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What is narrative?

- **'Mapping our thoughts'** into spoken or written language to convey an event
- Can be about the **past, present or future**
- Is dependent on having
 - A **'message'** to convey,
 - The **vocabulary and grammar** to encode the message
 - And a **framework** within which to **organise, and sequence**
- Narrative is the **'glue'** that **links separate elements of language**

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SECTION 1

What is narrative and why it is important?

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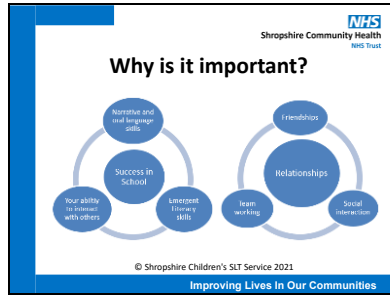
- It facilitates the **use of language for reasoning and explanation**
- It's **important for school success, effective communication and social interaction**
- Oral narrative skills usually **develop first** but it's essential that children /young people can transfer these skills to their written work
- Developing narrative skills can be a long or **complex process and needs time**

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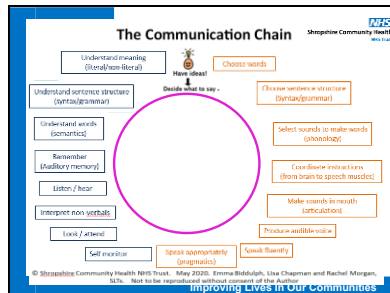
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Overview of Narrative Development

- Narrative skills develop in a predictable way
- Development continues to about 8 years old
- See the **Supporting Narrative** handout shared with you for further information about the typical pattern of development
- The handout will also help you to identify the young person's strengths and difficulties and track their progress

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Narrative Development Video



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SECTION 2

What can go wrong and how can we help?

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What do spoken narrative difficulties look like for your young person?



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You may notice.....

Difficulty answering questions about a topic	They're telling of events may lack detail and context	They take the point of the story they are retelling (what it's about)
It's harder to give key parts of a story or to explain what happened and why it was important	They always tell the same story	They are able to talk about the story and the characters but don't explain what happened or how they felt
They answer questions about a story but don't remember the main points	They may start a story at the end or the events are jumbled	They struggle to explain their actions/behaviour
They may experience difficulties when playing games or when they are asked to explain their actions		Reduced participation in discussions and conversations

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You may also notice....

- They can find it difficult working as part of a team and using negotiation and problem-solving skills
- They may also have difficulty developing and maintaining friendships

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Let's see what you have noticed...



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How is narrative intervention effective?

- Many different areas in the brain are activated when you work on it
- Listening and engaging with stories is enjoyable
- Allows us to target many different areas of language all at once
- Its evidence based



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Things families and schools can do in the moment

- **Narrate routines:** This teaches your child the "stories" of bedtime, bath time, mealtime, and so on.
- **Narrate play:** Comment on their play and invent a mini story about it.
- **Co-create stories during play:** Join in the play and negotiate roles and ideas and stories that you can invent together



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- **Reading with your child:** this is one of the best ways to reinforce narrative skills. Model the story telling and use the bookmark/prompt cards to support your child to share different parts of the story. Match any questions you ask to your child's language levels.




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- **Modelling:** As the child attempts to relate a sequence of events, revise and repair his/her narrative by saying it back in the correct way. This shows that you are listening to him/her and provides a good language model.



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- **Retelling stories:** Support your child to retell a story they know well and enjoy. When a child is familiar with a story you can pause to provide opportunities for your child to take a turn to say a line or to fill in the gap you have left



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and beyond the clouds

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- **Reminiscence:** Children love to hear about funny or dramatic things they, or other family members, did in the past. Tell and retell these stories. Eventually you can ask your child to tell them to you.
- **Give a story to get a story** e.g. when asking about their day at school.
- **Ask "wh- questions":** Rather than yes or no questions, which encourage black and white answers, ask questions that start with who, what, when, where, why or how.
- **Use visual support:** Have your child create a linear drawing of a story (what they did at school that day, for example) and then talk about the events as they occurred.

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Comfort Break



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More targeted support

Small group work or individual support?

- Identify **how often**
- Identify **'who'** if you're thinking of a group
- Choose a **quiet setting**
- Ensure you **allocate some preparation time**
- **Prepare/identify visual resources** you are going to use e.g. a visual timetable, attention and listening visual prompt cards, story component prompt questions etc.
- **Plan the session and structure**- warm up, recap of last session, introducing new target, modelling in a narrative activity, practice, reward and finish.

