Empowering Young Children Through Storytelling

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

Katie Houser
Mary White
Ryan Stone

Early Child Development Center

- A demonstration preschool for research, observation and practicum purposes
- Quality care and early education for children ages two through five from the College and neighboring community
- An active model of child advocacy in the Charleston community

PLAY • INQUIRE • CREATE

Our “Schedule”

Centers	Play Stories
Outside	Play Stories
Whole Group	Storytelling
Small Group	Story Creating
Centers	Play Stories
Writing Workshop	Writing Stories
Outside	Play Stories
Lunch	Storytelling
Rest	Reading Stories
Centers	Play Stories
Outside	Play Stories

Chapters

Personal

Communal

1. A Teacher Finds Her Voice
2. Child Voice Emerging Through Play
3. Connecting Play to Story, Story to Play
4. Student Empowerment: “Writing/Story Workshop”
5. A Teacher Finds His Voice
6. A Parent Sharing Voice with the Community

CHAPTER 1

A Teacher Finds Her Voice

1983 — "IN THE MIDDLE" Nancie Atwell

2003 — JOURNAL WRITING

2006 — TEACHERS COLLEGE Emily Skinner

2007 — STORYTELLING Mary Blake Jones

2017 — Story Animations

2018 — STORY WORKSHOP

Good teaching is a reflection of the inner life of the teacher.

*Writing Workshop by Lucy Calkins (2003)

*Story Workshop by John Schultz (1977)

- “Writing” is self-chosen
- Moving child when developmentally appropriate
- Exposure to stories
- Teacher support
- Moving out of comfort zone
- DAP – Time and Reflection

Child Voice Emerging Through Play

"Within the learning context, adults guide play in one of two ways: by carefully preparing the environment beforehand and scaffolding children's actions as the play unfolds over time"
-Weisburg et al. 2014

"A balance between adult initiated and child-directed play."

-Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

Free Play

Guided Play

Direct Instruction

STAGES OF PLAY

Personal

Communal

Unoccupied Play – The child is seemingly not engaged or actively playing with others at all. They may remain stationary and be engaged in random movements with no objective. This stage of play is mostly seen in newborns and infants, between the ages of 0 and 2. This is an important setting stage for future play exploration and development.

Solitary Play – During this stage of play, children will often play alone, with toys different from those of others, and be uninterested or unaware of what others around them are doing. This stage of play is most commonly seen in young toddlers between the ages of 2 and 3, but it is important for children of all age groups to participate in from time to time. Solitary play is common at a young age because cognitive, physical and social skills have yet to fully develop. This type of play is important because it teaches children how to entertain themselves.

Onlooker play – Onlooker play is when a child observes others playing but does not join the play. They will frequently engage in other forms of social interactions such as conversations to learn more about the game or play that is going on. This type of play is common in younger children between the ages of 2½ and 3½, but can take place at any age.

Parallel play – This occurs when children play side-by-side from one another, but there is a lack of group involvement amongst them. They will typically be playing with similar toys and often times mimic one another. Parallel play is common in toddlers between the ages of 2 ½ and 3 ½ but can take place at any age. Although it looks like there is very little contact between them, these children are learning valuable social skills and actually learn quite a lot from one another. For this reason, parallel play is important as a transitory stage for the development of social maturity, which is key to later stages of play.

Associative play – At this stage, children will begin to play together, but not focused towards a common goal. A child will be more interested in playing with other children around them than the individual toys they play with. Associative play is slightly different than parallel play as children may continue to play separately from one another, but they start to become more involved in what others around them are doing. You may find children playing or trading with the same toys or actively talking with or engaging one another, but no rules of play are being set. This type of play typically begins around ages 3 or 4, extending into the pre-school age. This is an important stage of play because it develops necessary skills such as cooperation, problems solving, and language development.

Cooperative play – Cooperative play is where play finally becomes organized into groups and teamwork is seen. Children are now interested in both the people that they are playing with as well as the activity at hand. The group is more formalized with a leader, as well as other assigned roles, and play organizes around accomplishing group goals or specific tasks. Cooperative play begins in the late preschool period, between the ages of 4 and 6. It is uncommon to see children reach this stage until these later years, as it requires an evolved set of organizational skills and a higher degree of social maturity. Cooperative play is indeed the culmination, bringing together all the skills learned across previous stages into action, giving the child the necessary skills for social and group interactions.

