



## TLC STRATEGY

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### “Salvador Late or Early” • Using narrative symbols

**Purpose:** Students learn how to use narrative symbols as a writing tool for outlining a story and building their own outlines. This exercise further builds community among students and provides the teacher with background knowledge about the students, as they share their own stories of going to school.

#### Materials

- One-page prose poem, “Salvador Late or Early,” from Sandra Cisneros’ book, House on Mango Street (one copy per participant)
- Set of narrative symbols (provided here, but you can add and make your own).
- Writing paper, if time allows for writing at the end of the activity

#### Included here

- Narrative symbols master (included here)

#### Steps

1. Set-up: Small groups around tables.
2. Each participant is given a set of narrative symbols, and instructed to use them to tell the story. The teacher reads aloud “Salvador Late or Early;” students may follow along. Students are then asked to use the symbols to tell the story in any order they wish, and to “retell” it to the others at their table. Allow 5 minutes for students to assemble the symbols, and a couple of minutes each to tell their stories in small groups.
3. If time allows, ask several students to write their symbol story on the board and share it with the whole group.
4. Ask students to use the narrative symbols to “write” their own story of going to school. Students share their own stories in small groups. Again, if time allows, ask a couple of people to share their stories with the whole group. They will need to recreate the symbols on the board so that everyone can see.
5. Students write their stories using words instead of symbols.

Teaching-Learning Collaborative (TLC)  
Narrative symbols

Add your own symbols, then cut into squares. Use one sheet per participant.

