

State Studies

The Visitors' Center

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ABOUT STORYPATH

THE STORYPATH STRATEGY

Storypath offers both a structure for organizing the social studies curriculum and an instructional strategy for teaching. The structure is a familiar one: the story. The strategy is grounded in a belief that children learn best when they are active participants in their own learning, and places students' own efforts to understand at the center of the educational enterprise. Together, the structure and the teaching strategy ensure that students feel strongly motivated and have meaningful and memorable learning experiences.

Originally developed in Scotland during the 1960s, Storypath draws support from decades of experience with teachers and students. The approach has its roots in these beliefs about children and learning:

- The world is complex and presents many layers of information. Children know a good deal about how the world works and have a reservoir of knowledge that is often untapped in the classroom.
- When children build on that knowledge through activities such as questioning and researching, new understandings are acquired. Because children construct their own knowledge and understanding of their world, their learning is more meaningful and memorable.
- Problem solving is a natural and powerful human endeavor. When children are engaged in problem-solving, they take ownership for their learning.
- The story form integrates content and skills from many disciplines and provides a context for children to gain a deeper, more complex understanding of major concepts.

AN INQUIRY APPROACH

Questioning, by both teacher and students, is a key component of Storypath. Through the story structure and the discourse it creates, the teacher guides students in their search for meaning and understanding as they acquire new knowledge and skills. Your questions, and the discussions they engender, cause students to:

- ask their own questions and think critically about what they know;
- use their prior knowledge to make sense of new information;
- connect personally to important social studies concepts.

The story structure and inquiry guided by unit goals provide the framework for students to integrate skills and complex content through problems they encounter. As they do so, their understanding of important concepts is extended and key connections are made.

THE STORY STRUCTURE

For thousands of years, stories have helped us create order and make connections between events. Storypath's narrative structure helps students understand concepts that they often find difficult to comprehend in the traditional social studies curriculum.

Each Storypath unit centers on a unique and engaging story that provides a concrete context for understanding the social science content. This story may be based on actual historical events, as developed in *Struggle for Independence*. Or the story might instead be based on typical community or business structures, as developed in *Families in Their Neighborhoods* or in *Understanding the Marketplace*. From all of these structures, students develop a meaningful context for developing understanding of the topic.

Typical structure of a Storypath unit

CREATING THE SETTING

Students create the setting by completing a frieze or mural of the place.

CREATING THE CHARACTERS

Students create characters for the story whose roles they will play during subsequent episodes.

BUILDING CONTEXT

Students are involved in activities such as reading, writing, and research to stimulate them to think more deeply about the people and the place they have created.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Characters confront problems typical of those faced by people of that time and place.

CONCLUDING EVENT

Students plan and participate in an activity that brings closure to the story.

USING THE COMPONENTS

TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

Each Storypath unit includes a Teacher's Handbook, which is designed to be flexible and easy to use.

Episode Planning Guides

Each episode opens with an overview of the instructional plan and materials needed.

Teaching Notes

Each Handbook contains detailed support for instruction.

1

CREATING THE SETTING THE TOY COMPANY

INTRODUCING THE TOY COMPANY page 15

Students brainstorm about the various departments within a toy company.

Materials None

Grouping Whole class

Schedule Approximately 10 minutes

CREATING THE COMPANY FLOOR PLAN page 16

Students create a floor plan of their company, including all the various departments.

Materials Portfolio 1, *Floor Plan Guide*, p. 4
Portfolio 2, *Floor Plan Sketch*, p. 3
For the floor plan:

- bulletin board or wall space, about 6' wide x 4' high, covered with paper
- various colors of construction and tissue paper
- colored markers, crayons, glue or paste, masking tape, scissors, rulers
- optional graph paper
- other materials to add texture and interest, such as fabric, aluminum foil, yarn, wallpaper scraps, and so on

Grouping Small groups that will stay together throughout the unit

Schedule 1–2 hours divided over several days or in one session

CONCLUDING EPISODE 1 page 17

Students reflect on their experiences, create word banks, and decide on a name and a slogan for their toy company.

