

2. Telling stories in a clear and interesting way: Variants:

2nd–9th grade

20 minutes



- The instructor provides the students with the following “recipe” for writing in a clear and interesting manner: “put yourselves into the shoes of the main character(s) in the story. Close your eyes and think about how they feel and think, their worries and hopes, etc. Now describe this in your text!” The students then practice the „recipe“ orally before writing, using different, suitable topics. Examples: “a discussion around our dinner table”, “an experience in my parents’ native country”, “my grandmother’s tales of her youth”.
- Another “recipe” that follows the same pattern is to practice with the following instructions: “close your eyes before you begin to write. Think about your story and imagine it as a film in your mind. Now write everything down in as much detail as possible.”
- A tip which often leads to more clarity is to use direct speech: “use direct speech, let the characters talk to each other!” This, too, should first be done orally and then written down.
- Texts are sometimes more “alive” and interesting when they are narrated in the first, rather than in the third person. If students follow this and the above suggestions, they should become successful.
- Picture stories provide an ideal opportunity for practicing vivid and lively writing. In this way, the students are relieved from searching for ideas and can concentrate on writing an appealing text. It is important that the written texts are then compared and discussed among the students.
- Re-narrating stories is also a valuable and effective opportunity to practice a clear and interesting writing style, as described below (18.3 and 21).

3. Exact re-telling and summarizing; Variants

3rd–9th grade

30 minutes



Materials:
Story as a template
for the re-narration
(see right).

Re-telling stories occur regularly both in school and life in general. This can be seen in many different forms, from reports about a television show or a dream, to the summary of a phone message, from paraphrasing to the most detailed reconstruction possible, whereby the stylistic aspects should also be captured. The advantage of re-telling, in terms of writing style, is that the students are freed from having to construct their own story (which has already been provided) and thus can concentrate entirely on the language aspects of writing. Examples and possibilities:

- Lead-in discussion: explore where and why re-telling of stories and summarizing texts is necessary, both in school as well as in everyday life. The students should be aware of how relevant these types of text are for everyday life (also for jokes and gossip). Then, collect examples of actual real-life re-telling of stories and summarizing of texts (from the last couple of days): who (re)told what to whom?
- The instructor reads a short (or longer) story to the class 2–3 times. The students then re-narrate the story as accurately as possible, but hide 1–2 inaccuracies. The stories are then read and the question is asked: can you find the mistakes? (see also #7.4)
- Re-narration with a change of perspective: the students read a story (e. g. a fairy tale, a legend or an episode from one’s own literature). Instead of simply re-telling the story, the students put themselves into the role of a specific character from the story and re-narrate it from their perspective. For example, the fairy tale “Little Red Riding Hood” could be narrated from the perspective of the wolf.
- The same story can be re-told in different types of text formats: see also 17.4.
- Re-telling information and summarizing in very short forms is commonly practiced with phone messages, which is something students sometimes do for their parents. This can be practiced in a playful way where the