(Parten, 1932)

Connecting Play to Story, Story to Play

Personal

Communal

STAGES OF PLAY

(Parten, 1932)

1. UNOCCUPIED PLAY
2. SOLITARY PLAY
3. ONLOOKER PLAY
4. PARALLEL PLAY
5. ASSOCIATIVE PLAY
6. COOPERATIVE PLAY

STORYTELLING STAGES

(Stone & White, 2018)

1. PRE-STORYTELLING
2. DEVELOPING STORYTELLER
3. EMERGING STORYTELLER
4. EARLY STORYTELLER

STORYTELLING STAGES

Personal

Communal

PRE-STORYTELLING

Student has difficulty coming up with a story without some sort of adult instruction. Often draw/scribble, then make up story when prompted. Story may change multiple times based on when you ask for retell. May tell the same simple story every day (repetitive) over many weeks/months.

DEVELOPING STORYTELLER

Student sticks to a familiar story script where characters, actions follow a particular set of rules and characters have particular roles (cannot branch from this). May cite facts (non-fiction) of particular animals, or familiar texts, however cannot use those facts to create a story. Often repetitive in nature and stick to what is known to be true (familiar tv show or movie, fact book, etc.)

EMERGING STORYTELLER

Student begins to create new and unique stories either with familiar characters or simple stories of something that happened to them (family stories). Stories growing in length and include more action and descriptive words. Simple sequence of events that have a basic beginning/middle/end.

EARLY STORYTELLER

Student can work independently to create a story of their choice. Can differentiate between fiction and non-fiction and may choose to write one type of text or another. Can sound out text on own, and piece story together (PLAN) over several days where each page is a different action/part of the story. Use of transition words (and, and then, next, first, second).

(Stone & White, 2018)

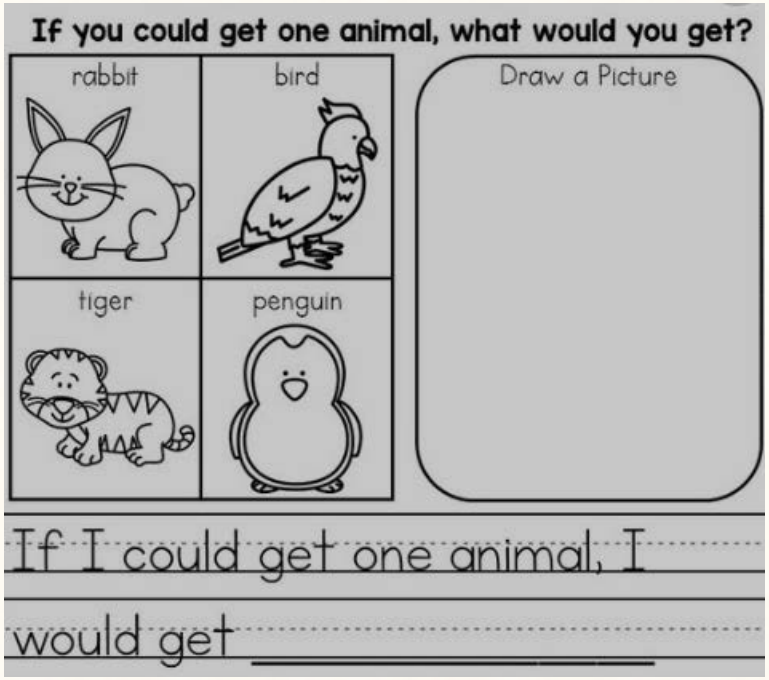
Story Starters

"How can we make sure students get the practice and inspiration they need as emergent writers? One teacher-tested solution is to use exciting writing prompts like the ones in this book."

1. Your character is running late and has to take the bus instead of walking.
2. At school or work, your character gets an unusual assignment.
3. Your character finds something he or she had lost.
4. Your character has to choose between two things that he or she loves.
5. Your character is out talking a walk when he or she sees a dog that...

