

Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching and Support Service

How to use Story Stones to Develop Language and Literacy

Why?

- They are a fun tactile resource to engage pupils in retelling stories, making up their own stories, and developing their spoken language skills. They can also be used to develop alliteration and rhyming skills.



You will need:

- A range of small stones with pictures.
- Either paint the pictures (use acrylic paint / paint pens and then a coat of PVA glue to seal) or photocopy / print selected pictures and paste them on the stone with PVA glue – make sure you glue over the top of the pictures to seal them.
- You will need a range of pictures to provide prompts for the story including: characters, settings, what happened (this can be for example weather, witches, sea serpents, a poisoned apple), resolution (such as a rainbow, magic wand, key, unicorn). You can base some of your stones on traditional fairytales initially so they can use familiar stories to base theirs on.
- Labelled baskets, story maps, a bag to hold the stones.

How?

There are many ways the stones can be used – here are a few ideas.

- Place a small selection of stones in a bag and ask the pupils to feel in the bag and remove one. They could then:
 - Name the pictures to develop vocabulary.
 - Give the initial sound.
 - Start telling a story using each stone selected.
 - The adult may need to support by modelling how to develop a story initially.
- Use a basket of stones for each section of the story i.e. characters, the setting (where), a problem (what) etc.

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- Use a story map to support children using a random selection of stones to create their own story.
- Initially the adult will need to support the development of the story by giving prompts such as “Once upon a time a...” the child selects the character and continues the story. Continue giving prompts to develop the story.
- Story stones can be a great addition to small world play. They can add another dimension and encourage storytelling.
- Story stones can be used to support initial sound recognition – can they match a selection of pictures to the correct letter?
- Create a set of rhyming stones to develop phonological skills i.e. dog, log, fog, jog or cat, hat, mat, bat, rat. You could then carry out ‘odd one out’ activities with a selection of stones that rhyme and one that doesn’t. Can they identify the rhyme pattern?
- Story stones based on familiar stories are great to support pupils who struggle re-telling stories.

The most important thing with story stones is allowing the pupils time to play and explore the stones and being encouraged to develop their imaginative play.

Who?		Where?		What happened	