



PARTICIPATORY STORIES

Orpheus and Eurydice (9 – 10 age group)

Learning objectives

The 4 sheets will focus on expanding writing skills through identifying synonyms and antonyms, using the appropriate types of adjectives, substituting verbs and adverbs, and adding various other story elements in order for the children to be able to expand their vocabulary, diversify the structure of their sentences, “have fun” with grammar and create their own endings to the story.

Helpful Narrative & Writing Tools

- The division of children into small groups or pairs to facilitate better collaboration and possible role-playing to aid storytelling.

For this reason, the arrangement of the desks should also follow the division made with the children.

- The setting up of a space with mats and cushions for debriefing time.

- The teacher could previously organize boxes containing the words to be proposed to provide visual support.
- If previously for the narration of the story, the teacher has made use of any particular tool (silent book, etc.) the same tool can be used again.

1ST sheet: EXPANDING VOCABULARY

Invite children to expand their vocabulary by replacing some adjectives with their synonyms or antonyms.

The teacher should give examples and propose words herself to help the children, also explaining the meaning of the proposed new words.

1. Orpheus enchants everyone with his voice.

Write a sentence describing Orpheus' qualities in detail. Use and find synonyms for “enchant” or its antonyms.

2. The nymph Eurydice falls in love.

Write a sentence describing Eurydice in detail.

Find synonyms or antonyms for falling in love/to love/ to make fall in love.

What may result is something like:

Synonyms: beautiful - replaced by charming, cute, enchanting, etc

Or **antonyms** that will also change the meaning of the story accordingly.

“Orpheus was ugly, unpleasant to the eye and sang badly, with a horrible, unlistenable voice.”

2nd sheet: DEVELOPING SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Invite children to expand the sentence by, for example, inserting adjectives indicating whether qualifying, possessive, demonstrative, etc. qualities. The requested adjective should lead the children to add details that can expand and modify the story as they see fit.

1. Orpheus and Eurydice married, but their happiness did not last long.

Expand the sentence by using qualifying adjectives.

2. Eurydice, pursued by a suitor, is bitten by a snake.

Expand the sentence using an opposition.

What may result is something like:

“The musician Orpheus and his beautiful Eurydice married.”

“Eurydice the most beautiful of nymphs was chased by a young shepherd who had fallen in love with her.”

3rd sheet: HIGHLIGHTING ACTION IN STORY PLOT

Experiment with the children to demonstrate the importance of actions by substituting verbs, which thus change the course of the story, or adverbs of time and place.

1. Eurydice dies and desperate Orpheus decides to go and get her back in the underworld.

"Eurydice and Orpheus in the Underworld". The action is missing, write or invent what they do.

2. Orpheus by singing moves all the guardians placed to guard the entrances to the realm of the dead.

"Orpheus all the guardians placed to guard the entrances to the realm of the dead." The actions are missing - invent what Orpheus and the guardians do and where.

What may result is something like:

"Eurydice sings and Orpheus, exasperated, decides to send her back to the underworld."

"By singing, Orpheus amused all the guardians posted to guard the realm of the living."

4th sheet: ADDING ELEMENTS OF THE STORY

Complete the story by proposing alternative endings that can be similar to or totally replace the original end.

Once the stories are complete, each group will tell/recite its version to the others, sharing it and comparing it with those proposed by the other groups.

From the comparison of the stories, new insights can arise.

The children have the opportunity to explain their choices and tell new developments from their stories.

1. Orpheus is allowed to return to Earth with Eurydice on the condition that he will never look at her or speak to her on the way back.

Modify, alter or insert elements that may change the course of the story.

2. Orpheus does not trust and looks back. Eurydice is lost forever.

Modify, alter or insert elements that may change the course of the story.

* For a post-writing exercise, prepare a **Writing Checklist** with prompts for students to check off such as:

- I have checked that all my sentences have ending marks (. ! ?)?

- I have started all sentences and proper nouns with a capital letter (ABC)... etc.
- Have pupils double-check their work before recording their stories.