visuals, sounds, and space to engage the students with the story.
- Encourage all ideas. "Yes, if..." is better than "No, unless..."
- Character = Motivation + Goal + Action
- Reward the behaviour you want to see again.
- Don't hoard your ideas. Throw them into the story, don't hold back.
- Classroom Stories are symbiotic with existing or new teaching styles.
- Rigour is a natural product of interest.

AT ITS CORE

1. A Setting and Problem (use your CONTENT and OUTCOMES - generally planned by teacher)
2. Characters (vehicles for students role-play in the story)
3. Events, Prompts, and Responses (narrative to evoke mystery, danger, collaboration)

INGREDIENTS FOR TEACHERS

Public space to place ideas and images.

- whiteboard, digital file, paper notebook, banner of paper, whatever!

Pens, pencils, folders, notebooks, images, ideas, markers, papers.

Gumption, moxie, flexibility, quick-thinking, and confidence.

Time and patience.

INGREDIENTS FOR STUDENTS

An environment that encourages ideas.

Pens, pencils, papers, folders, markers and notebooks.

A private place to collect images and ideas.

Collaboration, cooperation, and creativity.

Q: Why is it important for students collect/build a body of writing/work? ☒

A: Content and context! Students use their notes to reference previous events in the story; further develop small ideas and side projects; monitor their progression as a thinker and writer; select favourite pieces to revise, edit, and publish. Everything is in one place for the teacher to assess and evaluate.



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