

Create a Title for Your Published Narrative



Mentor Text

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Learn strategies for developing a personal narrative title.
- Generate title ideas in a group.
- Discuss how to apply the strategies to their own personal narratives.

Preparation

Materials Needed

- Mentor text: “The Catch” from *My Best Moment*
- Chart paper and markers
- Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

Students will need a piece of writing to share. If the piece has a title, have students conceal it from their partner.

Preparation Tip

If you have not already read “The Catch” with students (Read Aloud a Mentor Personal Narrative 1, pp. 4–5), you may wish to do so.



1. Focus

Explain the Importance of a Title

Ask: When you’re looking for a book to read and you go into a bookstore or library or you go online, what kinds of book titles make you interested in a book? Encourage students to generate their own ideas about how titles affect them and what kinds of titles they respond to as readers.

Say: The title of a piece of writing is usually the first thing your audience pays attention to. It should get their attention, it should give them some idea what the writing is about, and it should make them want to find out more.

Model Brainstorming a Title

Display the mentor text “The Catch” in book form or using the interactive whiteboard resources. If you are using the book, post chart paper so that you can jot key words as you model. You can circle or highlight words and phrases with the interactive whiteboard resources.

Say: Let’s imagine that I’ve written this personal narrative and I’ve revised and edited it, but I still don’t know what to call it. That happens to writers all the time, by the way. Choosing those two or three words can sometimes feel like the hardest part. One strategy for coming up with a title is to look back at what you’ve written and pull out words and ideas from the text. I’ll show you how I do this.

Revisit page 16. Say: My narrative is about my league championship game, so I’ll write down the words **championship game**. I’ll also write down the name of my team, the Raptors, and the phrase **do-or-die**. I like that phrase. It really describes that game.

Revisit pages 17–18. Say: Nothing really stands out for me on these pages. They are very dramatic, but I don’t see any words or have an ideas that come into my mind.

Revisit page 19. Say: This is the really important part of my narrative, when I make that catch. If I hadn’t made that catch, our team wouldn’t have won the game. I’m going to write “I make the catch” on my list.

Revisit page 20. Say: In the last paragraph of my narrative, I wrote “I wondered if I would be able to catch the ball like that again.” That idea of my making the catch is really what this narrative is all about. That catch was why I wrote this personal narrative to begin with. It changed our team’s fate, and it stayed with me as an important accomplishment. I’ll write down “the catch.”

Say: *The word that keeps coming back to me is **catch**. I think that's my title: "The Catch."*



2. Rehearse

Practice Generating Title Ideas

Invite students to work with a partner. Each partner should read a short story, narrative, or other piece of writing that their partner has written and jot down ideas for titles based on key words, phrases, and ideas in the writing. Each partner should develop one or more titles for their partner's writing. Then partners should share their ideas.

championship game
Raptors
Do-or-Die
I make the catch.
The catch

Sample Title Brainstorm

Share and Discuss

Bring students together and invite students to talk about the process of generating titles. How did the strategy of rereading to look for key messages and ideas help them create a title?

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Display familiar books from your classroom. Point to the title of each book and read it aloud to students. **Say:**

"The title of this book is _____."

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: **title/el título**.



3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: *Remember, the words in your personal narrative should hold the key to a good title. You want your title to reflect what's important in the narrative. It shouldn't be vague. It should make people intrigued, or curious, and want to read more. Keep this in mind as you develop a title for your narrative.*

Encourage students to apply this mini-lesson when they prepare to publish their personal narrative. During conferences, support students' selection of an appropriate title, or reinforce other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.



4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite 2 or 3 students to share the titles they developed and to explain the process they used to come up with them.