

Drawing the Story

Targeted skill

Young children are expected to determine the purpose for listening to a story, such as to get information, to solve problems, or just for enjoyment. Also, they are expected to retell the order of important events in stories as well as understand the structure of simple stories.

Materials

- ◆ paper
- ◆ drawing materials such as crayons, felt-tip markers, or colored pencils

What to do

After sharing a simple book or story with your child, ask your child to draw an event from the story. Encourage him or her to include as many details as possible. For example, if the book emphasized the color of the character's hair, then your child should include that in the drawing.

Discuss with your child the details that are included. Talk about how the characters might have felt or why the particular actions occurred.

Extending the activity

- ✦ Have your child draw more than one picture of a favorite story and assemble them into a "book" about that story. Make a construction-paper cover and staple the pictures together. Ask your child to compare the text with the collected drawings.
- ✦ Your child can draw a favorite part, the main idea, the funniest thing that happened, the saddest thing that happened, and so on.

Drawing the Story (continued)

- ✦ Your child can make a mural-type drawing to represent all the details of the story. For example, if the story is about a character's day, then divide a large piece of paper into three parts, labeling them morning, afternoon, and evening. Then help your child draw what happened at each time during the day.
- ✦ Asking your child to orally retell the events in the story helps him or her understand the story. Ask questions such as, "What happened next?" or "What happened first?" to focus his or her attention. Begin to ask the why and how questions as well, such as, "Why did ___ do that?" or "How did that action change the story?"

What your child is practicing

Learning to represent events in a story by drawing them is a first step to understanding and retelling stories. Children who have difficulty with comprehension or remembering details often benefit from drawing a picture that represents what they've heard.