

linking language development to literacy



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Trauma-Sensitive Distance Learning With Story Grammar Marker® and Braidy the StoryBraid®

April 15, 2020, 3:00-4:00 pm

Maryellen Rooney Moreau, M.Ed., CCC-SLP

Sheila M. Moreau, M.Ed.

REFERENCES

Simon, C. (Ed.) (1985). *Communication skills and classroom success*. San Diego: College-Hill Press

This was the text that contained Carol Westby's chapter entitled "Learning to Talk-Talking to Learn: Oral-Literate Language Differences." This was the text and particular chapter that sparked Maryellen's interest in narrative development as a thinking process pertaining to academic and social realms of a child's life.

Two texts sponsored by the Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and learning policy initiative:

Cole, S., J.D., M.Ed. (2005) *Volume I: Helping Traumatized children learn: Supportive school environments for children traumatized by family violence*.

Cole, S., J.D. (2013). *Volume II: Helping traumatized children learn: Safe, supportive learning environments that benefit all children: Creating and advocating for trauma-sensitive schools*.

Both Volumes above are available at www.traumasensitiveschools.org

Coster, W. & Cicchetti, D. (1993). *Research on the Communicative development of maltreated children: Clinical implications. Topics in Language Disorders. 13(4), 25-38.*

This article adds to the content noted in our Webinar, detailed in Volume I of the above texts sponsored by the Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and learning policy initiative. Difficulties in narrative organization, cause/effect and problem/solution structures for academics and social purposes.

Westby, C. (2018). *Adverse childhood experiences: What Speech/language Pathologists need to know. Word of Mouth, 30:1, Sage Publications*

This is an excellent publication, in general. This particular issue focuses on background in the area of ACES and also focuses on the need for attention to the communication delays of those who have experienced traumas. Westby notes that Speech/Language Pathologists need to collaborate with mental health professionals and vice-versa. The following quote references Coster and Cicchetti, (1993) who contributed widely

to the publications sponsored by the Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and learning policy initiative, referenced above.

"Children who have experienced trauma are at risk for a variety of developmental delays and disorders, the most likely and long lasting being communication." (Coster & Cicchetti, 1993)

Hwa-Froelich, D. (Ed.) (2015) *Social communication development and disorders*. NY: Psychology Press

This text is an excellent resource for all things social! Of particular interest are chapters by Westby on Social Neuroscience; Catherine Adams' chapter entitled Assessment and intervention for children with pragmatic language impairment; Hwa-Froelich's chapter entitled Social communication assessment and intervention for children exposed to maltreatment. This chapter contains a list of formal tests as well as informal ways to observe. Westby contributed another chapter related to disruptive behavior, entitled Social communication assessment and intervention for children with disruptive behavior problems.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Armstrong, J. (2011). *Serving children with emotional behavioral and language disorders: A collaborative approach*.

Cain, K. & Oakhill, J. (Eds.) (2007). *Children's comprehension problems in oral and written language: A cognitive perspective*.

This "go to text" contains excellent contributions concerning working memory, ADHD and story comprehension, pragmatic language impairment and children with social communication problems.

Goncu, A. & Klein, E. (Eds.) (2001). *Children in play, story and school*. NY: The Guilford Press

This is a wonderful book about the value of play. There is a chapter on sociodramatic play as well as information on the risks of nonsocial play.

Hughes, N. et al (2012) *Nobody made the connection; the prevalence of neuro disability in young people who offend*. London: Office for the Children's Commissioner.

Hughes, N. et al. (2017) *Language impairment and comorbid vulnerabilities among young people in custody. J Child Psychol Psychiatr. 58 1106-1113. Doi:1111/jcpp.12791.*

Moreau, M., (2019). *Oral language and trauma: Nobody made the connection*.

The above reference is to a blog on our site www.mindwingconcepts.com where I was responding to the growing interest in the use of our tools with children who experienced trauma in their lives. I focused on the narrative development pur-

pose and the ability to be able to tell one's story, identify feelings and think about plans of self and others. In this particular blog, I refer to the work of Speech/Language Pathologist Herb Hein also contributions of Jessie Graham's blogs on the topic of childhood trauma.

Siegel, D. (2015). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are.* NY: Guilford

This text highlights, for speech/language pathologists and mental health professionals that children who experience ACES may have problems expressing feelings, regulating behavior and engaging in conversational exchanges.

Snow, P. & Powell, M. (2005) What's the story? An exploration of narrative language abilities in male juvenile offenders. *Psychology, Family & Law, 11, 239-253.*

Snow, P. (2009). Child maltreatment, mental health, and oral language competence: Inviting speech-language pathology to the prevention table. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 11(2), 95-103.* Doi:10.1080/17549500802415712.