Materials Portfolio 3, *Word Bank*, p. 6
Portfolio 4, *Creating a Company Name and Slogan*, p. 7
Content Slide Sets 1 and 2
Markers and 3" x 5" index cards for class word bank
Pocket folders or sturdy paper to make folders (one per student)

Grouping Whole class and individually or in pairs

Schedule 1 hour

EPISODE OBJECTIVES

- **Knowledge** Use concepts of labor, specialization, and capital resources to explain how businesses function.
- **Skills** Organize, plan, and give direction while working together with group members.
- **Social Skills** Determine an appropriate course of action to complete the floor plan.
- **Critical Thinking** Apply ideas in determining a name and a slogan for the company.
- **Critical Thinking** Explain their own ideas, discuss them with others, apply their ideas to the floor plan.
- **Literacy** Use spoken, written, and visual language to develop understanding of companies in the marketplace.
- **History** Use the specialized vocabulary to understand and communicate concepts about the marketplace.

from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

1

INTRODUCING THE TOY COMPANY

Launch the unit

Explain to students that they will be creating a story about a toy company that will be designing new and very special toys for children. Discuss with students the elements of a story: setting (where and when the story takes place), characters (the people in the story), and plot (events that happen during the story). To give students a time frame for the story, estimate six to eight weeks and announce the date of the toy fair (Episode 6). Then explain there is much work to be done to prepare for the event. In this episode, students will create a floor plan of the company; this will be the place for their story. Explain that all companies use labor, people who do the jobs in the companies. Ask students what types of jobs might be found in a toy company. List their responses on the board. Some of their ideas might include:

- CEO (Chief Executive Officer) or boss
- secretary
- inventor
- accountant
- designer
- packager
- advertising specialist
- shipper
- salesperson
- materials purchaser

Using their suggestions for jobs, help students organize the jobs into departments, such as design, production, advertising, sales, business/accounting, and shipping. Ask students where these departments might be located in the company. Lead them to list locations such as offices, a laboratory, a manufacturing plant, a design studio, and so on. As students discuss the various departments, lead them to understand that the company has specific departments because the many different jobs must be organized to make the company successful. This differentiation is called *specialization*.

Describe the setting

After students determine what departments will be included in their company, prompt them to think about where the departments will be located and what they will be like. You might use questions such as the following to start the discussion. After the questions to apply to your class's particular departments.

- 1. What employees would work in the lab? In the office? In manufacturing? (Guide students to separate the job into departments. For example, designers might work in the lab, while accountants and customer service representatives would most likely work in the office.)
- 2. Would the company need capital resources? (Use skill probably need to explain to students that capital resources are tools, equipment, machines, and other goods used to create products.)
- 3. Business uses money to invest in equipment. What kinds of equipment would be found in each department in the company? (Encourage

from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

Teaching Masters

Masters provide nonfiction content, writing models, or other information specific to the unit's content. These Masters can be copied for students, displayed in the classroom, or made into transparencies, depending on your teaching needs.

Assessment

Each Handbook contains strategies for assessing learning throughout the unit, as well as unit questions for review and synthesis activities.

EPISODE 1

PORTFOLIO 1

DATE _____

FLOOR PLAN GUIDE

Work in your group to make your department for the floor plan.

1. What department will your group create? _____
2. List your ideas. In the first column, list each feature your department will include. In the second column, write why this feature is important to the department.

Department Features	Importance to Department

3. On the next page, make a sketch of where each feature will be located on your floor plan. After you make your sketch, discuss with your group why features are located in certain places on the floor plan.
4. Decide on the best ideas and make your department's floor plan. Make sure everyone has the opportunity to share. Decide who will do each task on the floor plan.
5. Assess your work. Put a checkmark next to the things you did.
 - I offered ideas about the floor plan.
 - I listened to other people's ideas.
 - I asked questions when I didn't understand something.
 - I disagreed in a polite way.
 - I made positive comments to my group members.
 - I was willing to change my ideas to help the group.

from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

EPISODE 1

PORTFOLIO 1

DATE _____

SYNTHESIS ACTIVITIES

The following synthesis activities offer your students the opportunity to demonstrate what they've learned in this unit. These activities are also powerful assessment tools for you because they're multidimensional. They allow you to assess students on a variety of subjects and at a number of different levels. Each synthesis activity is followed by Criteria for Assessment. Unit Objectives addressed by each activity are on pages 52–54 of this Handbook.

