Introduction

How do we help young writers use the power of imagination to change familiar stories and create new ones? How do we help learners identify and explain the differences between non-fiction and fiction? Using drawing and storytelling, children will create books that modify familiar tales and build upon real experiences. This project sparks curiosity and builds confidence while helping children become authors and illustrators.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Children will deepen their understanding of how authors and illustrators build stories. They will:
- illustrate familiar stories and modify the illustrations by drawing different characters, settings, and events;
- identify the differences between fiction and non-fiction and explain what elements in their stories are real or imaginary; and
- use math operations such as addition, subtraction, sorting, and substituting to create changes in their story text and illustrations.

Vocabulary

surprise	realistic	character	add
fiction	imaginary	setting	subtract
non-fiction	fantasy	plot	substitute
adventure	make-believe	original	

Essential Questions

• How do fact-based stories differ from imaginary stories? In what ways can the differences between fiction and non-fiction be explained?

• How do questions such as "What if…?" help children imagine changes to a story?

• How can art help students make their thinking visible and strengthen their story-building skills?

• How do the mathematical operations of subtraction, addition, and substitution help children make changes in stories?

Guiding Questions

• Are you planning to create a story based on facts (non-fiction) or something imaginary (fiction)?

• What characters, settings, problems or conflicts, and events will be in the story?

• Consider a familiar story. What are some ways you can change the

characters, setting, problem, or events to make it a new story?

• Which elements of that familiar story would you take away and what would you add to change the story?

• How will you revise the title of the story to reflect the changes you made?

Supplies

- Paper (white or coloured)
- Crayola® Markers
- Crayola® Crayons
- Crayola® Watercolour paints (optional)
- Water cup

Prepare

Organizing a special place together with your children where they will consistently create their learning projects helps them take responsibility for managing their work and cleaning up when projects are finished. Is there a corner of a room that can be set up as a learning station? Or if this is shared space, what are the agreed-upon rules for cleaning up in time to serve meals or do other activities in this space?

Applying SEEK to this video and lesson ▶

SEEK™

SEE	What do you see?
EVIDENCE	Why do you say that? What is the evidence?
EXPLAIN	What decisions did the artist make? Why?
KNOW	What do you know? What else do you want to know?

SEE:
Explore a familiar story's illustration. What characters and settings do you see?

EVIDENCE:
What problems or events are shown in the illustration?

EXPLAIN:
How did the artist's choices of colour, lines, and shapes help you determine the characters' feelings?

KNOW:
What do we know about the original story from this illustration? What do you want to know about the next event? How does reading the illustrations inspire you to imagine a revised story?

CREATE

• Read or tell a familiar story. You might read a picture book together or recount a short story, folk tale, fairy tale, or a fable.

• Have children modify elements of that story to create a new tale. Discuss how they might add new characters or take some objects away and replace them with something different. For example, a child might decide to take out the rabbit and replace that character with a giant troll or magical frog. Another child might decide to replace the three little kittens with one huge, hungry lion. Children can also change what happens (the plot) or add new challenges or problems that the characters need to solve.

• To spark new ideas, ask children "What if…?" questions, for example, "What if the main character changed into an animal?" or "What if the setting changed to another planet?"

• As children make decisions have them illustrate the new scenes and new characters and sequence the illustrations to form a new story.

PRESENT

• Identify an audience for the presentation. For example, children might want to tell their story to an audience of relatives by making a video with a smart phone and then emailing it to them. They might decide to do a live presentation using FaceTime or another remote connection tool.

• Help children plan how they will customize the presentation in ways that would interest the audience. A presentation to preschool-age cousins, for example, would look different from a presentation to grandparents.

• When children share their book they should be prepared to answer questions, listen to others' comments, and respond to suggestions.

RESPOND

• Use SEEK™ to discuss the new illustrations children create.

• Listen intently, be curious, and ask questions that encourage children to explain their thinking.

• Ask about the decisions children made as they added surprises into their stories.

• Ask if the changes in their stories are based on factual, real experiences or if they are based on something imaginary. Talk about the benefits of both types of stories and the importance of knowing the difference between what is real and what is imaginary.

CONNECT

• Playfully explore extending this approach to additional stories. Ask "What if this character continued to solve a similar problem in another story?" Create "What happens next…" tales.

• Discuss how stories about personal experiences, simple errands, or more complex adventures can be either fictional or non-fictional. Turn a non-fictional series of events into a fictional story by adding imaginary characters, settings, and actions.

• Emphasize the difference between fantasy and reality, imagination and fact, and fiction and non-fiction.

For Younger Children ▶

• Have children dictate the stories about their pictures to an adult or older sibling who will transcribe the words, and let the children drive the storyline.

• Ask young children what is important in stories and discuss the roles of characters, settings, problems, and how each of these makes the story interesting and informative.

• Help young authors organize their stories by asking what happens first, next, and last. Ask them to organize their stories to be sure there is a beginning, middle, and end.

For Older Children ▶

• Expand the newly created story into a storyboard for a film or a graphic novel.

• Draw or sketch an event in history and change the details to create a new story in the genre known as historical fiction. This often involves bringing to life one character who represents the stories of several people who lived through the event. Or it might involve condensing the timeline of events while upholding the integrity of describing what happened.

• Introduce a science-based problem as the story surprise and create a new story in the science fiction genre.

Child Reflections

• How were the SEEK™ questions helpful in reading story illustrations?

• What additional ways could you change a story?

• How did you decide who the story characters would be and what those characters would do?

• How do you know the difference between fiction and non-fiction?

Adult Reflections

• What new insights do you have about your child(ren)'s understanding of change, fiction, and non-fiction?

• How did using the math concepts of addition, subtraction, and substitution help the students understand the concept of change?

• How can you adapt this project to fit with other experiences?

STANDARDS AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Standards help teachers and families focus on important skills and understandings that learners need in many subject areas. It is helpful to discuss standards with students so they too know what the learning goals are. This video and project address the following standards:

LANGUAGE ARTS
• Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose stories in which learners name what they are writing about and supply details.

• With guidance and support from adults, children respond to questions and suggestions and add details to improve writing as needed.

• With guidance and support from adults, children recall information from experiences to answer questions and create connections.

.MATHEMATICS
• Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

• Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from.

SCIENCE
• Generate and compare multiple possible solutions to a problem based on how well each is likely to meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.

• Ask questions, observe, and gather information about a situation people want to change.

• Define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool.

VISUAL ARTS
• Generalize and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

• Use art vocabulary to describe choices while creating art.

• Use personal experiences to make and talk about art.

• Present and talk about the ideas in artistic work.

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