

NOTES

Student Support Programme

Grade 8- English Language

Unit 5: Lesson 2

Story-telling Techniques

These notes will help you to read a story aloud.

Tip one: Rising intonation at the end of a question with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer

Intonation describes how the **voice rises** and **falls while speaking**. The question below has a ‘yes’ and ‘no’ answer?

- *Do you know why the bat only comes out at night?*

We use **a rising intonation at the end of a question** when we expect the audience to answer with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

All the questions below have either a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer, and they end with a **rising intonation**:

- *Are you hungry?*
- *Can we go out?*
- *Do you live here?*

Tip two: Varying the pace

Pace describes the speed that one speaks. Reading your story too slowly will make your audience bored. Reading the story at a very fast pace will make it hard for the audience to understand. When reading a story, some parts can be narrated slowly, if you want to create suspense, like for the sentence below:

- *At home, the rat asked his wife to boil some water to make a soup.*

When there is no need to create suspense, you read at a moderate pace. Some parts can be narrated quickly to release the suspense that has been created.

For example, this is how the following sentence can be read to create and release suspense.

- *(READ MODERATELY) When his wife was not looking, (READ QUICKLY) he*

jumped into the boiling water and was soon ... (SLOWLY) dead!

A storyteller varies the pace to create the atmosphere of the story. He tells a story:

- sometimes at a fast pace,
- sometimes at a slow pace,
- and most of the time at a moderate pace.

The storyteller **varies the pace** to:

- prevent the audience from being bored,
- allow the audience to understand the story,
- and to create and release suspense.

Tip three: Using sentence stress appropriately

Sentence stress is about reading specific words more loudly for emphasis. For example, if we read the words in bold with more emphasis, it means these words are more important than the others. The storyteller puts the stress on words like 'king', 'prisoner', 'bat', 'everyone' because these words are important to convey the meaning of the story and the feelings as well.

- *The **king** wanted the bat as **prisoner**. The **bat** flew away into the bush and hid himself. All day long **everyone** tried to catch him and he could not go out.*

Because of stress on certain words, we feel the tension in the story as the king wants the bat as prisoner and everybody is looking for him.