

Promoting Self-Regulatory Skills in Writing Using a Story-Toll*

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Introduction

This E-Book chapter describes a 10-session instructional program for elementary school children, aimed to promote general and self-regulation skills during writing composition. This instructional program is based on the Story-Tool “Yellow Trials and Tribulations”, which was initially proposed by Rosário, Núñez and González-Pienda (2007), and recently adapted to the field of writing. The intervention was carried out according to a structure in six stages, and the specific goals of the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) model by Harris and Graham (1996). The model has proven to be a highly effective instructional method in writing. This innovative program (Yellow Trials and Tribulations) is a story written for children under the age of 10. The book tells the story of the disappearance of the color Yellow from the Rainbow, as well as the adventures experienced by the other rainbow colors whilst searching for their missing colleague. Along the quest in search for Yellow, who should have not been left alone, the other colors of the rainbow meet new friends and learn useful self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies to overcome difficulties and challenges faced along the way. The different chapters in the narrative can be read, discussed, and worked through either in class or at home. The story provides opportunities to acquire, practice, and reflect on the use of the SRL strategies always embedded in the text with the reading-writing processes as main tools. The fact that the characters are colors and not children, although with a profile very similar to their own in the way they approach tasks, enables the students to discuss a number of situations that they may be acquainted with. Children are invited to examine what is happening in the plot of the story, and hopefully

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transfer this learning to their own life and to other learning tasks (i.e., writing compositions). The main goal of the SRL instructions is to help the students to master the three kinds of knowledge about learning strategies (i.e., declarative, procedural and conditional) (Núñez, Rosário, Vallejo, & González-Pianda, 2013), which are key elements for supporting students along the SRSD instruction.

Each lesson sequence is summarized in three steps: (i) reading and (ii) reflection about the story (approximately 30 minutes for both steps) and (iii) solving practical tasks (approximately 60 minutes). In the end of each lesson, students select as a take home message a sentence/quote from the chapter that was read.

Lesson 1

Purpose

The first lesson starts with the reading of the first three chapters of the Yellow Trials and Tribulations story. Students are expected to learn some features of the story, for example, the hood where the story takes place, the main characters and their characteristics, and to meet some of their friends. Students are invited to discuss and analyze what is happening in the adventure. In chapter 3, they met the learning strategy *planning* for the first time.

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Start the lesson by reading the chapters 1, 2 and 3 [The setting where the story takes place, Wood-Without-End, and the colors are presented. Readers learn that the Yellow ran away from the rainbow and all the colors decided to go on a quest for Yellow. On their journey, colors met the *River-of-Sobs and the Smiling-Eagle*, who introduced them the strategy of planning].

2 Reflection

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check whether students are following the narrative, and understanding the SRL message embedded in the text.

For example, discuss with children the following quotes from the book:

(...) You know, River-of-Sobs, we are the seven colors of the rainbow and we are all important. So no one should be left behind.

(...) I tell you that: there is a way, hipps, there is always a way, hipps. Who doesn't give up, will get there, hipps. You may go through difficult moments, but never forget this. Have a good trip, hipps. Hope you plan it well.

(...) Plan means thinking before doing anything. To think when, how and with which materials we will do what we want to do. For example, when I glide through the sky and I spot a delicious rabbit running through the trees, I start planning my catch: I pick a favorable air current and fly down with speed, capturing the prey with my talons. I never waste energy flying back and forth; this is the secret of my effectiveness as a hunter.

3 Practical Task

1. Based on the brief analysis of the psychological description of the rainbow colors presented in the first chapter, ask students to choose the rainbow color that best defines their current behavior. This task is called “Which color(s) am I feeling today?” (e.g., Green, looking for an adventure; Violet, strong and brave; Indigo, feeling lazy and tired). Students should also be invited to explain the reasons underpinning their choices. This task allows students to examine and reflect on their feelings, while making connections with the main characters.
2. At the beginning of the second chapter, the colors of the rainbow realize that their friend Yellow is missing and they start looking for him. Ask students some questions about what could have happened.
 - *Where would Yellow hide himself? Why?*
 - *If Yellow would get lost in your house where would he hide? Why?*
 - *When we get lost what shall we do? (give an example to help children)*
 - *Why do we want to hide ourselves sometimes?*
3. Recall the definition of “Planning” and ask students to give examples about planning when they are in:
 - *the classroom ...*
 - *the kitchen ...*
 - *the playground ...*
 - *their room ...*
 - *the bathroom ...*

4. Invite students to write a letter to the storyteller, uncle Jarbinhas, telling him about the daily life in the Wood-Without-End (the location where the story takes place). Call students' attention for the need of planning, and help them to think how to plan the task. Write on the board the following questions to help them plan the task:
 - *What will I write?*
 - *Which materials do I need to write a letter?*
 - *Where and when will I write?*
5. Define with your students a spot in the room for posting the *Yellow Trials and Tribulations* materials. Select from the story the slogans said by the characters (e.g., we are all important and no one should be left behind; who doesn't give up, will get there; with wings closed birds cannot learn how to fly) and discuss their meaning with children. Call students' attention to the slogans posted whenever needed (e.g., low motivation, procrastination behaviors when distracted).