Snow, P., & Powell, M. (2002). The language processing and production skills of young offenders: Implications for enhancing prevention and intervention strategies. *Report to criminology research council.*

Stanford, S. (2019) *Juvenile Injustice. Leader Pubs: American Speech/ Language and Hearing Association.*

Van der Kolk, B., M.D., (2015). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind and body in the healing of trauma.* NY: Penguin.

This is a world acclaimed book about trauma and its healing over time.

Westby, C. & Culatta, B. (2016). *Telling tales: Personal event narratives and life stories. ASHA: Language, Speech and Hearing Services in the Schools (LSHSS)*

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TRAUMA, ACES AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING, HERE ARE SOME WEBSITES AND LINKS THAT WE FOUND HELPFUL.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/aces/fastfact.html>

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/a-trauma-informed-approach-to-teaching-through-coronavirus>

<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/55679/four-core-priorities-for-trauma-informed-distance-learning>

<https://www.edutopia.org/profile/alex-shevrin-venet>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/03/what-coronavirus-will-do-kids/608608/>

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//the_12_core_concepts_for_understanding_traumatic_stress_responses_in_children_and_families.pdf

<https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//child_trauma_toolkit_educators.pdf

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/mental-health/trauma-sensitive-schools>

<https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/trauma-informed>

<http://www.qicct.org/sites/default/files/Eileen%20Swoboda%20-%20Zero%20to%20Three%20ICommunicationFinal.pdf>

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/319566.php>

<https://www.blueknot.org.au/Resources/Information/Understanding-abuse-and-trauma/What-is-childhood-trauma/Childhood-trauma-and-the-brain>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/childhood-abuse-changes-the-brain-2330401>

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/brain_development.pdf

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3652241/>

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/effect-trauma-brain-development-children>

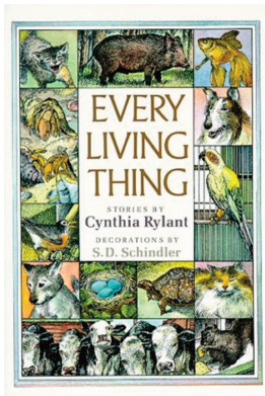
<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/trauma-and-learning/the-flexible-framework/>

<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/52566/how-to-build-a-trauma-sensitive-classroom-where-all-learners-feel-safe>

https://gobbelcounseling.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/trauma-informedapproachtobehaviorsinthe-classroom_2017.pdf

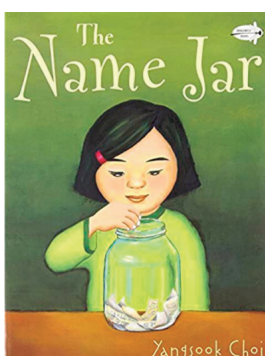
ADDITIONAL CHILDREN'S REFERENCES



Rylant, C. (1985). *Every living thing*. NY: Aladdin

This book of twelve short stories is valuable as a source for older students, grades 4 through 6. In each of the stories, a character experiences a death of loved ones, loneliness, rejection, familial discord and other life situations. The narrative writing is excellent for

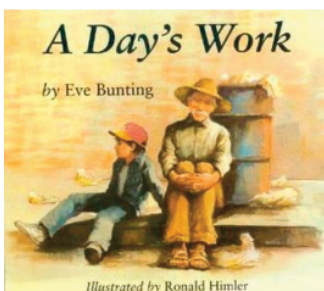
purposes of interest, discussion of kick-offs, feelings and thoughts of multiple characters within one story.



Choi, Y. (2001) *The name jar*. Dragonfly Books. NY: Random House

The little girl in this book has a name Unhei, from Korea, is new to the United States. Her name is hard to pronounce for the children in her new school. Some make fun of her name. When she left Korea,

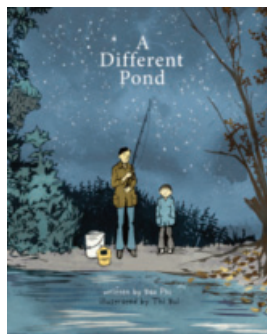
her grandmother gave her a wooden block with her name written in Korean characters. She loved her name, meaning “grace”. Due to the pronunciation problems of the children, Unhei would like to change her name to something easier. Children give her options in a jar. They try to be helpful. As she becomes familiar with her new home, she hears fellow Korean conversation and visits stores selling familiar foods. She is befriended by a boy in her class and the other children, in time, who all wanted Korean names since they had meanings.