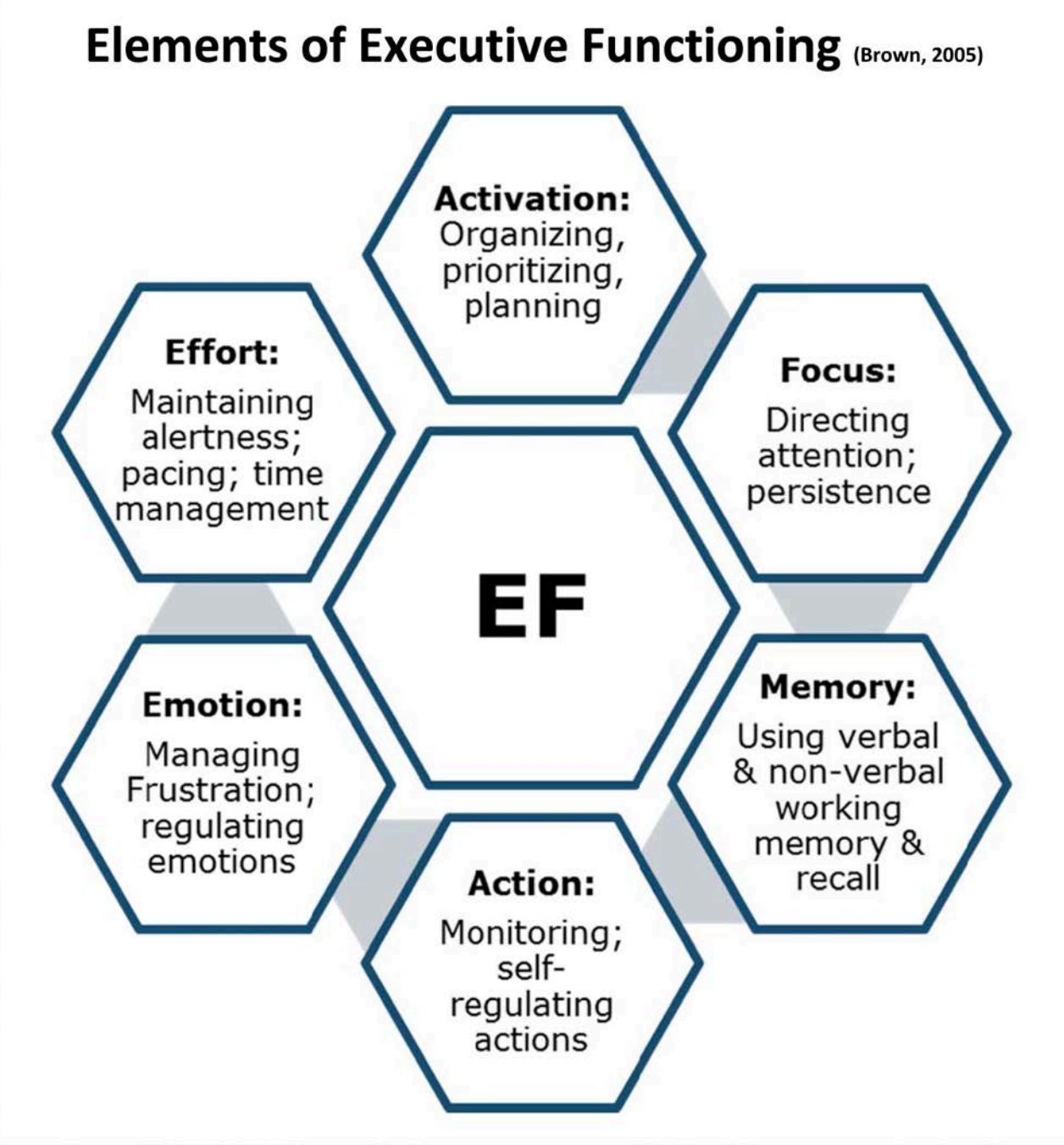
What's a whale doing in the middle of town? Pretend you are a news reporter on the scene, and you have to write an article to tell what is happening. You can choose one of the following news headlines to help you get started. Use your imagination!

