

Tell it Again – Q1!

building reading comprehension through explicit instruction in story retell

Why are narratives important?

Children use narratives to tell others how they feel and to share recent experiences or ideas. Narratives provide a natural bridge linking oral and literate language. Spoken and written narratives are based on the same underlying knowledge of story structure. In reading narrative texts, readers rely on the presence of conventional features and familiar structures including setting, characters, actions, feelings and resolution. These features are referred to as the **macrostructure** of a narrative.

Focus on macrostructure and retell

Petersen (2011) reported that an emphasis on repeated story retelling and a focus on narrative macrostructure appeared to be the most important elements for **narrative development**. Dunst, Simkus and Hamby (2012) examined the effects of story retelling on literacy and language development. Results indicated that story retelling positively impacts on story **comprehension**, expressive **vocabulary**, ability to make **inferences** and overall **literacy** development. Spencer, Moran, Petersen and Smith (2016) investigated the impact of oral narrative instruction on Year 1 students' story **writing**. On measures of both story grammar and language complexity, students clearly and repeatedly demonstrated improved writing performance.

Audience and delivery

Tell It Again – Q1! is intended for use with Year 1 students. It can be implemented as either a differentiated curricular support to the whole class, or as targeted intervention for a smaller group of students requiring additional explicit instruction in story structure, linguistic complexity, story retell and Tier 2 vocabulary. Tell it Again – Q1! incorporates evidence-based features of narrative instruction including literature based language activities, pictographic planning and the use of icons and gestures to represent story elements (Boulineau et al 2004; Petersen 2011; Justice, Gillam and McGinty 2012; Gillam and Gillam 2017).

Next steps

Contact your school or regional speech language pathologist to support evidence-based implementation.