1. PORTFOLIO RESPONSE

Activity

Have students review their Portfolios and identify at least four items that represent important ideas or skills learned. After students have selected the items, they should write at least one paragraph in response to the following questions.

- List three important ideas from your Portfolio. Why are these ideas important?
- What problems were encountered by or in the toy company? How did the company respond to these problems?
- What have you learned about running a business?
- What have you learned about designing new products?
- What skills do you believe improved as a result of this unit? Explain why.

Criteria for Assessment

Learning objectives were met if

- the portfolio demonstrates three important ideas about the economics of producing and marketing a toy and running a business;
- reflections are thoughtful, well organized, and clearly communicated;
- appropriate writing conventions are used.

2. INTERVIEW AN EMPLOYEE IN THE TOY INDUSTRY

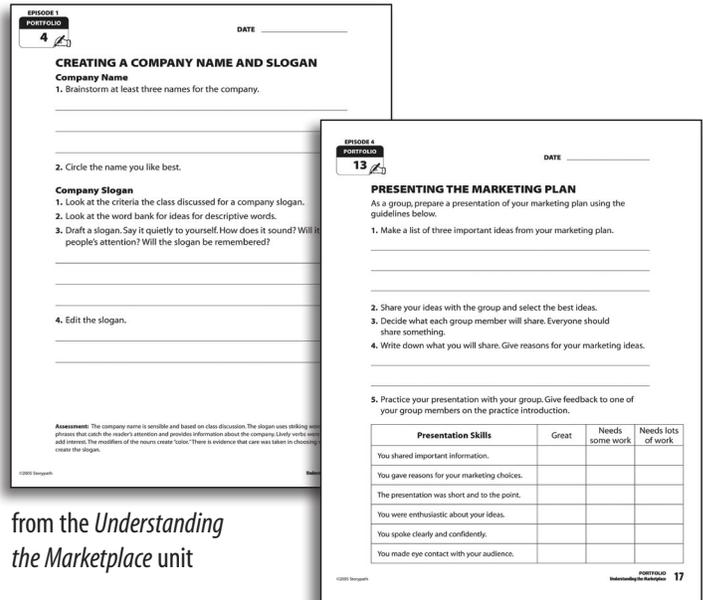
Activity

Have students conduct an interview with an employee of a toy company, manufacturer, or retailer through a field trip or a telephone conversation. In advance, students should write at least five questions that show their understanding of how a toy company works. After the interview, have students write a one-page report about the interview and what they learned from the person interviewed.

from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

STUDENT PORTFOLIO

Students use the Portfolio to read, write, conduct research, and complete other activities crucial to the specific Storypath unit. The Portfolio helps students manage their work throughout the unit. And when completed, the Portfolio becomes an authentic assessment tool.



from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

CONTENT SLIDE SETS

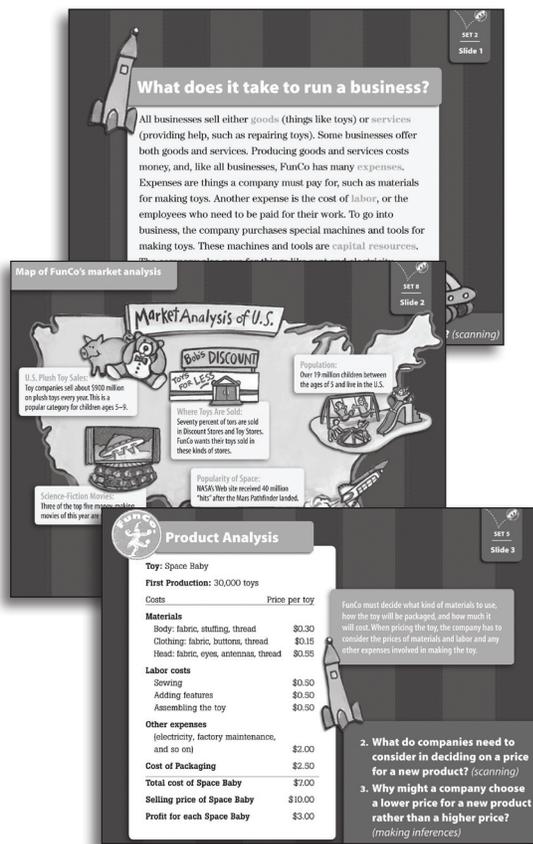
Each unit includes sets of Content Slides that offer flexibility in how they are used to support student learning. The number of sets varies from unit to unit. The slides in each set provide focused non-fiction content and can be used for independent, paired, or small group reading.