- Whale Invades Main Street, Takes Over City Hall
- New School Is Shaped Like a Whale
- Whale Gets Lost in City

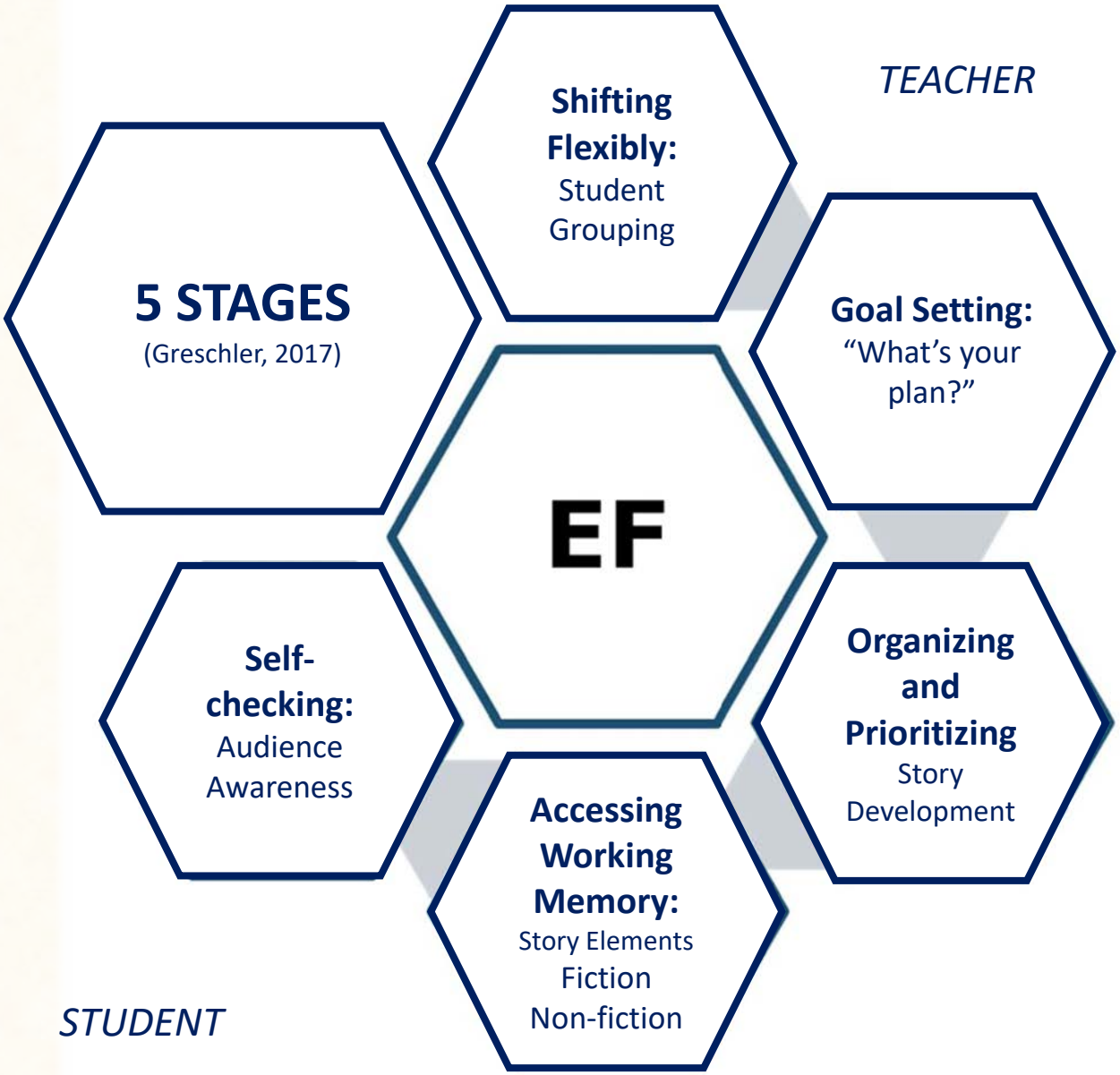


"Executive function (EF) is a broad term used to describe the complex cognitive processes that are the foundation for flexible, goal-directed behaviors."

