

Illustrate a Story

This activity is well received by younger and older learners, and is an excellent way to flex the comprehension muscle.

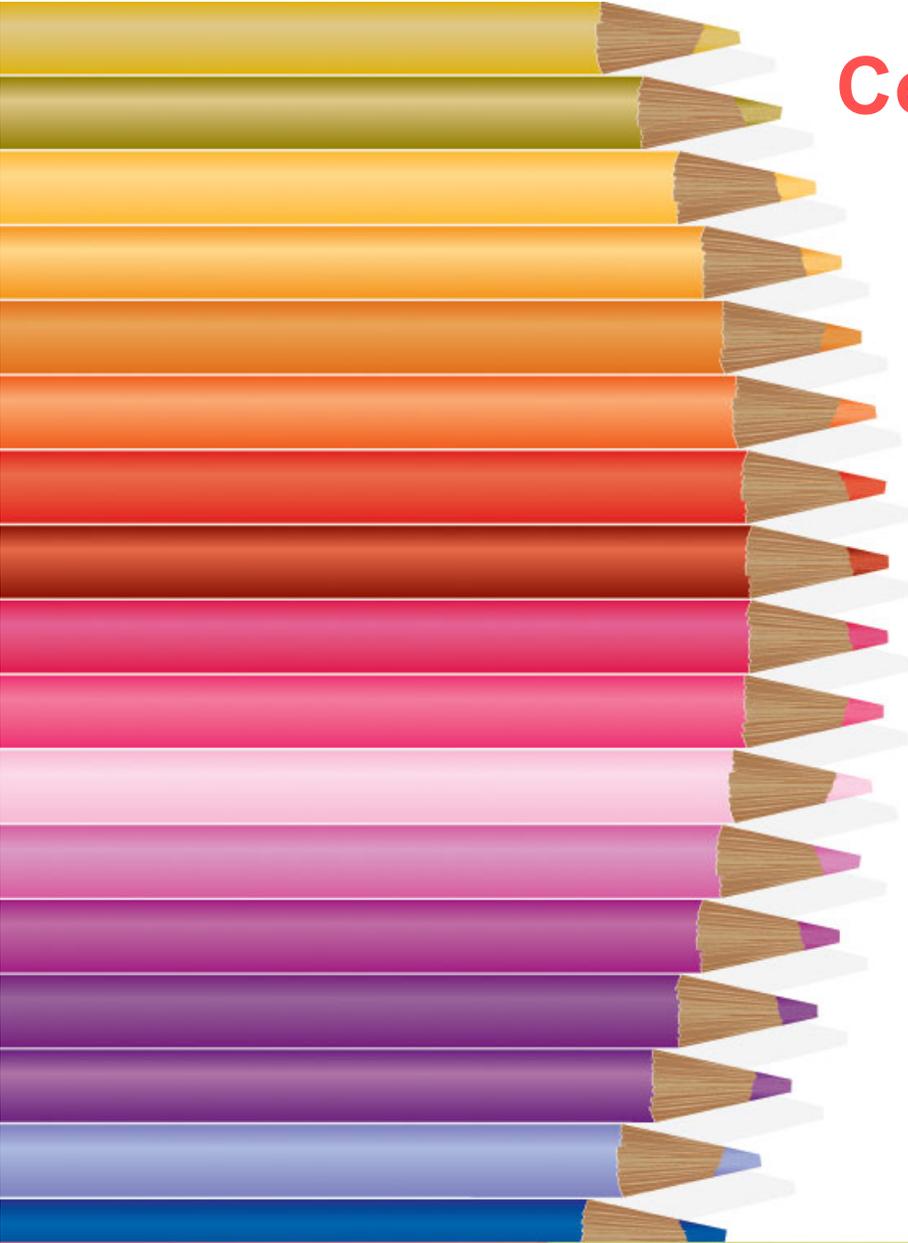
Supplies: Story or chapter book; Paper; Crayons, Markers or Pencil

Read a book or chapter out loud to your child. If the book you're reading has illustrations, do not show them yet. Initially, tell your child to "draw what he hears." In other words, if the story mentions a character with red hair and freckles, or a park-like setting with huge trees, he should incorporate aspects of those details into his drawing. Explain that it's impossible to draw everything he hears in the story; however he should continue illustrating for as long as you read. This will force him to pay attention and process what you are reading.

Drawings can be a collage of images or one cohesive picture of a scene. Or, you could have your child focus on illustrating only one aspect of the story, such as the setting, a secondary character, or the story's problem/solution. At the end of the book or chapter, ask your child about his illustration. Have him explain the details and how they relate to the story plot. You will immediately be able to ascertain whether or not your child comprehends the main ideas of the story. If he is struggling with understanding, have a relaxed conversation about the story and discuss answers to the questions on the following page.

Finally, a fun way to end this project is to compare your child's drawings with those of the illustrator. Discuss similarities and differences. How closely does your child's drawings resemble the illustrator's? How different are their perspectives?

Extension: "Illustrate a Story" is fun to do with chapter books! Collect the pictures drawn from each chapter, bind them, and review the whole story from start to finish. The hands-on task of ordering the drawings will strengthen the comprehension skill of sequencing.



Comprehension Questions

- ✓ Why does the title make sense?
- ✓ Who is the story mostly about?
- ✓ What did you like or dislike about the story?
- ✓ What is the main problem and how was it solved?
- ✓ What is one thing that happens to the main character?
- ✓ How does the main character change from the beginning to the end of the story?
- ✓ Where does most of the story action take place?
- ✓ Are there any characters that remind you of yourself or someone you know?
- ✓ If you were in the exciting part of the story, how would you feel? What would you have done differently?
- ✓ What part of the story was the funniest/saddest/most exciting?
- ✓ What message do you think the author was trying to share by writing this book?
- ✓ Who was the protagonist (hero) and antagonist (adversary) in the story?
- ✓ What were the relationship connections between the story's characters?