

Storytelling: Carnival Crime

Topic: Carnival in Brazil and a diamond theft

Aims:

- To develop extended listening and prediction skills in young learners using a short story
- To reinforce the use of the simple past tense

Level: Primary

Introduction

Stories are a highly adaptable teaching tool and can be used in a variety of ways to teach a variety of skills. This particular lesson focuses on extended listening skills and getting students to actively participate in the storytelling process, allowing them to use their prediction skills in a creative and fun way. It draws on materials from the British Council [LearnEnglish](https://www.learnenglish.org.uk/) site.

It isn't always necessary or desirable to do a more formal learning activity after telling a story in class, as storytelling activities are a good way of letting students simply enjoy listening and learning English. However, there are also some follow-up activities that concentrate on different aspects of language in the story. An interactive online exercise is also available on the LearnEnglish site.

Procedure

Pre-reading task:

- Write '**Carnival Crime**' on the board and tell the students that you are going to tell them a story called 'Carnival Crime'.
- Then ask the students if they know what a carnival is and ask them questions about carnivals to capture their interest such as:
 - *'Do we have a carnival in our country?'*
 - *'When do we have our carnival?'*
 - *'What do people wear during carnival?'*
 - *'What do people do during carnival?'*
 - *'What other countries have carnivals?'*
- Then tell the students that the carnival in the story is in Brazil and ask the students if they know where Brazil is, and if there is a map of the world in the class, get a student to point to Brazil on the map and elicit from the students everything they know about Brazil. It would also be helpful to show the students pictures of Brazil and the Rio Carnival either on the Internet or in books such as a world Atlas or a picture dictionary

Story-telling activity

- First of all explain to the students that you are going to tell them a story but that you need them to help you and all that they have to do is to listen and answer some simple questions when you ask them.
- This story telling activity involves the teacher taking the main role as the principal storyteller with the students acting as secondary storytellers.
- You can follow the story telling script on **Worksheet A** word for word and use the story telling cards as visual prompts to help you tell the story.

Tip: I recommend that you read the story a few times yourself until you can remember it and then tell the story in your own words stopping in the same way to get student input. Telling the story in your own words as opposed to reading word for word from the text will make the story seem more real and authentic to the students.

- Now start telling the story using the story telling script and the story cards, which you will need to cut out before class.

Tip: Before a story telling activity it is often a good idea to do something to change the mood of the class and to create a special time for story telling, such as to put on a special story telling hat or coat, or to play some music or have the class say a short story-telling time rhyme.

Student story-telling task

- Once you have told the story once get the students as a class to tell the story back to you using the pictures on the board to help them.
- Then give the students **Worksheet B** and see if they can join up the pictures of the story in the correct order and re-tell the story in pairs.

Follow up task 1

Use the drawing activity from **Worksheet C** to get students to create and describe their own carnival costumes. Ask students to follow these instructions.

- First of all draw a head and a neck of a person wearing a carnival costume.
Draw a carnival mask on the face of the person.
- Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.
- Now draw the arms and top half of the costume.
- Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.
- Now draw the legs of the person wearing the costume.
- Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.

- Now draw the shoes of the person wearing the carnival costume.
- Now fold your paper and pass it to the person on your right.

The students then unfold their costumes and in small pairs or groups describe their costumes to each other and take a vote on the silliest costume. Students can then write a short description of their costume, which they can pin on the wall together with their costume.

Follow up task 2

- If you have access to computers with the Internet or even just one computer with a data projector, the students can read and listen to the story on-line. <http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/kids/stories.asp?story=44>

Note: this is an old plan, so the webpage it links to is no longer available. You can print out the text from the worksheets for this lesson plan.

- There is also an interactive vocabulary activity at:
<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/words/activities/clothesdr.html>
- If you don't have access to the story on-line you can give the students the original script **Worksheet D** and ask them to find the differences in pairs between the class story and the original story script.