



# Narrative Story Retell Database

Database	Context (Subgroup)	Age Range	Grade in School	# Samples	Location	Special Coding
Narrative Story Retell	Nar (FWAY)	4;4 – 7;5	P, K, 1	145	WI & CA	SI, NSS
	Nar (PGHW)	7;0 – 8;11	2	101		
	Nar (APNF)	7;11 – 9;11	3	53		
	Nar (DDS)	9;3 – 12;8	4, 5, 6	201		

## Participants

The Narrative Story Retell database contains samples from typically developing English-fluent students located in Wisconsin and California. Age, gender, and grade data are available for all participants.

- *Wisconsin* participants were drawn from the Madison Metropolitan School System and several Milwaukee area school districts (Brown Deer, Fox Point-Bayside, Shorewood, Waukesha, Wauwatosa, and West Allis-West Milwaukee). There are students from a variety of economic backgrounds and ability levels. "Typically developing" was determined by normal progress in school and absence of special education services. Economic background was based on eligibility in the free lunch program. Ability level was determined by teacher ratings.
- *California* participants were drawn from two public school districts in San Diego County; San Diego City Schools and Cajon Valley School District. The participants were described as typically developing and of average performance in the classroom as determined by performance on standardized classroom assessments, teacher report, and absence of special education services. The participants reflected the county's demographics and were balanced by race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status was determined by mother's highest level of education.

## Elicitation Protocol

There are different ways to provide the story model and record the target speaker's story. The speaker may be seated next to you or you may be eliciting the sample virtually. You may be using SALT's *Online Story Elicitation* program (available as an annual subscription on the SALT web site), or providing the directions and story model yourself. Both methods should result in similar outcomes (Manning, et al., 2020, Brennan, et al., 2004). All samples should be recorded for later transcription.

### 1. Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grade 1

This is a story retell task using the following book:  
FWAY: *Frog, Where Are You?* (Mayer, 1969)

- Option 1 (In-person or virtual session):  
Use SALT's *Online Story Elicitation – Monolingual English / English Fluent* program. Select the FWAY story and follow the prompts. If this is an in-person session, use the recorder built into the program. If eliciting the sample virtually, use an alternate recorder, e.g., your phone, digital recorder, or the recorder built into the software you are using to host the virtual meeting, e.g., Zoom.

- **Option 2 (In-person session):**

Have the speaker seated next to you with the book in front of you. Provide the story model while looking at the pictures in the book. There are two ways to present the story model. Both methods should result in similar outcomes (Kim, 2016).

1. Play a recording of the FWAY story which can be downloaded from the SALT web site at [www.saltsoftware.com/resources/elicaids/frogstories/](http://www.saltsoftware.com/resources/elicaids/frogstories/). The database samples were elicited using a similar recording which comes with *The Strong Narrative Assessment Procedure* (Strong, 1998).

*Say “I would like to find out how you tell stories. First, we are going to listen to the story while we follow along in the book. When we have finished listening to the story, it will be your turn to tell the story using the same book.”* Play the audio. Turn each page while the speaker listens. Make sure the speaker is looking at the book.

2. Tell the story to the speaker, loosely following the script provided (*see page 4*). You do not need to memorize the story script, just become familiar enough with it to tell the story.

*Say “I would like to find out how you tell stories. First, I am going to tell you a story while we follow along in the book. When I have finished telling you the story, it will be your turn to tell the story using the same book.”* Tell the story, turning each page while the speaker listens. Make sure the speaker is looking at the book.

After telling the story or playing the audio, prepare the recorder and say *“Now I would like you to use your own words to tell the story.”*

Turn the book to the first page with pictures and start recording. Say *“Do the best that you can. Now you tell me the story.”*

## 2. Grades 2 and 3

This is a story retell task using the following books:

PGHW: *Pookins Gets Her Way* (Lester, 1987) for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

APNF: *A Porcupine Named Fluffy* (Lester, 1986) for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

- **Option 1 (In-person or virtual session):**

Use SALT’s *Online Story Elicitation – Monolingual English / English Fluent* program. Select the PGHW (for 2<sup>nd</sup> graders) or APNF (for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders) story and follow the prompts. If this is in an in-person session, use the recorder built into the program. If eliciting the sample virtually, use an alternate recorder e.g., your phone, digital recorder, or the recorder built into the software you are using to host the virtual meeting, e.g., Zoom.

