



PARTICIPATORY STORY

Stephen the Great (age group 5 – 6)

Learning Objectives

Working in small groups over the 4 worksheets, children will work on their writing skills with narrative and writing tools to be able to detail animals and objects in nature, give directions, assign numbers to nouns, and imagine an ending to the story.

Useful narrative and writing tools.

- Letter reference chart for children to practice when/if copying parts of sentences onto worksheets (generally/preparatory tool)
- Paper and drawing utensils (2nd sheet)
- Dice with random numbers stuck on each side (3rd sheet)
- Origami figures of Stephen the Great or box/cap with pieces of paper for descriptions (4th sheet)
- Writing Checklist (in general/post-writing exercise)

Sheet 1: DESCRIBING NATURE

Set the mood at the beginning of the story by reading aloud the writing prompts:

I am an oak tree and some would say I have grown so much in my seven hundred and fifty years.

To introduce your class to the imaginative atmosphere of the story at the beginning, ask students in groups to close their eyes and think of a tree they can see in nature. Then ask the students to open their eyes and share the tree they thought of with their group. Keep the groups small (4-5 pupils) to avoid them having to add too many words about trees to the story. The tree they are thinking of should be added to the first sentence using: "I look ____" and "I have ____" sentences.

To co-create the second sentence, ask the children to discuss their previous experiences in groups: Have you ever seen an oak tree that old? What did it look like? Weather permitting, this exercise can also be done using real-time observations of trees outside the classroom, if available.

Once you have completed the brainstorming and writing, read aloud a first writing prompt again, followed by the students' modified version.

The result could be something like:

I am an oak tree and some would say that I have grown so much in my seven hundred and fifty years.
I look majestic, wonderful, tall, and I have a nest so big it can fit 100 birds.

Then ask each group to take turns reading aloud the sentences they have created.

Sheet 2: PROPOSALS FOR DIRECTIONS

Read aloud writing instructions for children:

Stephen's arrow glides through the air. It lands near a tree.

Draw a picture of a forest with the children using arrows to show – under, over, left, right, etc.

The result could be something like:

Stephen's arrow glides through the air. **It goes over a rose bush, under a group of birds, left of the river and right of the deer.** It lands near a tree.

Then, as with the first sheet, ask the group to take turns reading aloud each of the suggestions and what they found.

Sheet 3: ADDING NUMBERS

Read aloud writing instructions for children.

Stephen the Great won battles and wars, built bridges and churches, and visited villages and monasteries.

To help students co-create these instructions, give each group a die to roll (either an existing cube or one you have built).

The dice should have random numbers taped to each of the sides (e.g., 3, 10, 9, 20, 8, 14), with one side labeled "Pick Your Own Number" so that the children are free to come up with their own number suggestions.

Ask the groups to take turns rolling the dice to determine the number of battles, wars, villages, churches, and monasteries.

The result could be something like:

Stephen the Great won **10** battles and **3** wars, built **9** bridges and **14** churches, and visited **8** villages and **20** monasteries.

Read aloud the instructions with your children, as you did in the previous two sheets.

Sheet 4: IMAGINING AN END FOR YOUR STORY

Read aloud writing instructions for children:

For every battle he won, Stephen built a monastery where his arrow landed.

For the final activity, you can use the origami figures from the StoriasKit Stephen the Great set to get students thinking about Stephen's change after the night spent in the cell of Daniil the Sikh. To help children visualise the changes, you can draw them on the figurines - Daniil's long beard, Stephen's sword and horse, the crown on the ruler's head, etc.

Alternatively, for children who find it difficult to come up with ideas on their own, you could write some possible changes for Stephen on slips of paper and put them in a hat/box. Ask the children to take out a slip of paper and decide to whom/what they can attribute these changes.

The result could be something like:

For every battle he won, Stephen built a monastery where his arrow landed. **Each monastery was bigger than the last, with his last monastery being as big as a mountain. No matter where he went, Stephen always remembered his meeting with Daniil the Sikh.**

As with the other worksheets, read the instructions aloud with your children.

* For a post-writing exercise, if children have had more input on writing tasks, prepare a writing checklist and ask them to double-check their work before recording their stories.