Bunting, E. (1994). *A day's work*. NY: Clarion

In this book Eve Bunting, with so much empathy, paints a picture of a boy who assists his grandfather to find a job. His grandfather, who is new

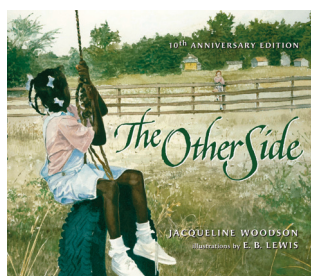
to the United States from Mexico, has a problem doing the job correctly since the occupation was unfamiliar to him. Francisco told the hiring person that his grandfather knew plants. This was not true. Grandfather did not understand the language used in the bargain. When the truth comes out, Grandfather insists in making good of the situation which involves much work for both he and Francisco. The story teaches many lessons applicable to any culture, any time.



Phi, B. (2017). *A different pond*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Young Readers

The characters are a family from Vietnam. The pond in their new country, the United States is much like the one that the father tells his son about as they fish for their evening meal. Mom and dad work

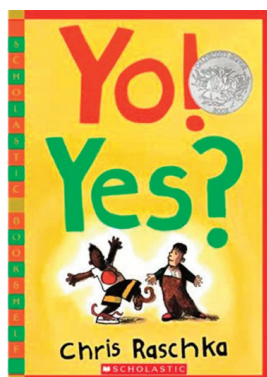
different shifts and multiple jobs. The boy has much responsibility. Empathy, family, memories and life experiences are the focus.



Woodsen, J. (2001) *The other side*. NY: G.P.Putnam Sons

All of Woodsen's books are valuable for stories about family relationships, friendship and kindnesses. This one is a developing friendship over a

fence! Children overcome social “rules”. Notice how the mom does not object. Empathy and friendships are the focus.



Raschka, C. (1993) *Yo! Yes!* NY: Scholastic

This is an oldie. It has been on my bookshelf for a few decades! Two words are exchanged between two children who don't usually play together. Notice body language and invite children to incorporate tone of voice. What does it all mean?

This is a great addition to communication libraries. Enjoy. Friendship is the ending!

See also the bibliography contained in the handout from a previous webinar, “Maryellen’s Favorite Books to Use During Uncertain Times” at: mindwingconcepts.com/pages/webinars

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This excerpt is a contribution by Kathleen Becker, CCC/SLP, who is a colleague of Maryellen's. In this section, she uses parts of Social Thinking® vocabulary integrated with the Story Grammar Marker® and children's literature pieces. Michelle Garcia Winner is a long-time friend and colleague and she and Maryellen have presented together several times over the years.

In *It's All About the Story!*, good friend and colleague, Kathleen Becker, M.A., CCC-SLP, of Northampton, Massachusetts, shared how she used Story Grammar Marker® in a social situation for her student, Jake. She has agreed to share more of her work in this book! Please enjoy the following selection from Kathleen.

I write newsletters for the children (and their parents) who participate in my play and Social Thinking® groups. Combining aspects of Story Grammar Marker® (SGM) and Social Thinking® forms the foundation for my explicit instruction in these groups. I then carry these concepts over into my coached Play with You® groups. Major vocabulary from these methodologies is in bold and notes just for the adults are in parenthesis. Parents are also given vocabulary lists such as SGM® icons, mental state verbs, and Social Thinking® words. There are several big concepts presented in each group, but these concepts are repeated over an extended period.

The students in these newsletters have been diagnosed as Asperger's or HFA and are between 5½ and 7 years old. They participated in Play with You® peer play groups prior to receiving more explicit instruction in Social Thinking® and skills. Most of the students receive weekly individual work in both SGM® and Social Thinking® concepts.

The newsletters reflect the two major segments of each group namely, explicit instruction and peer play. They have a conversational tone as they are meant to be read to the children, as well as shared with family members and teachers. You can read more newsletters on my web site:
www.socialplaythinkingandmore.com.

The first set of activities consists of explicit instruction and directed practice in SGM® and Social Thinking® vocabulary and concepts. This is not the most challenging part of their learning, but it is essential that the children (and their parents) first learn basic consistent vocabulary. This enables them to highlight selected aspects of their social environments outside of therapy. When families are very familiar with the basic vocabulary, they then have an objective and concrete tool to point out the deeper concepts underpinning the vocabulary. The newsletters give multiple examples of the vocabulary and concepts to reinforce the premise that social parameters are everywhere that we find other people.

The second part of each group, whether it is a weekly 75-minute group or part of a four hour camp day, is the Play with You[®], coached peer play group. Children are initially, just introduced to the cardinal rule of Play with You[®], namely playing with the two or three other children. This concept is demonstrated in a number of concrete ways, coached and reinforced for quick and maximum success at interactions and fun. Once we have made connections, had fun, started the seeds of friendships, it is more intrinsically motivating to work on social thinking concepts. Playing with friends relates to the concept of ‘body and brain in the group.’

