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Texts with a colon: picking words, and who, where, what stories

Goal

The following four suggestions promote students' creativity and the enjoyment of writing in their first language. Due to their attractive, low threshold character, these exercises are well suited for mixed-age groups, whereby the younger students can learn from the older ones.

1. Stories that follow a colon

3rd–6th grade

20 minutes



Materials:
Sheets of paper
with sentence beginnings
(one sheet per student)

Work cited:
Baumann-Schenker & Ernst,
2007, page 66.

a) One or two sentences serve as starters. They must end with a colon. All students receive or write such a beginning.

b) They continue the story with two sentences and then pass the paper on to the next person who continues the story. Important: each student's continuation must also end with a colon.

Example:

Once upon a time there was a little mouse. It thought to itself:
"If only I were enormously big and strong!" Then a cat came along and saw the mouse. It laughed cruelly and said:
"....."

c) Once the papers have circulated through the whole class or group, they are then read out loud. This way, the students can assess whether the task was fulfilled correctly.

2. Pick word stories

3rd–6th grade

20 minutes



a) Each student writes a sentence at the top of a sheet of paper and passes it on to the next person.

b) The next student writes an ensuing sentence which contains at least one word that was chosen ("picked" from the previous sentence. This word will be underlined. The paper is then passed on to the next student, who repeats the process by including any one word from the previous student's sentence.

c) The process continues around the class or group until everyone has had each piece of paper.

Variant: Picked word stories can also be written alone. The important thing is to ensure that the student uses one word in each sentence that was picked from the previous sentence.

3. Choose a word stories

3rd–6th grade

20 minutes



Work cited:
Zopfi & Zopfi, 1995, p. 47
("Zettels Traum").

a) The class forms a circle. The teacher informs the students that they are going to write a story together which is made up with the students' chosen words. Each student should think of a word and write his/her selected word on a piece of paper.

b) The papers are laid out in the middle of the group so that everyone can see them.

c) Who picks a word to begin the story? Who continues with another word or paper? – Parallel to telling the story, the pieces of paper are arranged or hung up in the correct order.

d) Finally, the students write the story, either in the sequence arranged by the group in the previous round, or according to their own ideas. The important thing is that all pieces of paper are considered and used for the story.