

In the Pick-a-Plot Strategy, students work in small groups to develop original stories to share, with one student generating an original idea and introducing characters and setting. The next student imagines a plot problem, or complications in the plot. The third student brings closure by inventing a climax or resolution to the problem. Groups share their stories with other groups in jigsaw fashion or as a whole class. Teachers can provide students with card prompts with possible setting, characters, problems and resolutions to inspire their ideas. This resource may be made into cards for individual student distribution.

Student 1:

Group Brainstorm on Story Ideas:

Think of some ideas for a story, something you've always wanted to write about, something similar to what you've read in the past, or something imaged that might be funny, interesting, or just fun to write about. Write down each idea. **Decide as a group which idea to use for the story.**

Setting – describe where the story takes place. Setting can include the time of year, time of day, city, state, country, or all of the above.

Characters – describe how each character looks, acts, how they feel, what color their hair is, speaking accent and anything else that makes each character different or unique.

Student 2:

Plot Problem – pick a plot from the brainstorming session and describe some of the events that take place below. Include a problem by the time you get to the last event, or something complicated that might need to be solved.

Student 3:

Resolution: – think of the problem in your story and how it can be solved to bring closure to the story described by your peers. Make it something clever, memorable, or something simple – as long as the problem is solved there is resolution. (Think of a time when you had a problem and how it was solved.)

What the problem is:
Cause of the problem:
What happens as a result (effect)
What the solution is (what can fix the problem)

Adapted from Mills, 2009