**Reading and retell**

This is a multi-step activity. Commercially produced graded readers such as *Oxford Bookworms* or *Penguin ESL Readers* are ideal.

1. Students read a story at their reading level. Each student should read a different story. Or, the class should at least read 2-3 different stories.
2. Students complete the reading and retell (RR) template appropriate to their level of oral production (which is usually lower than their reading comprehension).
3. Students practice reading the templates in order to remember what the story was about.
4. Students select 1-3 pictures from the story to help retell the story.
5. Students find a partner who has read a different story.
6. Student A tells the story to Student B using pictures from the story and following the template. Student A should NOT read the template.
7. Student B listens to the story and then completes the checklist/feedback sheet.
8. Change roles.
9. This process repeats regularly (1-2 times a week, if possible) over several years until students complete all levels. Let students decide when they are ready to progress to another level.
Template for a RETELL (LEVEL 1)

(Select only 1-2 illustrations to help you retell the story)

This book/story is called _______________. *(hold up the book and point to the title)*

The story is about *(who? What?)*

______________________________________________________________.

I liked the story ________________ *(a little, a lot)* because

____________________________________________________________。

____________________________________________________________。

Please *(do not)* read this book.
CHECKLIST/Feedback for LEVEL 1 RETELL

Partner Activity: Listen to your partner’s RETELL.
Complete the checklist for your partner.

Did your partner state the title of the book? Yes No

Did your partner show the title? Yes No

Did your partner tell something about the story? Yes No

Did your partner like the book? Yes No

Did your partner show 1-2 illustrations? Yes No

Did the illustrations help you to understand the story? Yes No

Did your partner read their retell? Yes No

Comments (Praise, hints, encouragement):

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Template for a RETELL (LEVEL 2)

(Select only three illustrations to help you retell the story)

This book/story is called ________________. The story is about (how many?) ________________ (characters/people).

(Name) ________________ is _________________.

(Name) ________________ is _________________.

The story takes place ________________. (setting/where?)

In the beginning ________________. (relationship)

First _______________ (character) _______________ (action).

Then _______________ (character) _______________ (action).

Finally, if you want to know what happened, please read the book!

OR

Finally _______________ (character) _______________ (action).

I liked this story because

_____________________________________________________________

I would (not) recommend that you read it because ________________.

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

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**CHECKLIST/Feedback for LEVEL 2 RETELL**

**Partner Activity:** Listen to your partner’s RETELL.  
Complete the checklist for your partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the title of the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the number of characters in the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner name the characters in the story? (who)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell the setting of the story? (where)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell the beginning of the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell the ending of the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell his/her feelings about the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner recommend that you read the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner show 1-3 illustrations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the illustrations help you to understand the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner read the retell?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments (Praise, hints, encouragement):**

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

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More Advanced Template for a RETELL (LEVEL 3)

(Select only three illustrations to help you retell the story)

When you are comfortable with the previous model, try this one. List (write down) the NEW words from the story:
__________________________________________

Try to use the new words when preparing the template for your retell.

This book is entitled ________________. I ________________ (reaction: liked, disliked, enjoyed, connected with) this book because
__________________________________________

It is by ________________ (author).

The story is about _________________ (main idea). The main character(s) in the story are ___________, _______________. . . .

____________________ is _______________________ (noun or adjective)
____________________ is _______________________ (noun or adjective)
____________________ is _______________________ (noun or adjective)
____________________ is _______________________ (noun or adjective)

The story takes place ______________________________. (setting/where/when?)

In the beginning ________________________________. (relationship/when?)
Secondly ____________ (character) ____________ (action). (EVENT 2)

Then ____________ (character) _______________ (action). (EVENT 3)

Then ____________ (character) _______________ (action). (EVENT 4)

Next ____________ (character) _______________ (action). (EVENT 5)

Then ____________ (character) _______________ (action). (EVENT 6)

Finally, if you want to know what happened, please read the book!

OR

Finally, ____________ (character) ______________ (action).

This story made me feel ______________________ because

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

I would (not) recommend that you read it because ________________.

