

teacher and students role play a phone conversation and then write down a short message.

- A related, special benefit derived from summarizing and understanding notes is test-taking. This should be discussed and practiced in class with specific examples, e. g., the students could write down the most important points from their last lesson and then compare and critically discuss their lecture notes. Variant: the instructor presents a lecture or shows an educational film and the students then have to summarize the most salient aspects in 10–15 points.

## 4. Interesting story telling; Variants:

4<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

35 minutes



Materials:

Possibly a picture story of handouts with themes/titles (see right).

- Oral preparation: discussing the terms “interesting” and “boring”. What do these categories actually mean; what is the implication for our own writing? Consolidation activity: the teacher reads (or gives in writing) to the class a (short) interesting story and also a boring text. What makes the one interesting and the other boring? Experiment: how could the boring text be made more interesting? Try to implement changes to make the text more interesting, then compare your work..
- The students receive the following “recipe” for interesting writing (as a handout):
  - Begin your text with a sentence that captures the readers’ attention (e. g. “Everything went wrong that day.”, “The frightening dog came close and closer to me.”).
  - Do not reveal everything at once. Give the readers initially just some clues that generate their interest! (“What I have experienced today, I won’t soon forget. It has something to do with more than a dangerous animal”.)
  - Describe the person’s feelings, fears and hopes in your text. (“Trembling with fear, she thought: [is there any hope of rescue for me?]”)
  - Interrupt your text with questions addressed directly to the readers. (Example: “What would you have done in this frightening situation?”)
  - Build up to the high point and most exciting part or outcome until close to the end of the story.
  - Think of an exciting title for your text that intrigues the reader, such as (“A tragedy in Turkey”, or “Is the tiger going to devour me?”).

The students are now provided with one or more outlines for stories for which they must write interesting texts, following this “recipe”. Example: An appropriate picture story; a topic like “A horrifying experience” or “Then I was really scared”.

After writing the texts, the students read and compare them and discuss how well the “recipe” was implemented.

- The students create a collection of interesting topics, titles and/or sentence starters (1–3 sentences). They write the accompanying texts in class or as a homework assignment. These collected texts can be stapled or bound to create a book (“Our horror stories”, “Exciting stories” etc.).