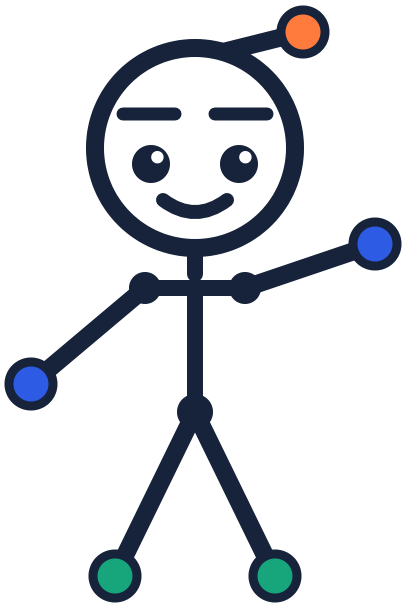
Young Innovators
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TELL IT STRAIGHT · GRADE 3

The Choice I Made

Six weekly practices in telling a true story about a choice you made.



This booklet belongs to

Teacher _____ School year _____

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START HERE HOW THIS BOOKLET WORKS

Your choice is the story.

Six weeks. Two pages a week, plus up to ten minutes in the room.

What you will make

One true story about a choice you made, that you can tell in 30 seconds. You find the five cards in week 1. You write yours in week 3. You check it in weeks 4 and 5, and tell it in week 6.

Pick a choice at school. A time you wanted two things and could only have one. It could be recess, a library book, or a class job. Not a choice about money at home. If your class did The Choosing Year, you know this already: what you got, and what you gave up.

If someone else is in your story, say who they are, like "my friend." Never write their name.

The boxes on the page

IN CLASS	What your class is also working on this week, in writing or in speaking and listening.
WARM-UP	Two minutes on your own, before the room gets busy.
IN THE ROOM	One short task. It says the minutes, the group size, and how long a turn is. A round is one turn each.
WHAT THEY SAW	Someone checks off what they saw or heard you do. An empty box is fine.
TALK ABOUT IT	A question to ask a grown-up you trust.
CHALLENGE ZONE	Harder, with more than one good answer. For when you want more.

Three promises this booklet makes

Nobody is compared with anybody. There are no scores.

Face the person. Turn your shoulders toward them. You never have to look in anyone's eyes.

If a task is hard, make the audience smaller. Do it with one partner first. Smaller is still doing it.

Five cards, one true story.

Every story in this booklet uses these five cards, in this order.

1	2	3	4	5
Someone	**Wants**	**But**	**So**	**Now**
Who the story is about.	What they were trying to do.	What got in the way. No But, no story: it is a list.	What happened next, or what was done.	How things are different. Say it in a few words.

Who goes on each card in this booklet

Someone is you. **Wants** is the two things you wanted. **But** is why you could not have both. **So** is what you chose, and what you gave up. **Now** is how it turned out.

A choice told as a list is just what you did. The But is what makes it a story.

THE RULE FOR EVERY STORY YOU TELL

A story you tell is true. If a part did not happen, or you cannot show where it came from, take it out.

The six weeks

WEEK	TITLE	SITS BESIDE
1	**Five Cards**	W.3.3a
2	**Where Is the But?**	SL.3.3
3	**Pick Your Choice**	W.3.3d
4	**Say It, Hear It Back**	SL.3.2
5	**Is It All True?**	SL.3.1c
6	**Tell It**	SL.3.4

WEEK 1 TELL IT STRAIGHT

Five Cards

Every story has five parts, in order. This week you find them in a story about Pip.

IN CLASS THIS WEEK
Writing a story: who is in it and what happens, in order (W.3.3a)

WARM-UP · 2 MINUTES, ON YOUR OWN
Write one small choice you made today or yesterday at school.

WORDS TO KEEP

card	One part of a story. A story has five, in order.

Pip's story

MADE UP. PIP IS OUR MASCOT.

a. Pip is in third grade.

b. Pip wanted to play tag and read a new book at recess.

c. But recess was too short for both.

d. So Pip chose tag and gave up reading at recess.

e. Now Pip reads the book at lunch.