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
### CHECKLIST/Feedback for LEVEL 3 RETELL

**Partner Activity: Listen to your partner’s RETELL.**
Complete the checklist for your partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the title of the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner give his or her reaction to the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the author of the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the main idea of the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner identify the characters in the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the setting of the story? (when &amp; where)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell how the story began?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell the events of the story in sequence?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell how the story ended?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state how the story made him/her feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner recommend that your read the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner show no more than three illustrations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the illustrations help you to understand the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner read his/her retell?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments (Praise, hints, encouragement):**

_____________________________________________________________

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More Advanced Model for a RETELL (LEVEL 4)

(Select only three illustrations to help you retell the story)

When you are comfortable with the previous model, try this one. List (write down) the NEW words from the story AND try to use as many of the new words from learned in previous retells as you can when preparing the template for your retell.

This book is entitled ______________. I ______________(reaction) this book because it ________________.

It is by ______________________________(author).

It is a ______________________(genre).

It is written for _________________(age/interest group/audience).

The story is about _________________ (main idea). The main character(s) in the story are ____________, _________________. . .

____________________ is _______________________(noun or adjective).

____________________ is _______________________(noun or adjective).

____________________ is _______________________(noun or adjective).

____________________ is _______________________(noun or adjective).

The story takes place ____________________________. (setting/where/when? Use at least THREE adjectives)

In the beginning __________________________________(relationship/EVENT 1)

Secondly ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 2)

Then ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 3)

Next ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 4)

Then ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 5)

Then ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 6)
Finally, if you want to know what happened, please read the book!

**OR**

Finally, _____________ (character) ______________ (action).

This story makes me realize that __________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________(lesson).

I would (not) recommend that you read it because ________________.

Which parts of the story happened as you predicted? Which parts surprised you?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________.

*Be prepared to answer any questions your partner might have!"
CHECKLIST/Feedback for LEVEL 4 RETELL

Partner Activity: Listen to your partner’s RETELL and complete the checklist for your partner.

Did your partner state the title of the book?  Yes  No
Did your partner give his or her reaction to the book?  Yes  No
Did your partner state the author of the book?  Yes  No
Did your partner state the genre of the book?  Yes  No
Did your partner state the age/interest group/audience?  Yes  No
Did your partner state the main idea of the story?  Yes  No
Did your partner identify the characters of the story?  Yes  No
Did your partner state the setting of the story using at least three adjectives?  Yes  No
Did your partner tell the events of the story?  Yes  No
Did your partner use the words beginning, then, next, and finally?  Yes  No
Did your partner state what the story made him or her realize?  Yes  No
Did your partner make a recommendation?  Yes  No
Did your partner show no more than three illustrations?  Yes  No
Did the illustrations help you to understand the story?  Yes  No
Did your partner share information about his or her predictions?  Yes  No
Did your partner use the three new words?  Yes  No
Did your partner answer any questions you asked?  Yes  No

Comments (Praise, hints, encouragement):

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

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# I Can or CAN-DO self assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal (objective)</th>
<th>I think I can do this independently</th>
<th>I think I can do this with help &amp; guidance</th>
<th>I do not think that I can do this yet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can name the characters in the book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I can give two actions for a character in the book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I can describe the main idea of the book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I can understand the main idea of my partner’s book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I can identify at least two events from my partner’s book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I can give my opinion about the book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can give a compliment for my partner’s retell.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I can use at least adjectives describing the characters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I can put the events in order during my retell.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I can use the words first, then, next, and finally when giving my retell.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More Advanced Model for a RETELL (LEVEL 5)

(Select only three illustrations to help you retell the story)

When you are comfortable with the previous model, try this one. List (write down) the NEW words from the story ____________________________ AND try to use as many of the new words from learned in previous retells as you can when preparing the template for your retell.

This book is entitled _______________. I ____________ (reaction) this book because it ________________________.

It is by ____________________________ (author).

It is a ____________________ (genre) written in ____________ (point of view)

It is written for ________________________ (age/interest group/audience).

The story is about ________________ (main idea). The main character(s) in the story are __________, ______________ . . .

________________________ is a ______________________.

________________________ is a ______________________.

________________________ is a ______________________.

________________________ is a ______________________.

The story takes place ________________________________

________________________ (setting/where/when? Use at least THREE adjectives)

In the beginning _________________________________. (relationship/EVENT 1)

Secondly ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 2)

Then ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 3)

Next ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 4)

Then ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 5)

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Then ______________ (character) ______________ (action). (EVENT 6)

Finally, if you want to know what happened, please read the book!

OR

Finally, ______________ (character) ______________ (action).

This story makes me realize that ______________________________________
_____________________________________________________ (lesson).

I would (not) recommend that you read it because ________________.