Lesson 2

Purpose

The second session aims to develop students prior knowledge on composition, to discuss and explore the characteristics of a good story. General writing strategies (i.e., POW, *Pick my ideas, Organize my notes, Write and say more*, see section 3, number 3) will be presented and discussed with students. Through the reading of chapter 4, teachers may learn any negative attitudes towards writing, and, if needed, encourage students to value the role of effort and commitment in their learning process. Teachers may support students to change their negative thoughts into positive beliefs (e.g., *"I can do it, if I use the right strategy"*; *"Change I can't do it for I can still do it"*). Some quotations of the story tool may help on this task, for example that by the River-of-Sobs: *"To learn more and grow wiser depends mainly on what each one does"*.

Materials

- The story-tool *Yellow Trials and Tribulations*
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Before continuing reading the book, ask children to tell what they remember of the last three chapters and to define *planning* in their own words. Then read chapter 4 [The colors met the Bird-Teacher who was giving a class on *how-to-fly* for little bird-students. The Bird-Teacher told the little birds a story about a lazy deer who did not listened to the teacher advice's friends and hurt himself while competing with a grasshopper].

2 Reflection

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check whether students are following the narrative.

Discuss the following sentences:

The Bird-Teacher flew by, encouraging them [bird-students] and correcting their movements, but everyone knew that the committed help of the Bird-Teacher was not enough to help them learning. Each one had to make every effort and to work hard. To learn more and grow wiser depends mainly on what each one does.

With closed wings no one learns how to fly!

Ask children to build other synonymous sentences and discuss the practical implications of each one (e.g., with tied legs no one can run; with closed hands no one can write; with closed eyes ...).

3 Practical Task

1. In the story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations, some little birds were afraid of flying. Sometimes children and adults are also afraid of new situations. Discuss with students the questions below and encourage them to be creative with their answers.
 - What might children be afraid of and why? How can fears be erased?
 - How could we name the “rubbers of fear”? How would they work?
 - Can children be afraid at school? Of their teachers? Of doing something wrong in math? Of writing?
 - How do they face this fear?
 - What did the *Bird-Teacher* said about that?
2. Tell students that from today on, after reading the story-tool, they will be doing hands-on activities to learn a set of learning strategies, as well

- as writing strategies. These writing strategies are like “tricks” that good writers use when they want to write something. Ask them if they have an idea about which strategies or “tricks” you are talking about.
3. Using a chart paper or the board, write the mnemonic POW and explain what each letter stands for:
 - P* – Pick my ideas (i.e., decide what to write about);
 - O* – Organize my notes (i.e., organize the ideas for writing in a writing plan);
 - W* – Write and say more (i.e., change and improve the plan while writing).
 4. Good writers start planning by writing down notes or ideas about a subject. Explain that the mnemonic POW is a “trick” that good writers use when they want to plan a writing task.
 5. Ask students which elements define a good story, and what good writers write down when they plan a story.
 6. Introduce S-A-C [principal steps of a story: Setting (*s*), action (*A*) and conclusion (*c*)] as a mnemonic used by good writers to organize their notes/ideas (the O of POW). Answering the questions in each step will help students to become familiar with the S-A-C mnemonic.

TABLE 9.7

<i>s (setting & characters)</i>	<i>A (action)</i>	<i>c (conclusion & emotions)</i>
1. Where does the story take place?	4. What do the main characters do or want to do; what do other characters do? What happens then?	5. How does the story end?
2. When does the story take place?		6. How do the main characters feel? How do other characters feel? Add a moral if possible.
3. Who are the main characters? (Describe them).		

7. Write POW and S-A-C on the board or on a chart paper and practice by reviewing the meaning of those mnemonics. Help children to understand that “*Good writers use these writing tools, because it helps them to plan a good story without leaving any part behind*”.

8. Open the story-tool *Yellow Trials and Tribulations* on chapter 4 (Bird-Teacher tells a story about a lazy deer), and ask students to use the mnemonics to identify the parts of the story (practice using the six questions aligned with the three S-A-C steps).
9. Next, ask children to discuss the moral of the story of the lazy deer.
10. Announce students that in the next session they will be asked to tell what POW and S-A-C mean from memory.
11. For homework students are invited to write a short story (see the topic below). Help students to think about how to plan the story and write on the board the steps:
 - What will I write? “Don’t forget POW and S-A-C!”
 - Which materials will I need to write the story?
 - Where and when will I write it?

Topic—*Imagine you’re in the circus and the magician transforms you into an animal. Retell the adventures you lived as the animal you were turned into.*

Lesson 3

Purpose

The third session aims to revisit the general writing strategies (i.e., POW) and to discuss the SRL strategies (i.e., self-instructions, goal setting, self-assessment, and self-reinforcement) to be used before, during and after writing a story. Students will learn how to plan, self-monitor their performance and evaluate their stories using the story written for homework at session 2. Following the reading of the book, students will analyze the steps of the problem solving process and practice the implementation of those steps using specific tasks. Each step must be carefully explained.

Materials

- The story-tool *Yellow Trials and Tribulations*
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- Projector
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk
- Planning sheet
- Tree-goal chart

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Before continuing with the reading of the book, ask the students to summarize the last chapters. After this initial revision, you may start with the reading of

chapter 5 [Colors design a plan to search for Yellow and set proximal goals. The squirrel Sarabico helps on the task].

