

RUSTY THE RED BLOOD CELL

INTERNAL ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY STORIES

Kids love to talk about cuts, scars, and war wounds. This intrinsic motivation to show everyone their scars and tell their stories can be used to teach internal anatomy and physiology.

Model the process by telling a story about a cut or "booboo" that happened to you. Tell it as a story. Be sure to include three-dimensional characters, a clear setting and a sequential plot laced with suspense and irony.

After they hear your story as solid example, pass out real or imaginary bandages and ask the students to think about their scars and the stories that go with them. Ask them to travel back in time, using their imagination to re-live the moment, recalling as much detail as they can. This works well if you ask them to close their eyes and take a few deep breaths. When we relax, our minds are clearer and we can remember more detail. Ask students to choose a partner and take turns telling their stories to each other. Using their oral version as a rough draft, challenge them to write down their stories. Using Chart A on the reverse side ask them to make a story map or outline. Help them to write their rough draft and then begin the rewriting process. Writing is always easier if you ***tell it, then write it.***

When these stories are complete, challenge your students to look at these same series of events from the point of view of a red blood cell. Ask the question, What was going on inside your body when this accident happened? What were your blood cells doing? How did your brain and nervous system respond? What hormones were released and how did your body chemistry change? What were your bones doing? What were your stomach and intestines doing? How did your body deal with the problem? What helped in the healing process? How did your body fix it-self? Who helped and what did they do? How did you know it was healed? You can discuss these questions as a class or in small cooperative groups.

Now retell your story from the point of view of Rusty the Red Blood Cell. As an omniscient narrator with x-ray vision tell what lead up to the accident and how the bones and muscles propelled the body on the bicycle (or whatever). As the wound is inflicted tell how the white blood cells began a war on the invading germs, how the fibrous cells tried to stop the bleeding. Tell about the nerve cells sending messages to the brain and the brain sounding the alarm. (It may help if you use a copy of Chart B on the reverse side to help you outline your story before you tell it to the students.)

After you tell your story, walk the students through Chart B. Discuss as a large class or in small groups how the different body systems function in general and how they help the body deal with crisis. When the charts are complete ask them to enter their stories from the internal point of view. They could imagine they are inside a red blood cell, a microscopic ship or Ms. Frizzle's® bus. Again, ask them to close their eyes, breathe deep and imagine as much detail as possible. Ask them to choose a new partner and take turns telling their tales. ***Tell it, then write it.*** Again, using their oral version as a rough draft, ask them to write their stories. Assist them in the rewriting and editing of their stories.

If they are unsure of any of the body systems and how it responds to a specific ailment, this could be a highly motivated opportunity to do research. Where could they find this information? A discovery approach to learning is a great way to help students learn research skills and learn facts and concepts that are relevant to their lives. Help them to learn what they want to know.

When both the inside and outside versions of their stories are complete these could be told to the class and collected into a self-published book to be shared with their peers. Students could then add scientifically accurate illustrations.

Please send copies of students' stories and illustrations to Fox Tales and I may use them in my next newsletter!

RUSTY THE RED BLOOD CELL - Internal Anatomy & Physiology Stories

Think about a time when you were injured. It doesn't have to be a major calamity like a broken bone or car crash, it could have been a bike accident or falling out of a tree. Take a band-aid, real or imagined and place it on one of your "boobos." Choose a partner and tell them the story of how it happened. Include as much detail as you can remember. Tell it as a story. Be sure to include three-dimensional characters, a clear setting and a sequential plot laced with suspense and irony. When you are finished telling your story fill in Chart A:

Who was there? _____
Describe each character.

Where were you? _____
Describe the setting.

What happened? Beginning: _____
Describe the plot.
Middle: _____

End: _____
Use this chart to write a story. Do some rewriting and editing before sharing it with your class.

PART II

Now think about this same story from the point of view of a red blood cell. Imagine that you could look inside your body to see how each part of your body responded to the crisis. What was going on inside your body when this accident happened? What were your blood cells doing? How did your brain and nervous system respond? What were your bones doing? What were your stomach and intestines doing? How did your body parts work together to solve the problem? What helped in the healing process? Who helped and what did they do? How did you know it was healed? You can discuss these questions with a partner or in a small group. Fill in Chart B:

BODY SYSTEMS

	MUSCLES	BONES	BLOOD	NERVES	DIGESTION	SKIN
BEGINNING						
PROBLEM						
MIDDLE						
SOLUTION						
END						

Use this chart to rewrite your story from an internal point of view.