Which parts of the story happened as you predicted? Which parts happened by surprise?
_____________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________

This story (or a character in the story) reminds me of (a story title, movie, comic book,
video game, personal experience) __________________________
_____________________________________________________

Be prepared to answer any questions your partner might have!

CHECKLIST/Feedback for LEVEL 5 RETELL
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**Partner Activity: Listen to your partner’s RETELL and complete the checklist for your partner.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the title of the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner give his or her reaction to the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the author of the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the genre of the book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the point of view used in the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the age/interest group/audience?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the main idea of the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the characters of the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the setting of the story using at least three adjectives?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell the events of the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner use the words beginning, then, next, and finally?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state what the story made him or her realize (a new insight)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner make a recommendation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner share information about his or her predictions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner relate this story to another story, personal experience, event or type of media?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner use the three new words?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner read his/her retell?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner answer any questions you asked?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments (Praise, hints, encouragement):**

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When you are comfortable with the previous model, try this one!

**More Advanced Model for a RETELL (LEVEL 6)**

Select THREE illustrations to help you retell the story.

Write down NEW words or expressions from the story.
1. ___________________ 2. ___________________ 3. ___________________

Try to use these new words or expressions and words or expressions learned in previous retells when preparing the template for your retell.

This book/story is entitled _______________. I _______________ (reaction) this book/story because it ____________________.

It is written by _______________________________ (author).

It is a _______________ (genre) written for _______________ (age group).

The story is written in the _______________ (First Person, Second Person, Omniscient) point of view.

The story is about _______________ (main idea). The main characters in the story are ___________, ____________ . . .

_______________ is a __________________________.

_______________ is a __________________________.

...

The story takes place ____________________________________________

________________________(setting with at least THREE adjectives)

The story begins with ____________________________, (EVENT 1)

Then_________________ (character) ______________ (action).

Next_________________ (character) ______________ (action).

After that ____________________________, (EVENT 2)

Then_________________ (character) ______________ (action).

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Later _______________________________(EVENT 2)

Then____________________(character)____________________(action)

Next_____________________(character)____________________(action)

Lastly _______________________________. (EVENT 3)

This story makes me think of ______________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

I would (not) recommend that you read it because ________________.

Did the story end the way you thought it would?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

What parts surprised you?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

This story reminds me of (a story title, movie, comic book, video game, personal
experience) ______________________________________________________________

because _________________________________________________________________

Which part of the story would you change if you could? How would you change it?

________________________________________________________________________

Be prepared to answer any questions your partner might have!

CHECKLIST/Feedback for LEVEL 6 RETELL

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Partner Activity: Listen to your partner’s RETELL. Complete the checklist for your partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the title, their reaction to the story and the author?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner identify the genre of the story and age group for which the story was written?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state in which point of view the story was written?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the main idea of the story?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner identify and describe the main characters in the story?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner state the setting of the story with at least three adjectives?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner tell how the story began?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner identify and describe at least three events in the story?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner share what the story makes he/she think of?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner recommend that you do or do not read the book?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner share whether he or she was able to predict the ending?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your partner share their surprise?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Did your partner express which part he or she would change and how?  Yes  No

Did your partner share what the story reminds he/she of? Yes  No

Did your partner show three illustrations?  Yes  No

Did the illustrations help you to understand the story?  Yes  No

Did your partner read his/her retell?  Yes  No

Comments (Praise, hints, encouragement):
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
CHECKLIST for LISTENING LEVEL

**Partner Activity: Retell your story. Complete the checklist for your partner (and listener) after retelling your story.**

- Did your listener offer praise after you retold your story?  
  - Yes  
  - No

- Did your listener show interest while you were retelling your story?  
  - Yes  
  - No

- Did your listener thank you for retelling your story?  
  - Yes  
  - No

- Did your listener offer encouragement while you were retelling your story?  
  - Yes  
  - No

- Did your listener ask you questions about your retell after you completed it?  
  - Yes  
  - No

---

**Offering Praise**

- Really great!  
- Spectacular!  
- Top Effort!  
- Awesome!  
- Fantastic!  
- Yes!  
- Wow!  
- Great job!  
- Good effort!  
- Great stuff!  
- Terrific!  
- First rate!  
- Marvelous!  
- Excellent!  
- Outstanding!  
- Good work!  
- Bravo!  
- Fabulous!  
- Right on!