- **Option 2 (In-person session):**

Use 2 copies of the book, one with the text covered. Have the speaker seated next to you with the book (text visible) in front of you.

Show the book to the speaker, and say *“I would like to find out how you tell stories. First, I will read this story to you while you follow along. Then I’m going to ask you to tell the story using your own words.”* Read the story. Make sure the speaker is looking at the book.

After reading the story, prepare the recorder. Give the speaker the copy of the book with the text covered and say, *“Now I would like you to tell the story. Notice that the words are covered up. That’s because I want you to use your own words to tell the story.”*

Turn to the first page with pictures and start recording. Say *“Do the best that you can. Now you tell me the story.”*

### 3. Grades 4, 5, and 6

This is a story retell task using the following book:

DDS: *Doctor De Soto* (Steig, 1982)

SALT’s *Online Story Elicitation* program does not include the DDS story. These directions assume an in-person session.

Use 2 copies of the book, one with the text covered. Have the speaker seated next to you with the book (text visible) in front of you. Show the book to the speaker, and say *“I would like to find out how you tell stories. First, I will read this story to you while you follow along. Then I’m going to ask you to tell the story using your own words.”* Read the story. Make sure the speaker is looking at the book.

After reading the story, prepare the recorder. Give the speaker the copy of the book with the text covered and say, *“Now I would like you to tell the story. Notice that the words are covered up. That’s because I want you to use your own words to tell the story.”*

Turn to the first page with pictures and start recording. Say *“Do the best that you can. Now you tell me the story.”*

### Examiner’s role during the retell

In an in-person session, move slightly away from the student, turning so that eye contact is easy. The speaker should be in charge of page turning during the retell but provide assistance if the speaker has trouble properly turning pages. Moving away from the speaker promotes language and minimizes pointing.

Use minimal prompts as necessary. If the speaker is unable to start, use the prompt *“One day...”*. If the speaker stops talking before the story is finished, say, *“Tell me more,” “Keep going,” “You are doing a great job,” “And then...”*. You may also use nonverbal cues such as head nodding and smiling to promote continued talking. Using overly-specific questions or providing too much information compromises the process of capturing the speaker’s true language and ability level. Open-ended prompts *do not* provide answers or vocabulary. They *do* encourage the speaker to try, or the speaker know it is ok to move on if needed. Avoid asking the “wh” questions, who?, what?, when?, where? as these often lead to obvious and limited responses/answers.

### Optional Comprehension Questions

Following the speaker’s retell, you have the option of evaluating his/her understanding of the story by asking a series of comprehension questions. For details, refer to the SALT web site at [www.saltsoftware.com/resources/elicaids](http://www.saltsoftware.com/resources/elicaids). Please note that the SALT Narrative Story Retell database samples were not scored for comprehension.

## Database Subgroups

When selecting language samples from this database, by default, the comparison is restricted to samples from the specific story listed in the transcript header. You can specify one of the following subgroups:

- FWAY = *Frog, Where Are You?*
- PGHW = *Pookins Gets Her Way*
- APNF = *A Porcupine Named Fluffy*
- DDS = *Doctor De Soto*

## Transcription Notes

Utterances were segmented into Communication Units (C-units). The transcripts begin and end with the student's first and last utterance, respectively. All transcripts were timed and pauses, within and between utterances, of two or more seconds in length, were marked.