It is very gratifying to conclude that after over 10 years of creating Play with You[®] groups, that I can say that pretend play is alive and well, as it is by far the most popular activity choice for children through second and even third grade. The students are coached through the play with SGM[®] language. For example, “Think of your character’s plan.”, is the most frequent directive. When the students have acquired a facile use of the SGM[®] concepts, their spontaneous play stories develop a compelling and exciting (to the children at least) depth. This richness derives in part from a growing appreciation and therefore flexibility in combining play ideas. Basic cohesive ties (connector words) are introduced as a way to let everyone play what they want, while still playing with everyone else.

The Story Grammar Marker[®] and Social Thinking[®] concepts help to create dimension, structure and cohesion in children’s play. In turn, play is a powerful milieu for the development of peer relationships, perspective taking and Social Thinking[®]. Please see the following two letters that show the combination of methodologies that makes this so powerful!

Story Book Camp Monday, August 9, 2010

Dear Story Book Campers,

All the teachers are very impressed with how well you know the **expected behaviors** for being in a group!




When everyone does the **expected behaviors** for a **setting** (the setting was a small group of students at camp), there is not a **kick-off!** All of you came in this morning saying that one of your **feelings** was ‘happy’ and I think that feeling did not change because there have not been any **kick-offs** to change that happy feeling. I especially liked when kids worked to **keep their brains in the group**. When you are in the group it’s **expected** that you will **keep your brain thinking about what the group is doing and talking about**.





We played **SGM[®]** toss, throwing the **character, setting, kick-off, feeling** and **plan** pieces to each other.





When you caught it you had to yell out an example of each. Jake named many of the characters from Snow White, Harry and Matt were especially good at naming feelings and kick-offs. Emily, many of your characters were family members. One of my **characters** was my dog Sequoia and yes, an animal can be a character. A sponge is just a smelly, squishy kitchen thing until you put **two eyes** on it and then who is it? (Sponge Bob!


Remember some of those funny expressions for **feelings**?  What feeling does, being 'on cloud nine' mean? What about being 'in the dumps'? Which feeling would you rather have — being on 'cloud nine' or 'in the dumps'?


We read *The Trouble with Trolls* by Jan Brett. Emily and Matt, you were both awesome at figuring out  the girl's **plans**. She really had to **think** because every time a troll grabbed her dog she had to make a new **plan**. What did she **know** about trolls that helped her with her plan? We will talk about it tomorrow and maybe make a movie of it. Do you want to be a troll? William, our movie maker will be here tomorrow.

Right now, I am thinking about animals  and I am thinking about all of you slithering around on the floor like snakes and worms. Good idea Henry! I am **remembering** you being animals. Bill, our physical trainer had you being all kinds of critters and was very impressed by how well you moved. Jake, when you added the forked tongue, that was very **flexible thinking**...you were **thinking** with the group and using your imagination at the same time.

You are all so speedy too! Emily, Bill will come again on Wednesday so you might *want*  to wear sneakers.

 What **flexible** eaters you are! Everybody tried all of my new snacks. Can you **remember** them? Let's see, we had: something crunchy with whipped cream on top (chocolate cookie), something a little puffy and crunchy, (cheese puff) something sweet, chewy and very cute, (gummy bunnies) and something sweet and cold (fruit popsicles). Can you name them?

We watched a short movie about 5 **characters** and you had to listen very carefully to know when to raise up your popsicle stick with your character's face on it. When you heard a **characteristic**  of your character you raised up your popsicle character's face. There were 5 characters: 3 people and two animals, 3 with orange hair and two with gray hair, 4 who liked fish and only 1 who liked beets, 2 who liked to eat mice! 4 who are grown up, 2 who can read and one who is learning. Can you remember your character and some of their **characteristics**? (Parents: Mom with long red hair likes beets and fish, dad with short gray hair likes fish, girl with long red hair is learning to read, gray cat howls at night, etc.)

Tomorrow, we will start our passport books.  So ask your parents if they have a passport to show you. A passport book shows you the places or **settings** someone has been to. There are **different expected behaviors in different settings**. So when you go to church, that's a setting with **different expected behaviors** than when you go to your grandma's house. If you sang "Twinkle Twinkle" in church, that would be a kick-off, **because it would be unexpected**. The people in church might feel annoyed. But, in a different setting like at Grandma's house, it's not a kick off when you sing your favorite song. **Different settings = different expected behaviors**. You will all get a stamp in your passport book because you all used expected behaviors on your first day in a new setting or place — Story Book Camp!

Tomorrow we will also learn some words that are like...legos! A big pile of legos doesn't look very interesting, but when you start sticking them together, you can make many wonderful things. Word legos stick ideas together. A big pile of words isn't very interesting, but when you stick the words together, you can tell about anything! Word legos are called **connector words**. Let's see, that's words like: **so, and, but, because, then, first, next**. When you are in the car tomorrow morning on your way to camp, make up some sentences with the lego **connector words**.