Each line is one card. The card names are Someone, Wants, But, So, and Now. On page 2, write the card for each line.

IN THE ROOM — **4 minutes · pairs · 45 seconds a turn · 1 round**

1. Partner A tells B about a small choice from today or yesterday at school, in 30 seconds or less.
2. A holds up one finger for each card: Someone, Wants, But, So, Now.
3. B says which card was missing, if any.
4. Swap.

What happened

Line	Which card?
a	
b	
c	
d	
e	

The card my partner said was missing, if any:

What your partner saw

Checked by your partner. Check only what you saw or heard. An empty box is fine.

- ☐ Held up a finger for each card
- ☐ Told what they wanted
- ☐ Said a But
- ☐ Ended with how it turned out

💬 TALK ABOUT IT

Tell a grown-up at home or at school about a choice you made at school. Ask them which part was the But.



STUCK? TRY THIS

The But is why you could not have both. It often starts with the word But.

★ CHALLENGE ZONE

Make up a short story about Pip with all five cards. Write it, and label it "Made up."

WEEK 2 TELL IT STRAIGHT

Where Is the But?

A list tells what happened. A story has something in the way. That is the But.

IN CLASS THIS WEEK
Asking and answering questions about what a speaker said (SL.3.3)

WARM-UP · 2 MINUTES, ON YOUR OWN
Write one thing that got in your way this week at school.

_____

WORDS TO KEEP

list Things told one after another. Nothing gets in the way, so it is not a story yet.

Two tellings of the same recess

MADE UP. PIP IS OUR MASCOT.

Telling A

Pip went outside at recess.

Pip played tag.

Pip came back in.

Telling B

Pip wanted to play tag and read a new book at recess.

But recess was too short for both.

So Pip chose tag and gave up reading at recess.

Now Pip reads the book at lunch.

IN THE ROOM — **6 minutes · pairs · 75 seconds a turn · 1 round**

1. Partner A tells B about this morning at school as a list, in 30 seconds or less.
2. B asks, "What got in the way?"
3. A tells it again in 30 seconds or less, with a But in it. If nothing got in the way, A picks another school morning.
4. Swap.

What happened

Which telling is a story, A or B?

Copy the But from the story:

The But I added in the room:

What your partner saw

Checked by your partner. Check only what you saw or heard. An empty box is fine.

- [ ] Told a list first
- [ ] Answered "What got in the way?"
- [ ] Told it again with a But
- [ ] Started the But with the word But

TALK ABOUT IT

Ask a grown-up at home or at school about their morning. Then ask, "What got in the way?"



STUCK? TRY THIS

Think of a school morning when something was missing, late, too hard, or too short.

★ CHALLENGE ZONE

Write your own lunch at school as a list. Then add the But that really happened. If nothing got in the way, pick another lunch.

WEEK 3 TELL IT STRAIGHT

Pick Your Choice

Put a choice you made at school on the five cards. What you gave up goes in too.

IN CLASS THIS WEEK
Writing a story: an ending that closes it (W.3.3d)

WARM-UP · 2 MINUTES, ON YOUR OWN
Write two small choices you made at school this week. Circle the one to tell.

_____

_____

WORDS TO KEEP

choice	Picking one thing, so you do not get the other.

A choice at school

Pick a time you wanted two things and could only have one.

Recess, a library book, a class job, or a seat all work. Not a choice about money at home.

If someone else is in it, say who they are, like "my friend." Never write their name.

What you gave up

The thing you did not pick is part of the story. Put it on the So card.

The Now card is the ending. Say how it turned out, in a few words.

IN THE ROOM — **7 minutes · pairs · 45 seconds a turn · 1 round**

1. Take about three minutes to fill in your five cards on page 2.
2. Tell your partner your story from the cards, in 30 seconds or less.
3. Your partner says which card they want to hear more about.
4. Swap.

