



# Ready Reference Form

<b>Goal: Comprehension</b>		<b>Strategy: Retell the Story</b>
<b>Definition</b>	An accounting of a story's key points, told in sequence. A retelling usually includes characters, setting, problems, and solution or the main ideas of the text. It involves telling what is important in the story without telling too much.	
<b>Why Children Need This Strategy</b>	Retelling helps readers recall what is happening in the story, develop a sense of story structure, and become more accurate in monitoring their understanding. They can transfer this knowledge of story structure to their own story writing.	
<b>Secret to Success</b>	Think about what you are reading. Stop and reread if you can't remember. One way to teach students how to remember story sequence and character elements in the story is by using words such as <i>first, next, then, last, and finally</i> .	
<b>How We Teach It</b>	<p>Retelling is used on many beginning reading assessments, yet for years we never really taught students explicitly how to retell.</p> <p>We start by modeling this with our students during read-alouds. This technique is used by storytellers, and we borrowed the idea, giving our students a kinesthetic action to help them focus and remember the story.</p> <p>Introducing the Retell Rope, we hold up a small rope knotted eight times. Each knot represents one thought from the story. We also show the class a picture representation of the rope. We tell the class that when we come to each knot, it will remind us to state the next event from the story. We then read a story. After reading the story, we retell it using the rope and knots, stopping at each knot and telling an important fact from the story. Before our next story, we go to our visual of the rope and start labeling each knot to give students a structure for the retelling. Under each knot, we write the following words and explain them as we are writing:</p> <p><i>Characters, Setting, Problem, Event 1, Event 2–Next, Event 3–Then, Event 4–Finally, Ending—Circle Back to Solve Problem</i></p> <p>We then show the rope with both ends connecting to each other to demonstrate that the retelling ends by solving the problem in the beginning.</p> <p>Language we use:</p> <p>"Who were the main characters?"          "What problem did the main characters experience?"          "How was the problem solved?"          "How did the story end?"          "What happened first, next, and last?"</p>	
<b>Troubleshooting</b>	<p>Listening to a student retell a story is also an assessment strategy. We listen as students reveal what they think is most important in the story. This gives us a window into the students' thinking about story organization and their oral language development and vocabulary.</p> <p>We typically think of retelling a story as an oral activity. Keeping the retelling oral will support students who may have difficulty with this strategy, allowing them to focus on the story rather than their written response.</p>	