Students use the slides to build context and deepen their understanding of the unit's content. You can use the slides as most appropriate to your situation. For those with laptops, display the appropriate slides for student reading and discussion or reproduce the slides as needed for each episode for individuals, pairs or small groups.

In the overview of each episode, slide sets needed are listed and specific suggestions are provided for how to use the slides as you proceed through the episode. Best practice is for the slide to be available to the students either on a laptop in front of them or in hard copy. Then the teacher can use a large screen to display and support discussion related to the slide.

A "reading tips" chart in PDF format (located on the CD) provides quick reminders of key reading strategies. Reproduce "reading tips" for each student or group.

Note that the slides are conveniently available in a printable format on the CD.



from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

LITERACY AND STORYPATH

With the Storypath strategy, students deepen their understanding of major social studies concepts. Storypath provides literacy support to help students access and make sense of the social studies content. Students apply literacy skills such as reading comprehension, prewriting and writing skills, speaking and listening skills, and vocabulary development.

Reading

Content Slide Sets present opportunities for students to engage in focused content reading. Students can read the slides independently or with a partner and listen as the partner reads.

**SPACE BABY
ROUGH CONTROL DWG
BYL**

HEAD
PALE GREEN FABRIC
BLACK BUTTON
EMBROIDERED MOUTH

PLASTIC ANTENNA (2)

DOUBLE ROW STITCHING

MAIN BODY
GREY FABRIC
MAROON FABRIC
3/8" GOLD BUTTONS (4)

TRIPLE ROW STITCHING

HANDS & FEET
PALE GREEN FABRIC

BOOT
BLACK & WHITE SATIN STRIPE

APPROX. 8"

APPROX. 8"

**SET 5
Slide 2**

This design drawing shows measurements for all of the Space Baby's parts. The Health and Safety Department will review the designs to make sure that no materials or parts are toxic, or dangerous, or too small for young children.

1. What kinds of details does a design drawing for a new toy need to include? (understanding visuals)

from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

Comprehension

Questions in each Content Slide Set help students focus on important content. Questions are labeled with suggested reading strategies.

Visual Literacy

Each unit offers numerous opportunities to evaluate and respond to visuals such as photographs, maps, diagrams, and illustrations.

Reading Tips

For easy reference, Reading Tips for using the reading strategies are included on the CD.

Understanding the Marketplace: The Toy Company		
Reading Tips		
Reading Strategy	When do I use the strategy?	How do I use it?
Main idea/ supporting details	Use it to find the big idea, and then identify the facts and details that support it.	1. Think about what you want to know and what you already know. 2. Read the text and think: What is the "big idea" here? 3. Look for information that is important to the big idea. Some facts are interesting but not important. 4. The details you find may cause you to change your big idea.
Comparing and contrasting	Use it to find information that tells you how two or more ideas are alike and different.	1. Think about what you want to know. 2. Choose two events or ideas to compare and contrast. 3. List important information about one event or idea. 4. For each item on the list, look for information about how the other idea is the same or different. 5. Look for clue words such as "similarly," "also," and "however."
Making inferences	Use it to understand information not stated directly in the text or to "read between the lines."	1. Think about what you want to know and what you already know. 2. Look for clues in the text that give you new information. 3. Compare this new information with what you already know to figure out what the author is saying.
Connecting	Use it to understand new information by connecting it with what you already know.	1. Think about what new information you want to remember. 2. Think about what you already know. 3. Look for connections between the new information and what you already know from experience or reading. 4. These connections will help you remember the new information.
Scanning	Use it to quickly find the specific information you need.	1. Think about what information you need to find. 2. Move your eyes over the page looking for subheadings, italicized or bold print words, and key ideas. 3. When you find what you're looking for, slow down and read carefully.
Understanding visuals	Use it to find information presented in visual forms such as maps, graphs, photographs, diagrams, and timelines.	1. Think about what you want to know and what you already know. 2. Look for information that explains the visual. For example, look at labels, captions, arrows, or map keys. 3. Search for the specific information you want. 4. Put the information into words to help you understand the visual.