Meltzer (2010)



Elements of Executive Functioning



CHAPTER 4

Student Empowerment

“Writing/Story Workshop”

Writing Sample

STORYTELLING STAGES

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Honoring Children's Stories

LISTENING to children, respecting their voice, recognizing the child and "documenting" who they a
and reflecting their voice back to them (mirror image)

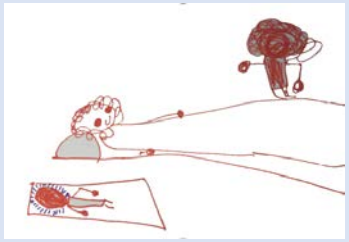
- Documentation is an integral part of connecting students' personal lives to those in their community
- Everyday photos highlight learning and other skills
- Photos into PowerPoint and send to families
- Post photos in the hallway for other teachers, students, and parents to see
- Sharing photos of student play gives their work a voice
- Listening Center
- ART Center
  Puppets with stories
- Shadow Puppets
- Dramatic Play

Shadow Puppets
-recognizing they had stories to tell and providing a means to share those stories (model making characters from their stories)

(Story elements)
-characters
Action/problem solution

PICTURE (blocks)
VIDEO (outside, d
SCAN photos - list
LISTEN to reading
PROVIDE addition
support story chil

FALL 2016



Student Animations

"By finding their voice, students develop empathy for others and develop a better ability to listen, participate, and share in another person's story."

Our "Projects"

SPRING 2017

Helping Documentary

MAYMESTER 2017

"Connecting"

SPRING 2018

Peace Parade

Personal

Communal

A Parent Sharing Voice with the Community

- Connect with community
- Develops trust with stakeholders
- Builds a relationships connection
- Opens doors-community building expands inclusivity
- Deeper and more abundant connections
- Access for all learners

This love of story is what generates motivation and satisfaction in the wider literacy learning process.

Future Implications

Different resources

Modify story workshop

PowerPoints monthly

Posting work and photos in hallway to share with community

Providing Space to find Voice

Personal

child-parent – a child's social interactions with parent or legal guardian where the child is the one sharing or creating a story. This may be observed through conversations with parents where parents share with master teachers incidences of the child sharing a personal story, retelling a familiar classroom or peer story, or how parents have shared their child's story with friends or family.

child-teacher – a child's social interactions with classroom teachers where the child is the one sharing or dictating a story. Classroom teachers include master teachers, graduate assistants, and undergraduate assistants that are part of the child's daily routines and schedule. This may be observed through child-led play with a teacher, the child beginning a story and working with a teacher as they illustrate, dictate, or begin writing words, or other related interactions with teachers in the classroom.

child-child – a child's social interactions with classroom peers in relation to storytelling and developing a story collaboratively. This may be observed through language in play, artwork, oral storytelling, written storytelling, or other areas.

child-self – the child's developing voice as viewed through their self-concept and self-esteem. This may be observed through their self-talk, motivation to write and share their stories, or other areas.

Sharing Voice with Families

- Connects with families
- Creates a shared experience
- Makes the concept of audience concrete for young learners
- A medium of connectivity and of community
- Develops interconnectedness
- Creates a powerful foundation for a lifetime of literacy learning

Sharing Voice

As Hamilton and Weiss (2005) tell us:

"Storytelling is the oldest form of education. People around the world have always told tales as a way of passing down their cultural beliefs, traditions, and history to future generations. Why? Stories are at the core of all that makes us human." (p. 1)

Despite this significant role in our human lives, it seems that storytelling rarely finds its way into classrooms as official curriculum – Why? Turn & Talk

