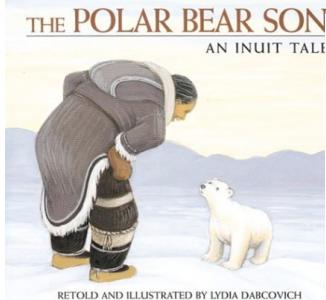


# 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders Dramatize Stories to Better Understand Character



**Story Dramatization** is a type of structured improvisation—an unscripted scene or set of scenes that the student actors plan before presenting.

After the book *The Polar Bear Son* was read aloud to students, the main events of the story were listed and put in the proper sequence. Students then acted out the events, becoming various characters in the book.

Below describes three scenes that were dramatized to make this a truly interactive read-aloud experience!

Preparing for Acting	Event 1	Event 2	Event 3
<p><b>Students practice the skill of concentration, a key skill in acting. They focus their eyes, bodies and energy on one spot. In drama this is called Point of Concentration.</b></p> <p><b>In the process of transforming the text from the written word into a live drama, students personally connected with the story as they found their own words and gestures to convey their character's thoughts and feelings.</b></p> <p><b>Event 1:</b> Students transform into the old woman who finds a polar bear cub alone in the wild. She knows the bear is lonely and she is lonely too, so she takes it home to be her son.</p> <p><b>Event 2:</b> Students transform into the hunters of the village who are jealous of the bear's ability to hunt. They want to kill the bear.</p> <p><b>Event 3:</b> Students transform into the old woman and the children of the village. They release the bear back into the wild. They want to protect the bear from the hunters.</p>			

## Drama Objectives

### *Based on the National Theatre Standards of Learning*

Students will create voices and dialogue that fit various characters from *The Polar Bear Son*.

Students will create poses, gestures, and movements that fit various characters from *The Polar Bear Son*.

Students will concentrate and cooperate as an ensemble.

## Reading Objectives

### *Based on the Virginia Reading/Literature Standards of Learning (SOL 3.5)*

Students will infer what characters would do and say in the fiction story *The Polar Bear Son*.

Students will sequence the key events of *The Polar Bear Son*.

## Teacher Reflections

The students did a wonderful job predicting what the characters in the story would say. We had 100% participation from the students. They loved the story and clearly demonstrated that by their enthusiastic portrayal of the hunters.

--Lenore Blank Kelner (Teaching Artist)

When students experience a story both as readers and actors, they develop a much deeper understanding of the story and the relationships among characters because they imagine themselves as the characters in the book. I watched students become the characters! They empathized with their thoughts and feelings so quickly! They felt angry when they played the part of the hunters, and they felt worried when they played the part of the old woman.

--Jessica Shumway (Classroom Teacher)

## STUDENT REFLECTIONS

I listened to the teacher tell the story. I had strong concentration. Being the hunter helped me think of what the hunters could do to not kill the bear. They could use the bear to help them hunt and get food and make money.

--RANDY

Dramatizing the story was like magic. We jumped into the book. Sometimes I read stories, but this time I was IN the story and could think about it in a different way. I got a deep sense of the book and how the characters were feeling.

--MICHELLE

I liked being the hunter. It made me feel so strong and very mad. A lot of the time, I felt like I was a real hunter.

--KYLA