See you all tomorrow morning!
Kathleen

Social Thinking and Play Group with Julian James and Max

Tuesday, November 2, 2010

Hi Guys!

This newsletter is to remind you of all the good work you did in group yesterday. It's important to remember the ideas from group! It's most important to try practicing those ideas when you are not even in group at Kathleen's.

First, we did our group check in. Everyone felt a little different. Everyone was in the same **setting** (Kathleen's play room) but each of us had different feelings.

Idea #1: Different people have different feelings...even when they are doing the same thing.

Someone might feel very good about what the group is doing, someone- just okay and another person might feel grumpy or sad.



Idea #2: Feelings Change.



Julian came to group feeling grumpy but later in the group he was feeling happy. This is a good idea to remember when a sad or mad feeling is very big. The feeling will change.

We listened to what everyone did on Halloween. Can you **remember** what your friends dressed up like? If you **remember** (Parents: Julian—a pony, James—a knight, Max—a paleontologist) tell your parents. If you were going to play pretend with one of your friends, what do you think they might like to play? Next time we meet think about going on a dinosaur hunt. Who would like to pretend that?



Idea #3: Listen to what your friends talk about; what they like to do... friends take turns playing and talking about their favorite things.

(Parents: this is part of developing the idea of character or 'friend's file (MGW), perspective taking, early inferencing as in, "He dressed up like a knight, maybe he'll want to play knights and kings.")

Idea #4: Keep your brain and your body in the group.

We made Play Doh brains and bodies to represent each of us in the group and took turns demonstrating what it looks like and what it does to the group if someone's brain or body leaves the group. (Parents: This is a lesson adapted from Michelle Garcia Winner's (MGW) work. Read about her work developing social cognition at www.socialthinking.com. We also talked about sometimes it is smart to leave the group and take a break, but that you need to check with an adult to see if this is an okay time to do that.

Idea #5: What do you notice and know about this setting? How does that change how you (or another character, as in a book) behave and talk?



We went over our setting song, which is sung to the tune of "This Land is Your Land." It goes like this:

CAN WE SEE...IT point to eyes
CAN WE HEAR ...IT point to ears
CAN WE TOUCH...IT wiggle fingers
CAN WE SMELL... IT? wiggle or touch nose
CAN WE TASTE ...IT? point to mouth
THEN WHAT...IS IT?

OUR SENSES WILL HELP US DESCRIBE...IT!

(This song comes from Maryellen Rooney Moreau's newest book on social skill development using the Story Grammar Marker® *It's All About the Story!*)

Six-Second Stories® is a contribution by Gwynne McElhinney, CCC/SLP, of Idaho. Gwynne's contributions to the field of communication disorders are many. We had the opportunity to work with Gwynne in publishing her Six-Second Stories® as a means to assist children who have much difficulty starting and maintaining a conversation. This excerpt is a piece of the method which encompasses the Story Grammar Marker® in its theory and extended practice.

Research shows that having even just one real friend can “inoculate” an individual from the severe depression and other emotional and psychological issues that result from social isolation. Despite heroic intervention efforts by family members and educators, our students may repeatedly experience conversational breakdowns, which can prevent individuals from developing social competence; having close, meaningful relationships, productively collaborating with co-workers and engaging & participating in social & family events (Gutstein & Whitney, 2002). Since the central deficit of individuals with social learning challenges is in the realm of understanding “experience-sharing” forms of social interaction, Gwynne searched for ways to effectively facilitate the development of relationships for children with social communication problems. Her ultimate goal is to provide individuals with skills and strategies that enable them to be socially competent and become happy, connected, productive members of families, friendship groups and of society.

What are Six-Second-Stories™?

Our students typically have adequate language skills in other arenas (vocabulary, grammar, syntax), but still can't “connect” with fellow human beings due to the problems they experience with Theory of Mind and perspective-taking. The following routine questions are simple, yet they can throw kids with social learning challenges “for a loop”:

- Classroom Teacher on Monday morning: “What did you do over the weekend?”
- School Principal in his office: “What happened on the playground at recess?”
- Friend at soccer on Saturday afternoon: “What did you do last night?”
- Parent at the dinner table: “What happened at school today?”

As we know, based on the information contained in *It's All About the Story!* and *Making Connections!*, at the core of conversation is the **ability to narrate**. In the example above, these types of questions can be a “kick off” for a student who is overwhelmed by the task of answering that question! In the Foreword of *Making Connections!* (which is also re-printed in full on page 3.3 of this book), Michelle Garcia Winner (Social Thinking®) explains this difficulty. “While these students still seek to share the events of their day and the story form in their imagination, they struggle to share their thoughts in ways that others can understand. At times lacking in coherence, demonstrating an over focus on detail, failing to sequence events in a manner that makes sense to the reader... may be some of the elements weak or missing in the narrative of our students.”

