Co-operative Show and Tell

Co-operative Show and Tell is a conversational time when children share items of interest in small groups. Each child chooses the item to talk about and/or to show. Group members listen, query, question and discuss the items shared.

Co-operative Show and Tell is also a pre-writing time because, before leaving their groups, the teacher asks the children to visualise what they might write about. Children make connections between talking and writing and rarely say, 'I don't know what to write.'

Why use Co-operative Show and Tell?

Co-operative show and tell creates opportunities for children to:

❖ talk of their lives and interests with classmates

❖ actively listen and converse in small groups

❖ report on their group discussion to the whole class

❖ experience explicit teaching and learning as children or teacher elaborate on shared items, such as a caterpillar, toy, magazine or software

Steps

1. Ask the children to sit on the floor, facing each other in pairs: XX   XX   XX

2. As they become familiar with the process, children sit in groups of three or four:

     XX   XX

     X   XX

3. Have the children sit facing each other for ease of sharing and to make eye contact:
    - A talks to B. They converse, question and share
    - B talks to A. They converse, question and share

4. Invite all pairs (or groups) to converse quietly at the same time: twelve children talk to their partners and then they reverse roles. This takes three or four minutes.

5. As pairs (or groups) finish sharing, ask them to sit in a class 'reporting circle' ensuring that partners sit next to each other. The teacher is also in the circle.

6. Invite a pair to report on their show and tell to the circle of children. Encourage active listening and ask, 'A, what did B talk about?' and then, 'B, what did A talk about?'

7. After the pair reports, the objects shown in the small group are placed in the middle of the reporting circle for classmates to see.

8. Other children may question the speaker about the item.

9. Ask the children to visualise what they might draw and write about before the pairs (or groups) move to journal writing.

Teaching Strategies for Literacy in the Early Years

Extensions

Detailed discussions

Sometimes a group and the teacher share detailed discussions about items of interest, as in this example of Rare Yugioh Cards (all names are pseudonyms).

> **H:** *I've got my Yugioh cards and this new one is a rare one.*
>
> **B:** *Yeah, I've got that one.*
>
> **P:** *Yeah, me too.*
>
> **T:** *Hans, what makes a Yugioh card a rare Yugioh card?*
>
> **Several boys:** … *shiny and gold stuff and numbers and attack …*

Hans brought his Yugioh cards to share. Hans liked Yugioh cards and sometimes duelled with them. The teacher was surprised to hear of a 'rare' Yugioh card but the boys immediately spoke of features of a *rare* card. Together, they quickly made a chart:

How do you tell if a Yugioh card is rare?

Number of stars

Gold writing

<u>Sh</u>iny

If atk is a high number

attack

Hans said to write 'atk' for 'attack' and pointed to 'atk' on a card. He commented that 'atk' was 'a short way' to write attack and the teacher referred to it as 'an abbreviation'. 'Attack' was added beneath 'atk' to show others what it meant. As each point was written on the chart, the boys found examples on the cards. When the chart was finished, the boys read it together. Jed found 's h' in shiny and said, 'S h says sh, sh.' 'Sh' was underlined. At sharing time (p. 88) Hans and Beau read the chart to the class then displayed it for others to read.

Free writing in journals

Invite the children to freely draw and write about personal interests in their journals (p. 50). Enthusiastically encourage the children to *try* to write and draw. Welcome all efforts and celebrate big and small steps as individuals show progress. Sometimes, copy a page of journal writing and send it home with the child to share with the family.