from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

ASSESSMENT

Each Storypath unit offers a range of options for assessing student learning.

Portfolio Assessment

The Student Portfolio provides ongoing assessment of student understanding of unit objectives through writing and other response activities.

During Each Episode

Assessment suggestions are included throughout the Teacher's Handbook and align with the Student Portfolio. Complex thinking and problem-solving abilities are assessed as students role-play and respond to critical events throughout the unit.

EPISODE 3
7 PORTFOLIO

DATE _____

ORGANIZATION CHART

Use the chart below to keep track of the tasks your group completes while you design and create your toy.

Task	Group Member(s) Responsible	Scheduled Date	Date Completed
Brainstorm toy ideas.			
Choose the best idea.			
Create a sketch of the idea.			
Meet with other group(s) for feedback.			
Construct prototype.			
Prepare and practice presentation.			
Give presentation.			
Redesign, if necessary.			

Assessment: The chart is completed including the scheduled date.

10 PORTFOLIO
 Understanding the Marketplace

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from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit

DESIGNING AND CREATING TOYS

ELL Sketch the designs
 Before students create prototypes of toys, they will need to carefully plan them in advance. Structure the designing activity based on the needs of your students. The following is one way you might organize their work. Portfolio page 10, "Organization Chart," can help students keep track of the various steps in the process.

Step 1 Have students assemble in their work groups.

Step 2 Before starting work, students could discuss skills for working in groups. Use the Social Skills Teaching Master on TH page 45. Discuss the skills and provide specific examples from the classroom setting.

- Be positive and respectful toward other group members.
- Be a good listener.
- Encourage others to participate.
- Do your fair share of the work.
- Work to resolve conflicts in the group.

Step 3 Students can work in their groups to brainstorm ideas for toys. Each group should compile a list, sketch ideas on Portfolio page 11, and then come to an agreement as to the idea the members like best. Remind them to use the criteria they outlined to help them select their best idea.

Step 4 After each group has selected its best idea, group members should make a detailed sketch of the toy on a large sheet of graph paper.

Step 5 Once the sketches have been finished, groups should conduct market research to receive feedback on their designs. You might model some questions, such as "What materials will be used to make this toy? How expensive will they be? These parts look like they could come off—how will you make this safer for young children?" On Portfolio page 12, have each group list questions to ask about the prototypes to help guide their inquiry.

ELL Make the toys
 Once groups have completed their designs and received feedback from classmates, each group should make a prototype of its toy. Refer students to Content Slide Sets 4 and 5 to help them understand the process of designing a toy and creating a prototype. The more variety in art and craft materials you provide, the more interesting the prototypes will be. Students may find that they will need to modify their toys once the construction process begins. As much as possible, let students solve their own construction problems. This will help them feel more ownership over their prototypes while also teaching them elements of design and construction.

TEACHING MASTER
 TS

ALTERNATIVE NOTE
The Learning Process
 Social skills are developed as students work through the construction process. Additionally, the construction process develops planning and organizational skills, "trial and error," communication skills, and problem solving.

CONNECT
Technology
 If your classroom has the computer technology, encourage students to use design programs to plan their prototypes.

CONNECT
Science and Visual Arts
 • The prototypes will give students the chance to practice an important skill: the construction of models.
 • Suggest that students create charts showing each step in the construction process of their prototypes.

7 PORTFOLIO

8 PORTFOLIO

9 PORTFOLIO

4 CONTENT SLIDE SETS
 5

26 EPISODE 3
 Understanding the Marketplace

from the *Understanding the Marketplace* unit