2 Reflection

Test to see if your students still remember the meaning of planning.

Yes, we have to think about what we will do, and about what we need to prepare before moving on to the next step, as the Smiling-Eagle taught us.

Discuss with students this sentence, encouraging the transfer to school and non-school tasks.

The goal was far and they had to divide it into small steps.—To reach the top of a tree, you need to start climbing, but climbing a branch at a time, that's what my grandfather taught us—said the squirrel Sarabico.

3 Practical Task

1. To help students practice divergent thinking and the process of generating alternatives, carry out the *Colors Backpack* task. This task consists of asking students to imagine that each color needs to prepare its backpack before initiating the search for Yellow. Each color can only carry 10 objects. Ask students if they can help the colors to prepare the backpack and foster divergent thinking. Make students look for different solutions and to justify their final decisions. Schematize and track on a chart paper or on the board the various suggestions and the class final proposal for the backpack task.
2. Write on a chart paper or on the board, the mnemonics POW and S-A-C. Test to see if students still remember their meaning.
3. Tell students that from this session on they will be asked to use a *planning sheet* (Appendix A) when writing a composition. This *planning sheet* will help them in planning their stories, including those assigned for homework. This *planning sheet* includes the six questions of the S-A-C steps, which will help students remembering and organizing their notes/ideas.
4. Pass out a *planning sheet* to each student and project it by using a projector. Discuss the meaning of POW by pointing out the *P*, the *O* and the *W* on the projected *planning sheet*. Emphasize that S-A-C is the 'trick' for the *O* of POW. Using a random story topic provide examples on how to fill in the boxes of the *planning sheet*.

5. Once students understand how to use the *planning sheet* and its potential contribute to promote the quality of compositions, deliver them the composition done for the last homework (homework 2) and tell them to read it again. Explain them that they are going to follow a *backwards strategy*: using the ideas of a composition already done (homework 2), to fill-in the boxes of a *planning sheet*. Then, ask them to complete the boxes of the *planning sheet* by writing the ideas of the composition. Check with them if any box is empty and reflect on that meaning (e.g., part of the story is missing; part of the story is incomplete).
6. After students' assessment of their own compositions, they will be asked to set a goal to overcome their writing difficulties. Support students on this task by explaining the importance of setting proximal goals to enhance the quality of writing. The squirrel Sarabico words, a character of the story-tool, may be of some help: "*The goal was far and they had to divide it into small steps.—To reach the top of a tree, you need to start climbing, but climbing a branch at a time, that's what my grandfather taught us.*"
7. Project on the wall the *tree-goal chart* (see Appendix B) to help students transfer this statement to their learning context. Students should set proximal and realistic goals for each branch of the tree starting from the lower branches. When a goal is reached a new goal should be set for the next branch of the tree.
8. Emphasize the idea that the last goal (number 5) is their long-term writing goal. In order to get there, they will have to climb a branch at a time, i.e., they will have to accomplish a number of proximal goals first.
9. For homework, the students must write a story (see topic) using the *planning sheet* provided.

Topic—*Imagine that you were on a boat school trip. Suddenly, the boat was caught in a big storm and shipwrecked. Write a story about your adventure as a castaway and your life in a desert island.*

10. Before leaving the classroom, the students should be informed that in the next session there will be a short quiz to test their understanding of the contents learned.

Lesson 4

Purpose

The purpose of the fourth session is to identify, define and apply the three phases of the self-regulatory process (i.e., plan, execute and evaluate) in the context of different daily and learning tasks. In this session, the general writing and SRL strategies should be addressed by recalling the mnemonics learned.

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- Projector
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk
- Planning sheet
- PLEE model (see 3.2)
- The PLEE chart (see 3.5)
- Tree-goal chart

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Chapter 6 [The colors met the General-Ant and the army of ants and learnt the SRL process through their experience].

—‘Before we charge, indeed before we do anything, we plan it thoroughly (PLEE). As our forefathers taught us, we first establish a plan for our maneuvers on the field. This means, we *think beforehand*. (...)—‘in order to plan, we have to decide what we need to know and what we need to do for everything to run smoothly. Afterwards, to avoid any problems, we allocate time for each task’. (...)—‘the second phase as follows is the execution phase (PLEE), meaning *to think during*. When we make a move, I coordinate the troops so that everything runs as planned’. (...) ‘Each of our maneuvers in the field involves the displacement of means and efforts. We have to carry plenty of supplies and food to our pantry as scheduled. We can’t afford to take the wrong road by mistake, or waste energy going around in circles, so I check our route all the time. In Ant Army jargon we call this operation ‘monitoring’. Which means confirming that all is going on as planned’—the colors were astonished with such wisdom.—‘Finally we reach the third and last phase: the Evaluation (PLEE). This means *to think after*. When we finish a drill, we have to assess if we accomplished what we were supposed to, if we carried enough food, if we run behind schedule, if we ended up too far from the food supplies ... The PLEE cycle is closed, do you see?’”

2 Reflection on the PLEE Model

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check for students' understanding of the narrative and the SRL message embedded in the text.

