

Lesson 7

Recounting Stories



Learning Target



Retell or recount stories from around the world by telling key events in the order in which they happened.

- ▶ **Read** When you **recount** a story, you are retelling the story in your own words. Be sure that you include the key details and **events** that happened in the beginning, middle, and end. Tell the events in the **sequence**, or order, in which they happened.

Read this story. Think about what happens at the beginning, middle, and end. Then reread the story. What are the most important details?

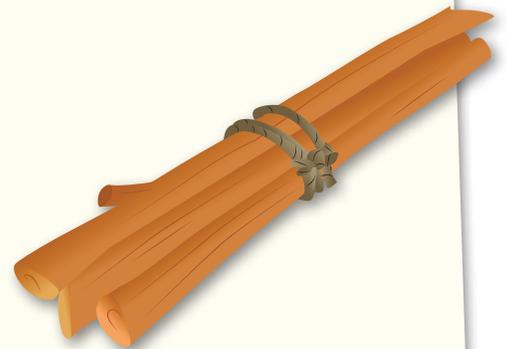
A Bundle of Sticks

Long ago, a mother had three children who were always arguing. "Your arguing sounds worse than the clucking of all the hens in the world," their mother told them. She wanted them to stop!

One day she got an idea. She gathered the children around her. Then she took a stick and broke it. "See how easy it is to break one stick?" she asked. Then she tied three sticks together. She asked each child to try to break the sticks. None of the children could break the bundle.

The mother told the children, "We're just like the sticks. When we don't stay together, our family is weak. When we stay together, nothing can break us apart."

The children understood! From that day forward, they didn't argue (as much).



► **Think** The chart below will help you to organize the most important details of a story. Think about what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Then add those details to the chart.

Beginning	Middle	End

► **Talk** Using the key details in your chart, retell the story to your partner.



Academic Talk

Use these words to talk about the text.

- **recount**
- **sequence**
- **character**
- **setting**
- **events**

Brother and Sister

a folktale from Korea

- 1 Long ago, a brother and sister grew rice to sell. Through the long summer, they worked together to care for the rice paddies. In the fall, they harvested all the rice and put the rice into bags. Each got the same number of bags.
- 2 After one harvest, the brother announced he was soon to be married. The sister knew her brother would need money to buy a new house for his bride. She didn't feel the rice was divided fairly, so that night, she took an extra bag of rice to her brother's house in secret.
- 3 The brother, too, felt the rice was not divided fairly. His sister had a large family. She would need more rice. So that night, the brother took an extra bag to his sister's house in secret.
- 4 The next day, the brother and sister counted their rice bags. Strange! Both had the same number as before. So that night, when the moon was full, they made another attempt. In the moonlight, the brother and sister each saw the other carrying a bag of rice! They laughed. The mystery was solved.



Close Reader Habits

Underline the sentences that tell the key events.



Explore

How do you choose which details to include when you recount a story?

To decide whether a detail is important, think about whether the story makes sense without it.

Think

- 1 Recount the folktale "Brother and Sister" by adding key details to the chart below.

Beginning	<i>A brother and sister grow and sell rice. They each get the same number of bags of rice.</i>
Middle	<i>Sister</i> <i>Brother</i>
End	

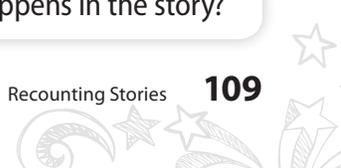
Talk

- 2 Using the details from your chart, take turns retelling the story with your partner.

Write

- 3 **Short Response** Which details from the chart do you think are most important? List them and tell why you chose them. Use the space provided on page 112 to write your answer.

HINT What details would you need to help a friend understand what happens in the story?



HOW THE BAT GOT WINGS

A CHEROKEE NATION TALE

- 1 A long time ago, the bat was a tiny mammal. It had no wings. One day, the mammals and birds decided to play a game. The birds played on one team, and the mammals played on the other team.
- 2 The bat wanted to play with the mammals, but the mammals laughed at her size. "You are too small," they said.
- 3 So the bat asked to play with the birds. The birds said, "You don't have wings, but we can make you some out of a drum." The birds stretched the skin of a drum into wings.
- 4 The birds put the wings on the bat and said, "Flap your wings." The bat jumped off a tree and flapped her wings, but she didn't fly in a straight line like the birds. Instead, she flew every which way in a crazy, zigzag pattern.
- 5 The birds let the bat play on their team. Just as she had done before, the bat flew in a crazy, zigzag pattern. The mammals on the other team could not catch the bat. The bat scored the winning points for the birds.
- 6 When the game was over, the mammals said, "Who is that superstar on your team?"
- 7 The birds said, "It is the bat. We gave her wings."
- 8 The mammals did not know what to say. After all, they had refused to let the tiny bat play on their team. The mammals had learned their lesson. From that day on, they let any animal of any size play on their team.