What happened

1 Someone you

2 Wants the two things you wanted

3 But why you could not have both

4 So what you chose, and what you gave up

5 Now how it turned out

What your partner saw

Checked by your partner. Check only what you saw or heard. An empty box is fine.

- [ ] Told all five cards in order
- [ ] Said what they gave up
- [ ] Told why they could not have both
- [ ] Ended with how it turned out

TALK ABOUT IT

Tell your five cards to a grown-up at home or at school. Ask which card they want to hear more about.



STUCK? TRY THIS

Stuck on Now? Ask: how are things different now? Was I glad I chose it?

★ CHALLENGE ZONE

Tell it with the other choice. Start So with "If I had chosen" and Now with "I think."

WEEK 4 TELL IT STRAIGHT

Say It, Hear It Back

If your listener can say your story back in one sentence, with your But in it, they got it.

IN CLASS THIS WEEK
Finding the main idea and details of something presented out loud (SL.3.2)

WARM-UP · 2 MINUTES, ON YOUR OWN
Read your five cards to yourself. Circle the card you are least sure about.

◂ YOU WILL NEED, FROM EARLIER IN THIS BOOKLET
- Week 3: your five cards, on page 2

WORDS TO KEEP

say it back	Your listener tells your story in one sentence of their own.

The one-sentence test

After you tell it, your listener says it back in one sentence of their own.

Listen for the But. If their sentence has no But, your listener missed it.

Say the But slowly and clearly next time. Do not add anything that did not happen.

Two sentences about Pip's story

MADE UP. PIP IS OUR MASCOT.

a. Pip wanted tag and a book, but recess was too short, so Pip chose tag.

b. Pip played tag.

IN THE ROOM — **8 minutes · pairs · 45 seconds a turn · 2 rounds**

1. Tell your partner your story from your cards, in 30 seconds or less.
2. Your partner says it back in one sentence.
3. Fix one card on your week 3 page. If the But was missing, make it clearer. If not, fix the card you circled.
4. Tell it again. Swap, so you each do two rounds.

What happened

My partner's one sentence, round 1:

Did it have my But?

What I changed before round 2:

Which sentence about Pip's story passes the test? Which letter?

What your partner saw

Checked by your partner. Check only what you saw or heard. An empty box is fine.

- [ ] Told the story in 30 seconds or less
- [ ] Let the partner finish the say-back
- [ ] Changed one card before round 2
- [ ] Told it again after the change

TALK ABOUT IT

Tell your story to a grown-up at home or at school. Ask them to say it back in one sentence.



STUCK? TRY THIS

Slow down at the But. It is the part your listener needs to say back.

★ CHALLENGE ZONE

Tell your story in 15 seconds. Did the But stay in?

WEEK 5 TELL IT STRAIGHT

Is It All True?

A true story uses only what you heard, saw, did, or felt.

IN CLASS THIS WEEK
Asking questions to check understanding and linking to what others said (SL.3.1c)

WARM-UP · 2 MINUTES, ON YOUR OWN
Look at your Now card. Did it really happen? Write how you know.

_____

◂ YOU WILL NEED, FROM EARLIER IN THIS BOOKLET
- Week 3: your five cards, on page 2

WORDS TO KEEP

true	It really happened, and you can say how you know.
guess	Something you think is true but did not hear, see, do, or feel yourself.

THE RULE FOR EVERY STORY YOU TELL
A story you tell is true. If a part did not happen, or you cannot show where it came from, take it out.

Pip's story, checked

MADE UP. PIP IS OUR MASCOT.

What really happened

1. Pip wanted to play tag.

2. Pip wanted to read a new book.

3. Recess was too short for both.

4. Pip chose to play tag.

5. Pip read the book at lunch.

Pip's story

a. Pip wanted to play tag and read a new book.

b. But recess was too short for both.

c. Pip's friends begged Pip to play.

d. So Pip chose tag.

e. Then Pip read the book at lunch.