Consider the child who initiated a conversation with Maryellen shown of page 1.10 of this book where the child attempted to tell Maryellen something interesting that happened over the weekend and stated: “Me and mommy went to the mall.” Please see the following analysis, which uses the Critical Thinking Triangle™ of the Story Grammar Marker®.

To be used for this purpose in the Six-Second-Stories™ method, Gwynne has added another name to the Critical Thinking Triangle™ map, “Conversation Connector.”

The CRITICAL THINKING Triangle™

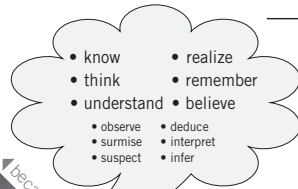
Conversation Connector



Kick-Off: Child sees teacher
 Name _____
 Date _____



Mental States/Social Thinking®:
 — Knows teacher will be accepting of her
 — Thinks that the teacher will like the story
 — Believes the teacher would be excited too.



because
so / and
when

THINKING VERBS

and / so
therefore



Feeling: Excited /
 compelled to tell the
 teacher about her weekend
 trip to the mall.



Plan: Wants to tell the
 teacher and so the child says:
 “Me and mommy went to
 the mall.”
*This statement is very
 vague and could cause a
 conversational break-
 down between this girl and the
 teacher.*

In the above example from page 1.10, Maryellen, as the conversational partner, had to provide a verbal scaffold to enable the child to express her story. This particular scaffold was made up of questions related to each stage of narrative structure. However, in order to actually tell this entire story, there would have to be several conversational exchanges. To narrate the story, the teaching of the narrative developmental sequencing would be necessary. In this instance, Maryellen began with the first stage of narrative (descriptive sequence), the Character and the Setting, then moved to encourage the girl to talk about the actions or what she did (action sequence) which provides the WHO, WHERE, WHEN and ACTIONS.

Language / Literacy Developmental Checklist		
Sequence of Narrative Development Stages		
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Descriptive Sequence	Action Sequence	Reactive Sequence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Character descriptions Age, gender Physical description Size, dress Personality Setting description Place, time, day Ability to label Has causal temporal link Additive cohesion Use word "and" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centering on a character or theme May have chronological temporal order Has causal relationships Center on actions Temporal coherence: first, first, next, when, after that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiating Events or which change automatically cause other changes reactions Causal chaining begins Not leading, often, or good stated Cohesive ties: as, but, or
Comments: _____	Comments: _____	Comments: _____
Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____

Six-Second-Stories™ is a kernel sentence containing the 4 Wh's...

- Who?
- Did What?
- Where?
- When?

...that creates a springboard for a balanced conversational exchange, such as:

My mom and I  ate a giant sundae  at the mall  on Saturday .

OR

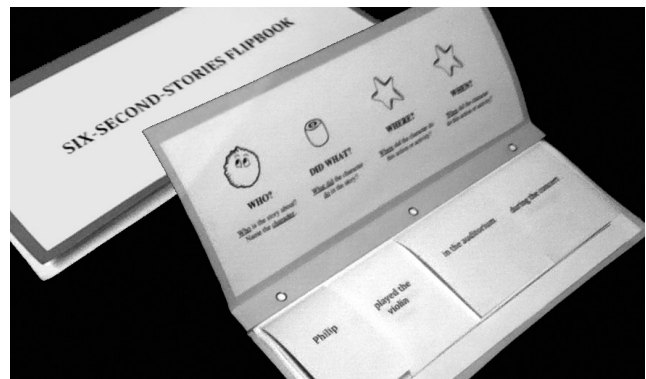
My mom  lost her purse  at the mall  on Saturday .

...instead of “Me and Mommy went to the Mall”...
which is sentence that could easily cause a conversational breakdown.

“My mom and I ate a giant sundae at the mall on Saturday” is an example of a Six-Second-Story™ that provides enough essential information to prevent a conversational breakdown. It allows the conversational partner to respond with personal thoughts and relevant questions based on the information provided in the Six-Second-Story™. This conversational repair technique utilizes a “kernel” sentence containing the narrative elements found in the Action Sequence or 4 critical Wh’s — *Who* did *What*, *When* & *Where*. In this method, oral language is paired with written expression in a highly structured format. The S³™ Therapy Sheet as well as the Six-Second-Stories™ Flip Book provides a visual template that incorporates SGM® icons and allows ephemeral auditory information to be “freeze-framed” to improve auditory comprehension (on the listener’s part) or oral expression (on the speaker’s part).

