**Supporting Narrative development**

As children learn language they begin to become more aware of the components of sentences and consequent story telling or narrative.

We use story telling skills in lots of different ways:

* We use stories when reading a story from a story book
* When retelling stories
* When giving information about what you’ve been doing or reporting back on something you’ve seen or heard
* When explaining something and in general conversation

**What is a story made up of?**

* Characters/people (**who**)
* Place (**where**)
* Time (**when**)
* Occurrence (**what happened?**).

**Why do we work on narrative skills?**

* It is important for the development of social skills
* It is important for pre-literacy development
* Helps to develop attention and listening
* Supports in retaining information when being given instructions and explanations
* Enables telling of their own stories
* Helps with extending vocabulary and descriptive language learning.
* Develops imagination and creative thinking
* Helps with questioning skills.

**Strategies to help**

* Read stories regularly to provide exposure to stories and formal language
* Teach the student 'beginning, middle and end' concepts i.e. discuss and demonstrate these in functional daily activities
* Provide a story plan and use story maps to chart and explain stories:
  + **Beginning**: who, what, where, when
  + **Middle**: sequence of ideas in a flowing manner
  + **End**: how story end
* Use ‘scaffolding’ questions to help plan narratives:
  + **Setting**: who, what, when
  + **Initiating event**: what happened
  + **Reaction**: how did she/he feel
  + **Goal**: what did she/he plan to do
  + **Attempt**: what did she/he do
  + **Outcome/Consequence**: what happened
  + **Ending**: how did it end
* Ask questions for more specific information and encourage further development of ideas. Incorporate critical thinking strategies by asking
* 'Who, What, When, Where & Why" questions
* Encourage the use of prediction and inference skills. Ask questions to help students organise and to comprehend information in stories:
  + Explaining inferences i.e. what do you think they mean by that?
  + Determining the cause i.e. why do you think that happened?
  + Negative-why questions i.e. why didn't ... ...
  + Determining solutions i.e. how could they solve that problem?
  + Avoiding problems i.e. what could they have done instead?
* Practise retelling of events and life experiences
* After a TV show/movie, talk about the story using narrative structure
* Use computer software that encourages story writing and building
* Use choose your own adventure story books, story tapes and story picture books
* Keep a diary, draw a picture or write about family/school outings
* Encourage role play, charades, puppet shows
* Tell simple nursery rhymes and role play them afterwards
* Make your own story books