3 Practical Task

1. Write on a chart paper or on the board the mnemonics POW and S-A-C. Test to see if students still remember the meaning of the mnemonics. Reassure that students understand that S-A-C is the 'trick' for the O, and also that they take some time memorizing it, as they will be tested throughout every session.
2. Using a projector or a chart paper, each phase of the SRL process: *PLEE* (i.e., Planning, Execution and Evaluation) must be carefully explained and discussed in class (see Appendix C).
3. To help children learn the SRL contents discussed, different examples of the application of PLEE model should be provided (e.g., go on a trip, write a storyboard, do the homework, make a drawing, outlining a composition, solving a math problem).
4. Once students show a good understanding of the PLEE model, and of its relevance as a framework for coping with daily tasks, discuss with children the application of PLEE to plan a story.
5. Next, using the *PLEE chart*, ask students to recall the strategies learned to outline a story (e.g., POW and S-A-C), and to fill in the empty boxes with writing notes (see Appendix D). This chart was designed to help students organize the planning of their writing activities.
6. Emphasize the importance of monitoring (execution phase) while performing the task. It is important to stress the need for carefully control every step of the process, so that students' self-set goals can be accomplished.
7. Finally, address the process of the evaluation phase. Help students to analyze their outcomes, to check if their goals were reached and decide what changes, if any, are in need to be implemented for reaching the self-set goals.
8. The session ends with students writing down the topic for homework. Encourage students to recall information previously learned (e.g., typical errors, corrections of that errors) and the goal set (see *tree-goal chart*) when writing a new story.

Topic: *Describe the adventures of the gray pencil, who went out of its case and initiated an adventure around the world. He colored in gray everything he found on his way, without thinking about the consequences, until ...*

9. Students should be informed before leaving the classroom that in the next session there will be a short quiz to test their understanding of the contents learned.

Lesson 5

Purpose

The purpose of lesson five is to model the planning of the composition using a set of general (i.e., POW) and SRL strategies (i.e., self-instructions, goal setting, self-assessment and self-reinforcement) taught. Teachers modeling lessons (teachers think out loud how to plan a composition using the SRL strategies) will help students to learn how to apply these strategies and develop competencies, attitudes and beliefs, while writing independently. The modeling process is one of the most relevant motivational variables for the final product. Self-instruction, self-monitoring and self-reinforcement should match student's verbal and style language. In this lesson, following the reading of the book, the students will be faced with the importance of peer and collaborative work.

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- Projector
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk
- Planning sheet
- The PLEE chart
- Tree-goal chart
- Lined paper
- Quality checklist

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Make a short summary of the chapter read in the last session and start reading chapter 7 [The colors found shifting sands on their way. They built a plan, but while they were executing the movement to pass over the shifting sands, the Orange felt exposing himself to the danger of being swallowed up. All the colors helped on the task and eventually they solve the problem by saving Orange].

2 Reflection

After reading the sentence “—*Now we should continue walking, because the way is forward*”, ask the students if they remember a character stating anything similar.

The *River-of-Sobs* said: “—*Who doesn't give up, will get there, hipps.*”

“(…)—*When everyone helps, everything is much easier.*” Highlight the role of peer and collaborative work, by giving an example of something that they have achieved as a class.

“(…) *At the end of another adventure, although everyone was very tired, they were closer to find Yellow, which was the most important thing.*”—Point out the importance of reaching the self-set goals, by dividing them into small steps, as previously stated in chapter 5 by the squirrel Sarabico: “—*To reach the top of a tree, you need to start climbing, but climbing a branch at a time, that's what my grandfather taught us.*”

3 Practical Task

1. First, verify if the students still remember the meaning of the mnemonics PLEE, POW, S-A-C. Recall that S-A-C is the ‘trick’ for the O.
2. Tell students that you will show them how to apply the SRL strategies previously learned to a writing task. The students should be offered numerous opportunities to practice before doing it independently.
3. Based on the adventure previously read in this lesson, tell the students that the topic of the story to be modelled is: “*The Orange color was saved by his friends from the shifting sands ...*”. Explain them that you will be thinking out loud on how to plan the story, while they should be helping with creative ideas and details about the adventure. Try to match the students’ verbal and style language, and be sure that you lead the modeling process, which is composed by the following steps:

A) Using PLEE model

4. Say: “*What do I have to do before start planning my story? I have to think about the materials needed, the place where I will write the composition and the time needed to complete this task, so that everything runs smoothly. To do so, I will draw a new PLEE chart and I will write down everything I need before start planning my story.*”

B) Planning using POW and S-A-C

5. Tell your students to put everything on the top of the table (i.e., all the school materials needed) and get ready to start planning the story.
6. Say: “*Now that I have everything I need, I can start planning my story. Looking at my planning sheet, the first thing I need to do is to Pick my*

ideas (POW), which means to think about the characters and organize the sequence of the events in my mind. I need to be creative”.

7. Next, say: *“Then I have to use the ‘trick’ for O —organize my notes”.* Ask students what ‘trick’ it is (i.e., S-A-C). Tell them: *“I will fill in this planning sheet in order to organize my notes and write down the ideas regarding each part of the story. Writing down ideas doesn’t mean writing full sentences, but just notes.”* During this stage, the students should help you with ideas and answer the 6 questions of the *planning sheet*.