Close Reader Habits

Which details would you include to recount the story? **Underline** the most important ones.



When you get ready to recount a story, choose the most important details.

Think

1 Number the items to show the order of some events in the story.

___ The bat flies in a crazy, zigzag pattern.

___ The birds make wings for the bat.

___ The mammals do not let the bat play on their team.

2 Why do the birds win the game?

- A** The mammals cannot follow the bat’s movements.
- B** The mammals are surprised to see the bat on the team.
- C** The mammals refuse to play against a bat.
- D** The birds fly in a crazy, zigzag pattern.

Talk

3 Using key details from the text, talk to your partner about how the bat’s way of flying helps the birds win.

Write

4 Short Response In your own words, recount what happens when the bat plays the game with the birds. Be sure to include the most important details from the story. Use the space provided on page 113 to write your answer.

HINT Review the game in paragraphs 5 to 8.



WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- **fuss**
- **disbelief**



True *or* False

a folktale from Myanmar (Burma)

- 1 There once were three poor brothers who loved to tell tall tales. They traveled throughout the countryside telling wild stories. They always claimed that their tales were true, but no one ever believed them.
- 2 One day, the three brothers met a rich traveler. The man was dressed in fine clothes and wore shining jewels. The brothers wanted his things. “Let’s ask him to play a game. Each of the four of us will tell a tale of a past adventure. The rule is that if anyone doubts the truth of another’s story, he must become that person’s servant. The man will never believe our stories. Getting him to doubt our stories will be like rolling off a log. He will have to become our servant.”
- 3 The others liked this plan. They did not want a servant. But they wanted the man’s fine things. The man agreed to the game.
- 4 The first brother told a story of how he had climbed a tree and could not get down. So he ran to a nearby cottage and borrowed a rope.
- 5 The second brother told of jumping into the stomach of a tiger who wanted to eat him. “I made such a fuss that the tiger spit me out,” he said.



- 6 The third told of helping the village fishermen. He said he turned into a fish and jumped into the river. There, he turned back into a man and killed the big fish that were eating all the little fish.
- 7 The rich man listened to the three tales without saying one word of disbelief. Then he told his story. He said he was searching for three servants who had run away from him.
- 8 “You three must be the ones I am looking for,” he said.
- 9 The brothers looked at him with alarm. If they doubted him, they must become his servants. That was their rule. But if they said his story was true, they would have to become his servants too!
- 10 They said nothing.
- 11 Finally, the man said he would let them go if they promised never to tell tall tales again.
- 12 The brothers agreed, and they kept their promise.



 **Think** Use what you learned from reading the selection to respond to these questions.

1 Number the items to show the order of some events in the story.

____ Each brother told his make-believe story.

____ Three brothers talked a rich traveler into playing a game.

____ The rich man made them promise not to tell tall tales.

____ The rich man told them a story.

____ The rich man did not question the brothers' stories.

____ The brothers realized they were trapped.

2 This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

Why did the three brothers want to play a game with the traveler?

- A** They wanted to see if he would believe their tall tales.
- B** They wanted to trick him so they could have what he owned.
- C** They disliked people who had more money than they did.
- D** They were once the rich traveler's servants.

Part B

Write a sentence from paragraph 2 that supports the answer you chose for Part A.

- 3** Which is the **best** recounting of the third brother's story?
- A** He plays a trick on the fishermen. He pretends to be a big fish catching small ones.
 - B** He gets away from the fishermen by swimming in the river like a fish.
 - C** He helps the fishermen. He turns himself into a fish and then back into a person to kill a big fish.
 - D** He becomes a fish so that he can help the fishermen chase fish into their nets.
- 4** Which is the **best** description of the brothers' problem at the end of the folktale?
- A** The brothers think the rich man's story is the best of all the stories they have heard.
 - B** The rich man believes that the brothers are the runaway servants he is looking for.
 - C** The brothers promise never to tell tall tales again as they know they should not be doing that.
 - D** No matter how the brothers answer the rich man, they will have to become his servants.

5 Which **two** details could you leave out when recounting this story?

- A** The brothers tell their tales throughout the countryside.
- B** The brothers ask a rich traveler to play a game.
- C** A tiger spit one brother out after eating him.
- D** The rich man said nothing about the brothers' stories.
- E** The rich man told a story about missing servants.
- F** The brothers agreed not to tell any more tall tales.

6 Reread these sentences from paragraph 2.

The man will never believe our stories. Getting him to doubt our stories will be like rolling off a log.

What does the word *doubt* mean in this context?

- A** dislike
- B** understand
- C** mistrust
- D** enjoy



Write

7 Short Response Use your own words to recount the folktale. Be sure to write about the events in the sequence that they happen in the story.



Learning Target

Explain why recounting the events in a story will help you understand it.