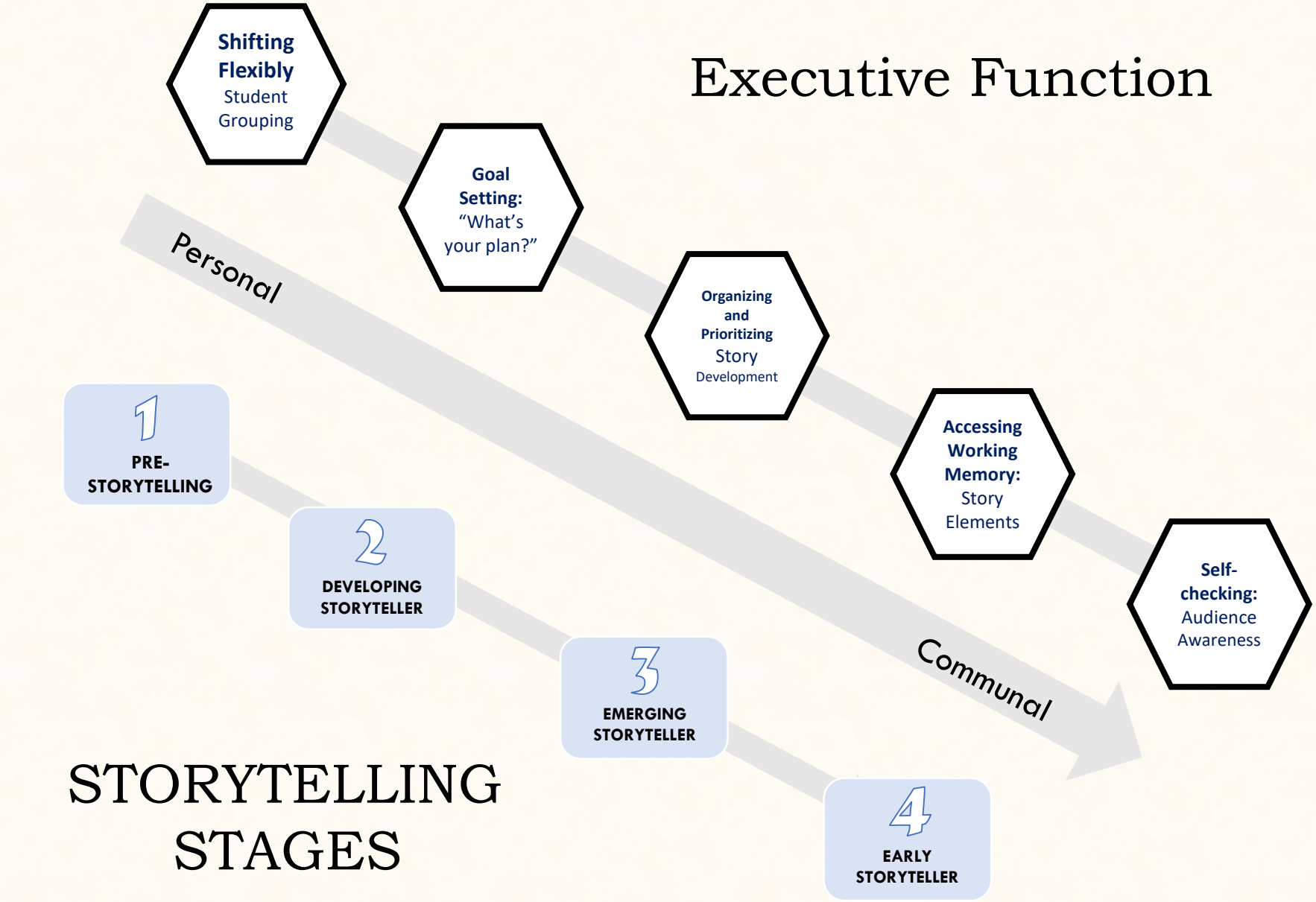
Sharing Voice

"As a natural form of communication, storytelling supports the development of oral language—a foundation for all literacy learning—by strengthening the ability to speak from the imagination. Furthermore, it has the potential to more directly support both reading and writing,"
(Roney, 1989).

The focus becomes the speaking- listening relationship. What are some of your own experiences with this? How can you open up this opportunity in your classroom?
Turn & Talk

Sharing Voice

- Celebrates child's self expression
- Develops competence and security
- Creates a safe social and emotional space
- Strengthens confidence and risk taking
- Builds genuine and intentional relationships



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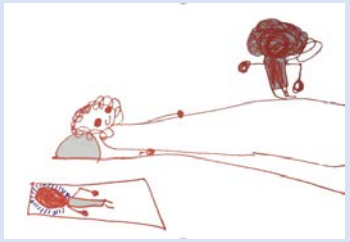
Our “Projects”

FALL 2016



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