C) PLEE

8. While writing down the notes on the board, remember the importance of *monitoring*, by saying: *“While I write down my notes, I check often if everything is going on as planned”.*
9. After writing all the ideas, model the assessment of the written notes. Say: *“Now that I wrote all my notes/ideas, I have to evaluate and look to see if I have accomplished what I had in mind or if I still have to add more notes/ideas to my paper”.* Model adding more notes/ideas.

D) POW

10. After organizing all the notes, put the *planning sheet* aside and give students a blank lined paper, while saying: *“Now, that I have finished writing all my notes, I will go for the W in POW, which means that I will write down the story using the ideas previously planned”.*
11. Model the entire process of writing a story by coping statements. Start by asking: *“What do I have to write first? Looking at the planning sheet, I must not forget to write the title of my story. After that, I will write my story in full sentences, including, if needed, one or two additionally ideas and vocabulary words”.*
12. Continue with the modelling, recall the importance of monitoring by saying: *“While I am writing my story, I must check if I am including all the ideas previously written. I make a “checkmark” on the planning sheet after writing the idea. By doing this, I know that I am not forgetting anything. It is also important to assure that my story makes sense and that my audience will like and understand it”.*
13. At last, model good ending sentences and finish by saying: *“Good work, keep it up!”*

E) PLEE

14. Say: “*Before sharing the story with my teacher, I will evaluate it and assess if everything went on as planned. If not, I will think about what I should do to avoid it next time.*”
15. Familiarize the students with a *quality checklist* to assess their stories’ scoring presence (awarded with 1 point), in-depth elaboration (awarded with 2 points), and items not included in the story (0 points). Tell the students to count the number of points and to write it on the bottom of the checklist. By doing this, students may recognize some missing parts that must be included in their next compositions. Model the evaluation of the quality of the story.
16. Return to the topic “The Orange color was saved by his friends from the shifting sands ...” and encourage students to make their own plan for the story (i.e. thinking out loud about all the steps of planning the composition) and to write it as homework. Call their attention to the *tree-goal chart* and to the importance of using the *quality checklist* for evaluating the stories.
17. This session ends by reminding students that they will be asked, in the next session, about the meaning of the mnemonics. Alert them to memorize the mnemonics whenever they have time.

Lesson 6

Purpose

The aim of this lesson is to model assessing stories (e.g. narratives previously written by students or provided by the teacher as examples) using the general and the SRL strategies. Students will be asked to identify the S-A-C steps in a narrative that will be provided by the teacher. Students are welcome to discuss each part and to add more words or sentences if needed. Following the reading of the *Cassiopeia* tale told by the Orange color in chapter 8, students will also be asked to describe and to reflect on how the colors identified each of the three phases of the SRL process (i.e., plan, execute and evaluate) and on the SRL strategies (i.e., self-instructions, goal setting, self-assessment and self-reinforcement) applied.

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- School board or chart paper

- Color pens or colored chalk
- Student folder
- Story tales
- Quality checklist

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Before continuing with the reading of the book, ask students about the last chapter. Then you may start with the reading of chapter 8 [Orange told his friends the myth of Cassiopeia and of Perseus connecting the adventure with the SRL strategies].

2 Reflection

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check whether students are following the narrative.

Discuss with them the following sentence:

—Perseus had a goal, planned and followed a strategy. Maybe that is the reason why he was successful”.

3 Practical Task

1. On the basis of the chapter previously read, say: *“Perseus had a goal and followed a strategy. To achieve the goal of ..., which strategy shall I use?*
 - ... *having strong teeth (goal), I shall ...*
 - ... *finishing a puzzle (goal), I shall ...*
 - ... *making my homework (goal), I shall ...*
 - ... *being concentrated in class (goal), I shall ...*
 - ... *writing my story (goal), I shall ...*
 - ...”
2. Verify if the students still remember the meaning of the mnemonics PLEE, POW, S-A-C. Recall that S-A-C is the ‘trick’ for the O.
3. Tell students to put everything on the top of the table (i.e., all the school materials needed) including the *quality checklist* to self-assess the quality of their stories.
4. Model “out loud” by assessing the S-A-C parts in a story previously written by the students, or provide new ones (e.g., Peter and the Wolf). Discuss each part of the story and add more words/ideas or sentences if needed.
5. Encourage your students to write a folktale with a moral as homework. Ask them to assess the S-A-C parts of the folktale and to add more words or sentences if needed. They may ask their parents or grandparents for help.

6. This session ends by reminding the students that they will be asked about the meaning of the mnemonics in the next session.

Lesson 7

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to initiate collaborative (i.e., in students groups, within pairs of students or as a whole class activity) planning, writing and assessing of stories, using the general (i.e., POW) and SRL strategies (i.e., self-instructions, goal setting, self-assessment and self-reinforcement). Following the reading of the book chapters 9 and 10, the students will be asked to reflect about the characters' emotions and behaviors and to identify similar daily life situations. By doing this, the students will learn to foresee and reflect about the consequences of their behavior in short- and long-term.

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk
- Projector
- Planning sheet
- The PLEE chart
- Tree-goal chart
- Quality checklist

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Begin with a summary of the chapter read in the previous session and start reading chapters 9 and 10 (The colors watch a picnic where the problems that commonly affect children's behavior and emotions [e.g., disobedience, lying, sulkiness, fear] are personified while discussing the best ways to de-stress children and control their behavior).

