

STORYASKING

Storyasking is a form of storytelling in which the storyteller (in this case, the teacher) doesn't know what will happen in the story, and so she asks the audience what they want to happen at different points in the story. Therefore, the teacher is not telling the story to the students; she is asking them what happens, and they decide.

In each storyasking session, we will have several target vocabulary terms that we must acquire and therefore include in the story. Our goal is to repeat those terms over and over and over. For example, "dog," "eats," and "dances." The story could be about a dog that goes on a cruise and eats and dances every night. Or maybe the dog eats a huge piece of cake and dances off the calories at a discoteque in Paris. It's whatever the class decides.

Research shows that a word does not become a permanent part of our vocabulary until we have heard or seen it 70-160 times. In order to get those repetitions, I will be asking really dumb, obvious, silly questions about the story over, and over, and over. I will ask so many dumb, obvious, silly questions that you will want to poke your eyes out. That's why we have to make sure that the stories we create are FUNNY and CREATIVE, so that we don't get super bored while we try to get in all of the repetitions we need.

The most important thing in storyasking is that you ALWAYS understand what I am saying: you cannot learn what I'm saying unless you understand what I'm saying. If you ever get confused, all you need to do is (1) make the confused gesture (make a fist and put it in your other hand) or (2) ask me in French to clarify. When that happens, I will either explain it differently in French or write it on the board in English. I will do my best to make sure that you understand me, but sometimes I won't see that you're confused, so you need to be your own advocate and let me know! Class will be fun sometimes, sometimes not—this is a rigorous academic class. I want you to be involved and engaged in class, but not necessarily entertained all of the time.

Rules for Storyasking

1. Listen with the intent to understand
2. One person speaks at a time
3. Speak French, not English!
4. Use the hand-in-fist gesture to show you don't understand
5. Actors match actions with the story