IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014
ROME • 16–19 OCTOBER
Knowing as Young Learners: The Power of Stories

Amina La Cour
Copenhagen International School
Welcome

- Stories & Young Learners
- Gender & Early Literacy
- Photos in Booking Making as a Way of Knowing
Before we begin…
…share your story with someone.

- Find someone sitting by you
- Take 1 minute each to share your story
- ...who you are?
  or, how you got here today?...
Stories...are a way of knowing...  
...help us make sense of our world...

ORAL STORYTELLING
Communication Skills
• Speaking
• Listening
• Non-verbal gestures
• THINKING

In EY Classrooms other forms may include...

• Dancing
• Painting
• Constructing
• Sculpting
• Drawing
• Drama/Role Play
• Book making!
• Etc...
Storytelling & recording stories

- part of human history & prehistory
- universal
- real or imaginary – way of knowing the world
Let the stories begin…

Let the stories begin…

Where did she go?

Ah, she’s back.

explore, play, finds answers

Where did she go?

PEEK-A-BOO

brain asks

making sense of the world…a way of knowing

-Vivian Paley
...beginning of the child as his/her own narrator...

NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT: relating the events of a story

Cognitive Development
Social Development
Emotional Development
Stories & Play young learners in the classroom

• Tells us & peers about their thoughts and emotions

• About their creativity, thinking skills, & collaboration

• Ability to put thoughts & emotions into words and actions
“Nothing that happens in a classroom is as interesting for a child as what another child says.”

-V. Paley
Collecting children’s stories
• Strengthens ability to ask & answer questions, enhancing early literacy skills

Connecting stories
• paves way for making friends
• later reading comprehension
  – connecting books to selves, other books & the world

Nurturing stories
• opportunities practice social, emotional & cognitive skills needed for collaboration, creativity & critical thinking
Children’s Stories & Play as Early Literacy Motivators & Activators

- Story Dictation
- Drawings
- Photos-Videos
- Book making

Vivian Paley
Matt Glover
“Research shows boys are having trouble reading…

…biological & sociological reasons…

But the good news is that research also shows that boys will read — if they are given reading that interests them.”

- Jon Scieszka
www.guysread.com
Gender & Early Literacy

What researchers ‘generally’ agree on comparing boys and girls:

• boys speech develops more slowly compared to girls (evens out by ages 4-5)
• boys take longer to learn to read than girls
• boys read less and are less enthusiastic about it
• boys have more trouble understanding narrative texts than girls
• boys become better at absorbing informational texts than girls

Whitmire explains, an extra emphasis on literacy in the early years sets many male learners back from the get-go…and boys are at a developmental disadvantage when it comes to early literacy challenges.
Recent neuroscience research…
• different regions of the brain develop **in different sequences** in different sexes, eg. language

http://www.nassp.org/tabid/3788/default.aspx?
topic=closing_the_achievement_gap_teaching_to_gender_differences
http://www sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/03/080303120346.htm

**Biological reason:**
boys born with smaller language centers in brain, & larger spatial centers

**Sociological reason:**
parents talk differently to boys and girls; parents tend to use longer sentences, and more open-ended questions with girls
Moving on...

Moving boys stories, way of knowing language & literacy

Stories in Play

Exploring Stories in Books

Recording Stories & ‘Retelling’

- Story dictation
- Drawings
- Bookmaking

illustrations? photos?
At first, inspirational sources many times are familiar Pattern Books

Brown bear, brown bear what do you see?

Red bird, red bird what do you see?

Grey horse, grey horse what do you see?
Narrative tells us about his way of knowing story, how he uses words to convey meaning & explore emotions

Wordless books vs. books with text
Similarities & Differences

The Ladybug Finds Some Shoes.
By Deepshikha

Ladybug came to my house with green shoes on.

Then she found other shoes in another house - brown.

She found two orange shoes, and one blue.

She found some other black shoes in another house.

Ladybug went to see her friend the spider.

THE END
Scaffolding with class books...
It begins with a story, and taking pictures...
Then selecting and sorting pictures...
Followed by lots of design planning & then gluing!
Then more sequencing ...
Adding words...

dictation & reflection

empowering all voices
Play, story making, and book making become a shared learning experience...
...of creativity, language & collaboration.
The text provides another kind of anchor and extension to having their voice heard, regardless the kind of learner...

…the next step in the Vygotsky ladder of language development.
"Are you here?"

"Tiger?"

"But where is Baby Tiger?"

They go to look for Baby Tiger.
A story may change when retelling from pictures or ‘rereading’ it by themselves, but then it just takes on new meaning.
Encouraging boys to write *words* in meaningful ways, and read.
And he climbed on the rocks.

He snapped at a mosquito.

He snapped at a flea.

He snapped at my finger.

But he didn't catch me.

He snapped at my fingers, too... but he didn't catch me.
Narrative texts-Fantasy
Informational texts-reality

CHANGING MATERIALS

REEF

Orange Juice
Gran Ice
Popsicles

Ice
Snow
Non float
cold
frozen water
“Nothing that happens in a classroom is as interesting for a child as what another child says.”

-V. Paley
References & Acknowledgments

Online Articles & Books


Images


Students at Copenhagen International School