2 Reflection

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check whether students are following the narrative.

Ask students to explain the following sentences/quotes:

(...) Even those problems that have deep roots can be defeated. It is possible to avoid problems taking care of our lives. This is not always easy to do, but it is always possible.

(...) *Perhaps the most important thing is that each one of us knows their own problems and fights against them.*

3 Practical Task

1. To help students to better understand the emotional and behavioral components discussed on chapters 9 and 10, carry out the “*The election of the Emperor-of-Problems*” task. This task consists of asking students to reflect about the emotions and behaviors presented in the story and to identify which ones are present in their daily life. To do so, students are invited to rank each “emotional and behavioral problem” (i.e., the Lying, the Laziness, the Sulkiness, the Disobedience and the Fear) using a 5-point likert scale, where 1 indicates “a little bit present” and 5 indicates “very much present”. The “emotional and behavioral problem” with the highest score will then be elected “*The Emperor-of-Problems*” of the class. Help students to reflect about their most common emotions and behaviors, to foresee their short- and long-term consequences and to propose alternative solutions, with the aim of *erasing* these “problems” from their lives.
2. Continue by saying: “*It’s time to write!*” Write on a chart paper, or on the board, the mnemonics PLEE, POW and S-A-C, while testing if the students still remember their meaning.
3. Tell students to put all their materials on top of the table, including a lined paper and a new planning sheet, and ask them to choose four completely random words (e.g., blank paper, rubber, pencil case, and bird). Write those words on the board and ask students to create a story title using those words. List some interesting titles and choose collaboratively the best one.
4. Afterwards, challenge students to plan collaboratively (i.e., using the *planning sheet*) and write a story based on the selected title. Let the students lead the entire process and support them when necessary. Write down the story on the board.
5. Recall lesson 5 and help students following the steps for planning (PLEE, POW and S-A-C), writing (POW), monitoring (PLEE) and assessing (PLEE and *quality checklist*) of their story.
6. In the end, project the *tree-goal chart* on the wall and ask students to provide an overall assessment of their story and to set collaboratively the goal for their next story.
7. Encourage your students to plan and write a new story as homework (see topic). Call their attention to the *tree-goal chart* and to the importance of using the *quality checklist* for evaluating their story.

Topic: *Because the lazy spring didn't want to wake up, the winter decided to stay for another three months. Tell what happened in your city.*

8. This session ends by reminding the students that they will be asked about the meaning of the mnemonics in the next session.

Lesson 8

Purpose

This lesson aims at strengthening the students' abilities for independent planning, writing and assessing of stories by using the general (i.e., POW) and the SRL strategies (i.e., self-instructions, goal setting, self-assessment and self-reinforcement). The challenge of this lesson is to wean the students off the planning sheet. During the reading of the book chapters 11 and 12, the students will be faced with the well-known tale of the '*Three Little Pigs*', which representatively illustrates the use of the PLEE phases, the importance of self-setting goals and making the effort to accomplish such goals.

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk
- PLEE chart
- Quality checklist
- Tree-goal chart
- Projector
- Lined paper

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Begin with a short summary of the chapters read in the previous session and start reading chapters 11 and 12 [In the Wood-Without-End the colors performed the story of *Three Little Pigs* for their friends. In the end, with the help of the Smiling-Eagle, the colors reflected on the SRL processes followed to perform the play].

2 Reflection

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check whether students are following the narrative.

Ask students to explain the following sentences/quotes:

“—Which traditional tale should we choose?”—asked the Red to his friends.
 ‘—The Three Little Pigs, the Three Little Pigs’—repeated the colors in chorus (...).”

Ask students why do they believe the characters of the story tool chose this tale? If students do not reply continue reading the story and tell them to look for the answer in the next pages.

“There is time for everything. First we work and then we play.”

“—Thank you, I enjoyed very much your act. The PLEE was very well portrayed in your play.”

Ask students what the Smiling-Eagle does mean with the last sentence, and also when the Three Little Pigs used the PLEE in the play?

3 Practical Task

1. Project the following *PLEE chart* on the wall. Discuss along with the students every topic.

TABLE 9.8 *Story of the Three Little Pigs*

<i>Plan</i>	<i>Execute</i>	<i>Evaluate</i>
	The first pig enjoyed more playing than working, and built a fragile house made of straw. Similarly, the second pig preferred singing, eating and playing than working, and built a fragile house made of wood.	Both houses did not resist to the wolf’s blow and fell apart. The two little pigs ran very scared to their brother house asking for help.
The third pig was very busy drawing plans for his house on the floor.	He laid bricks on the top of each other in a bed of mortar between them. He avoided the appeal of his brothers to play, focusing on this task.	His house was solid and wolf’s blow proof. (...) <i>“There is time for everything, first we work and then we play”.</i>