The goals for Six-Second-Stories™ are:

- Can you, as the *listener* — ask your communication partner to explain what s/he means if you’re confused?
- Can you, as the *speaker* — prepare your message so your communication partner can understand it the first time?
- Can you, as the *speaker* — repair your message so your communication partner can understand it if s/he is confused?



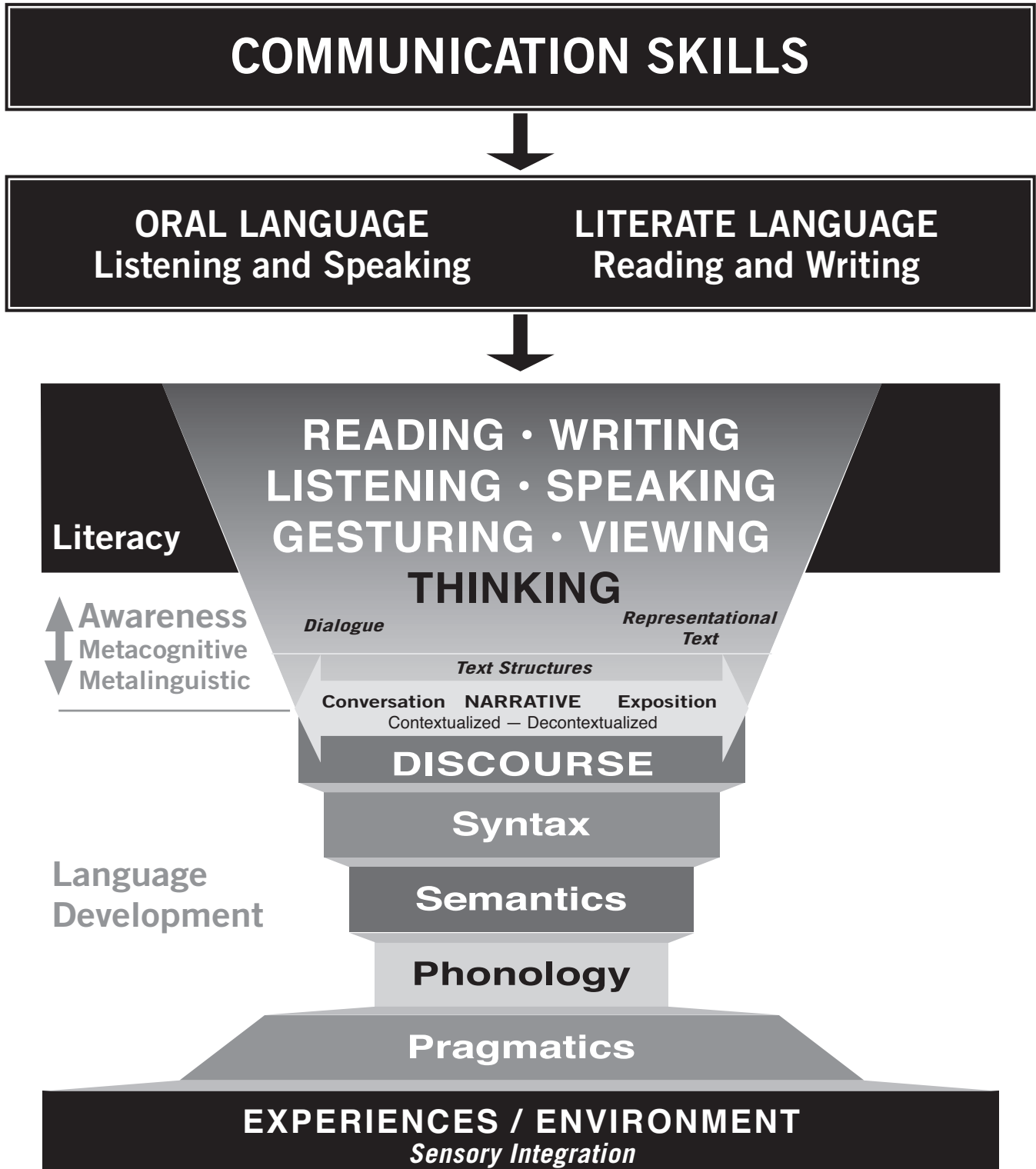
The S³™ Flip Book cover, inside cover, and inside pages are located in the Appendix (pages A.1–A.10) for you to copy and use, along with instructions for putting the book together. Printable files for download are also located on MindWing’s website.