## Coding Notes

- [EO:word] marks overgeneralization error
- [EP:word] marks pronoun error
- [EW] marks an extraneous or unnecessary word in the utterance that, if omitted, would make the utterance syntactically correct, e.g., C And he shout/ed and[EW] to the frog.
- [EW:word] marks other word-level error
- [EU] marks utterance-level error (*also marks utterances with 3 or more errors*)
- [FP] marks filled pause words such as *like*, e.g., *You (like[FP]) get six card/s.*

## Subordination Index (SI) and Narrative Scoring Scheme (NSS) Coding

SI is a measure of syntactic complexity which produces a ratio of the total number of clauses (main and subordinate clauses) to the number of C-units. A clause, whether it is main or subordinate, is a statement containing both a subject and a predicate. Grammatically, a subject is a noun phrase and a predicate is a verb phrase. Main clauses can stand by themselves. Subordinate clauses depend on the main clause to make sense. They are embedded within an utterance as noun, adjective or adverbial clauses.

NSS is an assessment tool developed to create a more objective narrative structure scoring system. It is based upon early work on story grammar analysis by Stein and Glenn, 1979. This scoring procedure combines many of the abstract categories of Story Grammar, adding features of cohesion, connecting events, rationale for characters' behavior, and referencing. Each of the scoring categories has specific explicit examples to establish scoring criteria, reducing the abstractness of the story grammar categories.

## Using SALT to Compare Samples to the Narrative Story Retell Database

Use SALT's Database menu to compare your sample with age or grade-matched samples selected from the Narrative Story Retell database. SALT looks at the "+ Context" and "+ Subgroup" plus lines in your transcript to determine which database to pre-select. To pre-select the Narrative Story Retell database,

include the following plus lines in your transcript, where the Context is “Nar” and the Subgroup is the abbreviation specific to each story retell (see database subgroups):

+ Context: Nar

+ Subgroup: FWAY (or PGHW, or APNF, or DDS)

Although you can type these plus lines into your transcript, the easiest way is to select the correct sampling context (Nar) and subgroup corresponding to the specific story (FWAY/PGHW/APNF/DDS) when first creating a new transcript using the New Transcript Header information dialogue box.

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## Story Script for *Frog, Where Are You?* by Mercer Mayer, 1969.

Page	Script
1	There once was a boy who had a dog and a pet frog. He kept the frog in a large jar in his bedroom.
2 – 3	One night while he and his dog were sleeping, the frog climbed out of the jar. He jumped out of an open window. When the boy and the dog woke up the next morning, they saw that the jar was empty.
4 – 5	The boy looked everywhere for the frog. The dog looked for the frog too. When the dog tried to look in the jar, he got his head stuck. The boy called out the open window, “Frog, where are you?” The dog leaned out the window with the jar still stuck on his head.
6 – 7	The jar was so heavy that the dog fell out of the window headfirst! The boy picked up the dog to make sure he was ok. The dog wasn’t hurt but the jar was smashed.
8 - 9	The boy and the dog looked outside for the frog. The boy called for the frog.
10 – 11	He called down a hole in the ground while the dog barked at some bees in a beehive. A gopher popped out of the hole and bit the boy right on his nose. Meanwhile, the dog was still bothering the bees, jumping up on the tree and barking at them.
12 – 13	The beehive fell down and all of the bees flew out. The bees were angry at the dog for ruining their home. The boy wasn’t paying any attention to the dog. He had noticed a large hole in a tree. So he climbed up the tree and called down the hole.
14 – 15	All of a sudden an owl swooped out of the hole and knocked the boy to the ground. The dog ran past the boy as fast as he could because the bees were chasing him.
16 – 17	The owl chased the boy all the way to a large rock. The boy climbed up on the rock and called again for his frog. He held onto some branches so he wouldn’t fall.
18 – 19	But the branches weren’t really branches! They were deer antlers. The deer picked up the boy on his head. The deer started running with the boy still on his head. The dog ran along too. They were getting close to a cliff.
20 - 21	The deer stopped suddenly and the boy and the dog fell over the edge of the cliff.
22 – 23	There was a pond below the cliff. They landed with a splash right on top of one another. They heard a familiar sound.
24 – 25	The boy told the dog to be very quiet. They crept up and looked behind a big log.
26 – 27	There they found the boy’s pet frog. He had a mother frog with him. They had some baby frogs and one of them jumped toward the boy.
28 - 29	The baby frog liked the boy and wanted to be his new pet. The boy and the dog were happy to have a new pet frog to take home. As they walked away the boy waved and said “goodbye” to his old frog and his family.