IN THE ROOM — **6 minutes · pairs · 45 seconds a turn · 1 round**

1. Show your partner your week 3 cards. For each card, they ask, "How do you know?"
2. Answer with "They told me," "I saw it," "I did it," "I felt it," or "I am guessing."
3. Cross out each guess on your week 3 page. If you know what really happened, write it above. Swap.

What happened

One line in Pip's story did not happen. Which letter?

_____

Each guess I crossed out, and what I put instead:

_____

_____

_____

_____

What your partner saw

Checked by your partner. Check only what you saw or heard. An empty box is fine.

- ☐ Answered "How do you know?" for each card
- ☐ Said which cards were guesses
- ☐ Crossed out each guess
- ☐ Kept the parts they knew were true

💬 TALK ABOUT IT

Tell your story to a grown-up at home or at school. Ask them to stop you at any part that sounds like a guess.



STUCK? TRY THIS

Not sure it happened? Ask yourself: did I see it, did I do it, or did someone tell me?

★ CHALLENGE ZONE

Write Pip's story again without the line that did not happen. Is there still a But?

_____

WEEK 6 TELL IT STRAIGHT

Tell It

Tell your story to someone who has not heard it. Then answer "How do you know?"

IN CLASS THIS WEEK
Telling a story or experience clearly, at a pace people can follow (SL.3.4)

WARM-UP · 2 MINUTES, ON YOUR OWN
Put a star by your But card on your week 3 page. Write your But here.

_____

◂ YOU WILL NEED, FROM EARLIER IN THIS BOOKLET
- Week 3: your five cards, with every fix written in

WORDS TO KEEP

listener The person hearing your story. This week, someone new.

Before you tell it

Start with Someone and Wants, so your listener knows what you wanted.

Slow down at the But. End on Now, and stop. Keep your booklet open to your cards if you need them.

How do you know?

Your listener asks, "How do you know?" about your But. Say what you saw, did, or felt, or what someone told you.

If you do not know, say "I do not know." That keeps the story true.

IN THE ROOM

8 minutes · groups of 3 · 1 minute a turn · 1 round

1. Groups of three: a teller, a listener who has not heard the story, and a watcher. In a group of four, one listener says back the But and the other asks.
2. The teller tells their story in 30 seconds or less.
3. The listener says back the But, then asks, "How do you know?" about it.
4. After each turn, the watcher checks off the teller's page 2. Everyone tells once.
5. When everyone has told, write your page 2.

Finding this hard? Tell it to one partner who has not heard it, who also checks off the boxes.

What happened

The But my listener said back:

My answer to "How do you know?":

One thing I would change next time:

What the watcher saw

Checked by the watcher. Check only what you saw or heard. An empty box is fine.

- [ ] Started with who the story is about
- [ ] Slowed down at the But
- [ ] Ended on how it turned out
- [ ] Answered "How do you know?" or said they did not know

TALK ABOUT IT

Tell your story to a grown-up at home or at school. Ask them what you gave up.



STUCK? TRY THIS

If you lose your place, look at your cards and say the next card's name.

★ CHALLENGE ZONE

Tell the same story in 15 seconds, then in 45. What did you add, and was all of it true?

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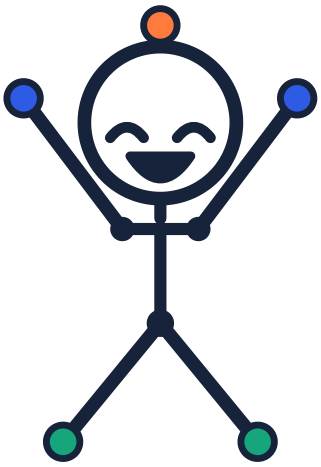
Grade 3 · Tell It Straight

Certificate of Completion

This is to certify that

_____

practiced telling a true story about a choice for six weeks. They practiced finding the five cards and putting their own choice on them. They also practiced saying it back, taking out what did not happen, and telling it to a small group.



_____ _____

Teacher Date

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