2. Discuss the SRL strategies presented in the story (e.g., goal setting, monitoring tasks, effort, fighting distractors, and self-assessment).
3. Then, ask students for the moral of the story.
4. Continue by saying: *"It's time to write!"* Write on the chart paper, or on the board, the mnemonics POW and S-A-C, while testing if the students still remember their meaning.
5. Tell students that from now on, they will plan their stories without the *planning sheet*.
6. Ask students to select four completely random words (e.g., house, frog, girl and Friday). Write those words on the board and ask students to create a story title using them. List some interesting titles and choose collaboratively the best one.
7. Similarly to the previous lesson, challenge your student to individually plan and write a story based on the selected title. Recall lesson 5 and help your students planning (PLEE, POW and S-A-C), writing (POW), monitoring (PLEE) and assessing (PLEE and *quality checklist*) their story.
8. When everyone is ready, tell the students to start planning their stories individually. After 5 minutes tell them to stop (they will be surprised!). Ask them to pass their planning paper to the student on their left and say: *"Now each one of you have a different story. Read it carefully and continue planning this story"*. After 5 minutes, tell them to stop and ask them to pass the planning paper to the student on their left. Repeat this procedure four or five times. The students will be faced with the need for constantly applying the general and SRL strategies learned.
9. Once this task is finished, tell the students to return the planning paper to the student who started it. Then, tell them to read it carefully, to assess it using the *quality checklist* and to add more words or sentences if needed.
10. Discuss the importance of working together by doing the *Musketeers task* *"One for all and all for one"*, which consists on giving examples of activities that they do together (e.g., at the playground; at home with their family; when solving a problem at school).
11. Finally, encourage your students to write the story planned during this session as homework. Call their attention to their *tree-goal chart* and to the importance of using the *quality checklist* for evaluating their story.
12. Announce students that they will be asked about the meaning of the mnemonics in the next session.

Lesson 9

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to continue strengthening the students' abilities for independent planning, writing and assessing of stories, using both general (i.e., POW) and SRL strategies (i.e., self-instructions, goal setting, self-assessment and self-reinforcement). Following the reading of the book chapters 13 and 14, the students will be firstly asked to discuss and reflect about how the characters applied the steps of the problem solving process, and secondly to put those steps into practice independently.

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- School board or chart paper
- Color pens or colored chalk
- Projector
- Lined paper
- Tree-goal chart
- PLEE chart
- Quality checklist

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Begin with a short summary of the chapters read in the previous session and start reading chapters 13 and 14 [The colors played a riddle game with the *Tree-Pirate* (a tree wearing eye patches to cover a missing part of the trunk) to get information about Yellow. The *Tree-Pirate* lost the game and the colors learned that the tree had lied. The information about Yellow was held on an old trunk protected by a hairy spider. The colors used the strategy by Perseus, tricked the spider and found the information].

2 Reflection

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check whether students are following the narrative.

Ask them to explain the following sentences/quotes:

(...) *why would the Tree-Pirate lie and now say the truth? How can we trust someone who lies and doesn't keep a promise?*

3 Practical Task

1. Project the following *PLEE chart* on the wall. Discuss along with the students every topic.

TABLE 9.9 *Story of the The Tree-Pirate*

<i>Plan</i>	<i>Execute</i>				<i>Evaluate</i>
Blue explains how to better understand the problem.	Blue draws a chart with the aim of solving the riddle.				Orange reflects about the drawing on the floor, solving the problem.
	<i>Plan</i> The colors defined the characteristics of the situation and tried to figure out how to distract the spider. Green recalled the story of Perseus fighting Medusa.	<i>Execute</i> With the sun's help, the colors confused the spider.	<i>Evaluate</i> The colors managed to get inside the trunk.		
	<i>Plan</i> Perseus reflected about how to distract the Medusa.	<i>Execute</i> Perseus used a shield as a mirror.	<i>Evaluate</i> Perseus managed to reach the Medusa without getting petrified.		

- After discussing the PLEE chart, start a game with your students by saying: *"Riddle, Riddle, Riddle"*. Tell students riddles and ask them to solve those riddles by applying the steps of the problem solving process. Tell them to: (i) firstly, make a drawing or a chart to help you solve the riddle; (ii) write down possible alternatives and check them; (iii) and finally, make a decision.

Some examples of riddles:

- What is higher than the king? (Crown)
 - I have a crown, but I'm not a king. I have roots, but I'm not a plant. I help my owner to eat, but when I have a hole I make him suffer. Who am I? (Tooth)
 - The bigger it gets, the less you see? (Darkness)
 - The more you take away, the bigger it gets? (Hole)
- Continue by saying: *"It's time to write!"* Write on the chart paper or on the board, the mnemonics PLEE, POW and S-A-C, while testing if the students still remember their meaning.
 - Ask students for four completely random words and tell them to individually create a story title with those words. Each student should then

independently plan, write and assess their story using the general and the SRL strategies learned. Call their attention to their *tree-goal chart* and to the importance of using the *quality checklist* for evaluating their story.

5. Recall the steps for planning (PLEE, POW and S-A-C), writing (POW), monitoring (PLEE) and assessing (PLEE and *quality checklist*) the story and provide extra individual help to struggling writers. Encourage students to create complete sentences and to use a diverse vocabulary. Moreover, remind your students that they may add more ideas and sentences to the story after assessing it.
6. Tell your students that they will be asked about the meaning of the mnemonics in the next session.
7. If you consider that your students are still struggling with writing, repeat this lesson, or similar ones, until you believe that they are capable of writing independently.

