

How to use the Story Gate Bridge

The Story Gate Bridge is a prewriting tool that walks students through questions they must ask themselves and decisions they must make when writing a story. It can also provide a visual format for readers to report on a book they have read.

The Bridge itself is a visual representation of story structure. It breaks down the parts of a story—the beginning, middle and end. While doing so, it visually shows the length of each part (the middle is twice as long as the beginning or end) and provides information about what to focus on in each part of the story.

The Bridge contains two supports, labeled “Turning Point 1” and “Turning Point 2.” These supports delineate the points where the story moves from one part to the next (i.e. from the beginning to the middle, and then from the middle to the end).

Under the Bridge there is space to write ideas and notes while thinking through the aspects of the story.

Above the Bridge there is space to write an outline for the events that will happen in the story.

When a writer comes up with a story idea, it often comes together as a puzzle. The writer may get an idea for a character name, or a story problem, or a scene in the story, or what the climax will be. The Story Gate Bridge provides a tool to plug in each part of a story during the brainstorming process and see how that part fits in with the other parts as the wonder that is a story comes together.

Beginning

The beginning of the story serves as an “Introduction.” In this portion of the story, the student will introduce the main character(s), the setting, and the conflict.

Additional decisions the writer makes at this stage include:

Audience—Who the story will be written for

Point of View—The viewpoint the story will be told from. Third person point of view is most common

Turning Point 1

Turning Point 1 is known as the Inciting Incident, and this is the pivotal point that propels/compels/impels the action forward.

Middle

The middle of the story is where the majority of the action takes place. The character(s) try to solve the conflict which arose at the end of the beginning. This often takes more than one attempt (Rule of Threes).

Things to think through: What problem does the main character face? What can the character do to try and solve the problem? Are there things that make it harder for the character to solve the problem?

Turning Point 2

Turning Point 2 is the climax, the highest point in the story. This is the pivotal point where the main character solves the problem, and it leads to the resolution.

End

In the end, or conclusion, the main character solves the problem (or doesn't solve the problem, as the case may be).