Social interactions demand moment-to-moment integration of multiple contextual, social, emotional and language cues. In essence, Six-Second-Stories™ allow us to capture fleeting data (so it can be “analyzed” and repaired if an element was missing), and so that personal narratives can be “organized” before spoken (to try to prevent a breakdown from occurring). This scaffolding, intended to reduce the complexity of social interactions, can be gradually faded, with ease. This approach is unique because it:

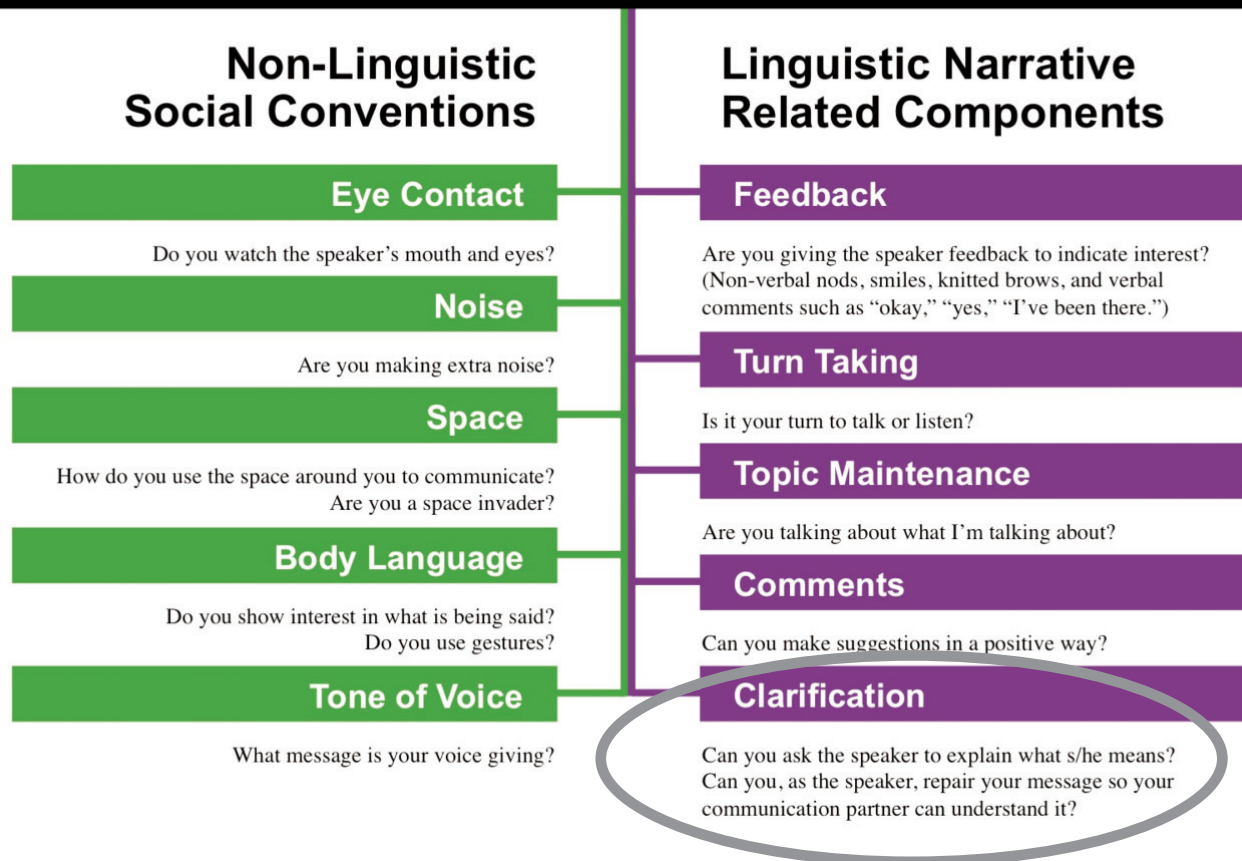
- offers visual, kinesthetic, explicit, systematic yet flexible instruction
- can be adapted to suit a wide-range of students (Pre-K–12)
- improves conversational exchanges in the Here & Now (listening & speaking) and incorporates critical elements of the There & Then (reading & writing) as well
- strengthens oral communication skills while enhancing literacy skills
- benefits our students; they have fewer dots to connect between interpersonal & academic behavioral expectations

- benefits educators & parents (through increased efficiency) with continuity of underlying vocabulary, concepts & materials among this method with SGM® and Social Thinking®

The focus of Six-Second-Stories™ is on a specific area of Pragmatics, a basic building block of communication skills (shown below). The S³ focus is Clarification, shown on the diagram on the following page.



PRAGMATICS



One of the biggest “gripes” of parents of children with social communication and social learning challenges (SLC) (and most children in general!) is that they have to constantly play “20 Questions” with them! This makes a back-and-forth conversation — a balanced conversational exchange — particularly difficult, because presuppositions must change as you add new information. Presupposition can be defined as knowledge of what information needs to be included or deleted during conversation (Owens, 2001). The judgment that a speaker must make about the listener’s needs are:

Information Content

- What does s/he already know?
- How much does s/he need to know?

Communicative Style

- What is her/his status in relation to me?