Lesson 10

Purpose

The intention of this last lesson is to review the general and SRL strategies taught throughout this instructional program and to offer students with the opportunity to reflect about their importance, not only in learning contexts (e.g., writing *good* compositions), but also in any daily life situations. Following the reading of the last book chapters (15, 16 and 17), students will be asked to reflect about how the characters had to take responsibility for their acts and about the importance of effort and commitment to accomplish their main goal (i.e., finding their friend Yellow).

Materials

- The story-tool Yellow Trials and Tribulations
- Pen or pencil
- Student folder
- Projector
- Color cardboard
- PLEE chart
- Tree-goal chart

Steps for the Teacher to Follow

1 Reading of the Book

Begin with a short summary of the chapters read in the previous session and start reading chapters 15, 16 and 17 [Blue and Sarabico heard a quiet and distant noise in the middle of the night, and left their friends in search of

the sound hopping it could be Yellow asking for help. Eventually they found a wounded lark. When the other colors woke up, they discovered that the two friends were missing; learned the story of Hansel and Gretel and went searching for Blue and Sarabico who marked their way with small torches in the ground. With the help of a grumbling owl the colors found Blue, Sarabico and met the lark. Finally the colors found Yellow hidden inside of an egg yolk.].

2 Reflection

Use small breaks throughout the reading of the story to check whether students are following the narrative.

Ask students to explain the following sentences/quotes:

(...) *when we achieve something difficult, the joy of the conquest is bigger*
(...)

(...) *I am not always paying attention. That's why sometimes the rehearsals seem to last forever.*

We all make mistakes. The most important thing is to be able to recognize our mistakes, to apologize and to try not to make the same mistake again.

3 Practical Task

1. Project the following *PLEE chart* on the wall. Discuss every topic with the students.

TABLE 9.10 *Story of the Blue and Sarabico went looking for Yellow*

<i>Plan</i>	<i>Execute</i>	<i>Evaluate</i>
	Blue and Sarabico followed a quiet and distant noise and found a wounded lark.	Blue and Sarabico reflected about the consequences of not planning before leaving.

TABLE 9.11 *The other colors went looking for Blue and Sarabico*

<i>Plan</i>			<i>Execute</i>	<i>Evaluate</i>
The colors reflected about the “ <i>Hansel and Gretel</i> ” story.			To mark the way, Blue and Sarabico	The colors were able to find Blue and Sarabico
<i>Plan</i>	<i>Execute</i>	<i>Evaluate</i>	left small torches on the ground.	and to return without any surprises. Blue and Sarabico reflected about the consequences of not planning and the importance of taking responsibility for their own mistakes.
To avoid getting lost in the woods, Hansel and Gretel thought about how to mark the way back home.	They left small stones along the way.	Following the trail of stones, Hansel and Gretel managed to get safely back home.		
The colors prepared the sticks and lighted them using a campfire.				

2. After discussing the *PLEE chart*, ask students to give examples of impulsive and inappropriate behaviors and ask them to reflect about the consequences of their acts (e.g., answering without thinking; hitting other students to play with their toy; go after something or someone without telling anyone and get lost).
3. At last, question students about “*The Yellow’s mystery*”, why it went away and how it got inside the egg [the colors found that Yellow was hidden in the egg yolk]. List some interesting suggestions and discuss them. Additionally, repeat this task by asking students for alternative endings for this story. Address the moral of the “*Yellow Trials and Tribulations*” story-tool by asking students what they have learned with this story.
4. Celebrate with your students the ending of the instructional program and tell them that they all did a great work. Go quickly through their written stories once again, and ask them to reflect about their achievements, namely about the accomplishment of their self-settled goals. Make

- a goal achievement party and congratulate students for their achievements.
5. The last activity consists on summarizing the contents taught along the instructional program. Divide your students into small groups and ask them to prepare a color cardboard or a PowerPoint presentation where they should present all the “tricks” and strategies learned. Recall your students that they should apply the PLEE phases to perform this task.

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Appendix A



Pick my ideas: think about the characters and organize the sequence of events

TITLE _____

S

When _____ _____ _____	Where _____ _____ _____	Who (describe them) _____ _____ _____
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	--

Organize

A

What do the main characters do or want to do _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

C

How does the story end _____ _____ _____	Add a moral _____ _____ _____
---	--

Write down your story

Appendix B

My goals

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



Appendix C

PLEE model



Appendix D

“We have to decide what we need to know and what we need to do for everything to run smoothly”

“To avoid any problems, we allocate time for each task”



“When we make a move, I coordinate the troops so that everything runs as planned ”

Monitoring “Which means confirming that all is going on as planned ”

2nd step of POW -
 Organize my notes by following the 7 questions chart
 ...



3rd Step of POW - Write and say more, upgrading the plan while writing
 ...

Keeping Records

“We can’t afford to take the wrong road by mistake, or waste energy going around in circles, so I check our route all the time”

Check the time planned for this specific task
 ...

“When we finish a drill, we have to assess if we accomplished what we were supposed to.”

Check if the plan includes all the elements in the 7 questions
Reconsider if more information is needed
 ...



“(...) if we run behind schedule ”

Reviewing Records

verify if the planning task ended as planned
otherwise, think what to do to avoid it next time
 ...