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Baseline Assessment

- **Select a narrative task** e.g. retelling a shared story, picture sequencing cards, describing how to do a well-known task
- **Or select a published assessment** e.g. the Squirrel Story, Peter and the Cat, Narrative Assessment Protocol -2 (NAP-2), Language for Behaviour and Emotions assessment
- **Record** exactly what the child says- try using a Dictaphone/smartphone and write it out (transcription)
- **Think about the language** the child has used
 - Vocabulary
 - The relevant story components- person, place, time, what happened, (problem, resolution)
 - Length of utterances
 - Grammar used
 - The sequencing

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Suggested targets

Example primary KS1 and KS2 targets:

- *To understand and use familiar sequences of words*
- *To be able to answer questions about the order of events using concepts of time e.g. 'before' and 'after', and number 'first' etc.*
- *To describe a sequence of events using connectives e.g. 'and'/'if'/'because'/'but', including sequential connectives e.g. 'then', 'next' etc.*
- *To accurately sequence and describe pictures from a story*
- *To understand and use a story structure*
- *To re-tell a familiar story*
- *To tell an imaginative story using a story planner/visual support*

Communication & Language Activities. Running Groups for School-Aged Children, Hockney SLT Service, 2013

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Measuring progress

- Put in an intervention for narrative 3 x weekly for 20 minutes for 6-8 weeks (1:1 or small group)
- Repeat the assessment
- Compare the transcriptions
- Check for differences in the language the child or young person has used across the different language areas (- see the previous slide)

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'How to Help' workshop

Verbal spot
the difference in re-tell

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Suggested activities

- **Develop sequencing skills:** using picture sequencing cards
- **Develop their understanding of time concepts**
- **Using props:** to support a child to tell a personal story
- **Drawing stories children tell:** use this as a visual cue for them to re-tell and share it with others
- **Children to draw out a familiar story:** use this to support them to re-tell it e.g. use **Story Maps** (Pie Corbett)
- **Explicitly teach the component parts of a story:** e.g. who, when, where, what happened, any problems, solutions, and the end.
- **Create new stories** e.g. story dice/roll a story, story bag

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Visual Supports

When

Who

Where

What happened

The End

Story Planner

When

Who

Where

What happened

The End

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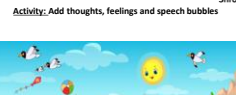
- Reading a short story and **recapping** using **question prompts**
- **Frequent opportunities to re-tell a familiar story:** heard (the child can use **visual props** e.g. **Objects/story-why prompt cards**)
- **Add the thoughts, feelings and speech bubbles to a picture of characters:**   
- **Using story planners/grids:** to help structure an oral and written narrative
- **Summarising an event**
- **Identifying the problem and solution cards:** answering why questions  
- **Edit or Precise a story- identifying key components**
- **Character building**
- Also see **published commercial resources**

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Activity: Add thoughts, feelings and speech bubbles



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It was a beautiful day and the family were going to the beach. Everyone was having a lovely time. The water was calm and the sun was shining.

The little girl, Daisy, is saying — 

Fred is thinking — 

Mum's feeling..... 

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Question	Answer	Question	Answer
 What did I request?		 What did I see and feel?	
 Who was there?		 What did I see and feel?	
 What happened?		 What did I see and feel?	
 What happened?		 What did I see and feel?	
 What's the problem?		 What did I see and feel?	

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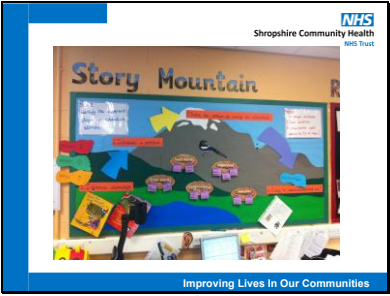
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'How to Help' workshop

Add thoughts, feelings and speech bubbles

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Recommended Commerical Resources

For 5-7 year olds:

- *Speaking and Listening through Narrative*, ages 5-7, Black Sheep Press
- *Communication & Language Activities. Running Groups for School-Aged Children*. Hackney SLT Service, 2013 (suitable for KS1 and KS2)

For 7-11 year olds:

- *From Oral to Written Narrative*, Black Sheep Press
- *Language for Behaviour and Emotions: A Practical Guide to Working with Children and Young People* (suitable for KS2-4), Branagan, Cross, and Parsons, 2020

For young people 11+:

- *Narrative intervention Programme* (V. Joffe, 2011)
- *Secondary Talk Narrative*, KS3- 4, Black Sheep Press

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Any Questions?

What are you going to take away from today's workshop?



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