

Finger stories

Refers to **Chapter 1: Working with groups of young learners: the basics** on page 23.

Content

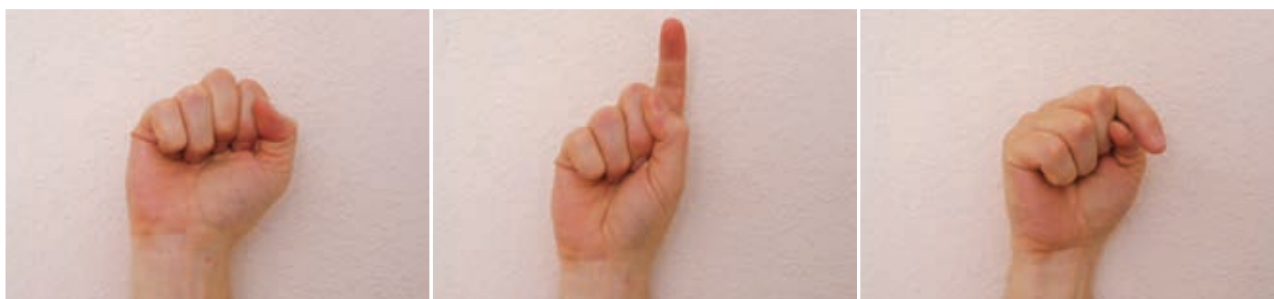
This resource contains three extra storyboarded sequences, which show how you can extend your captivation techniques and turn them into simple finger stories. There is an example story in the chapter, where one hand is sleeping and the other hand creeps up on it and wakes it up by shouting. The teacher models the action, allowing about one second for each, and the students copy.

Rationale

These stories began as short gestures that my students could copy. I added them on to my typical captivation technique of holding one hand in the air and the other over my mouth. The initial rationale was that if there was a follow-on to the captivation technique – something for the learners to actually do – then it would be more attractive to them than simply stopping what they were doing. The stories then took on a life of their own, and are now a feature of my lessons that learners enjoy in their own right. They can also be used as vehicle to teach simple stretches of language.

Story 1: Growing

In this story, (first outlined in Roland, 2015), a single-finger character wakes up, eats and goes to sleep. When it wakes up for the second time, our character has grown and is now a two-finger character. It eats and sleeps again. The third time it is a three-finger character, and the last time it wakes, it is a full-hand character.



Figures 1–3

Start with a closed fist (Figure 1) and a snoring sound. The single-finger character (Figure 2) wakes up and squeaks, 'I'm hungry'. It then eats something that is apparently lying around on the floor nearby (Figure 3).

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Figures 4–6

The character says 'I'm tired', then turns back into a snoring ball (Figure 4). When it wakes up, it is a two-finger character (Figure 5), having grown. It says it is hungry again, then eats (Figure 6).



Figures 7–9

It then repeats the cycle of sleeping (Figure 7), waking as a three-finger character (Figure 8), eating (not pictured) and sleeping once more (Figure 9).



Figure 10

The final time it wakes, it is a full-hand character (Figure 10). It chuckles, then 'walks' off.

Story 2: A door

In this story, a single-finger character approaches a door, knocks on it, asks to come in, then enters.



Figures 11–13

The story begins with two closed fists (Figures 11 and 12), one that becomes a door and one that becomes a finger character (Figure 13).



Figures 14–16

The finger character approaches the door (Figure 14). It knocks on the door (Figure 15) then squeaks, 'Can I come in please?'. The door creaks open (Figure 16).

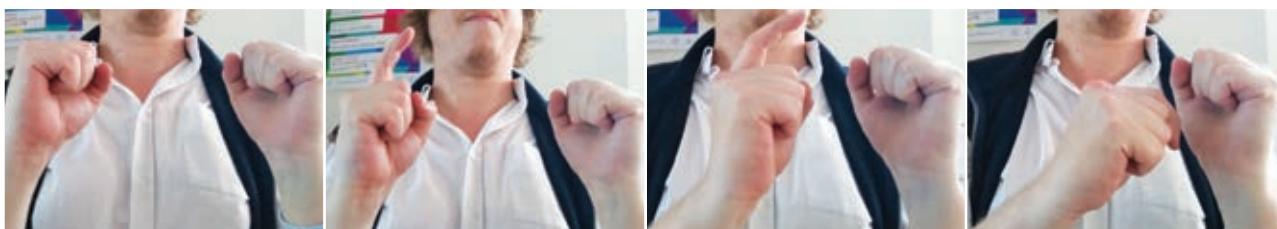


Figure 17

The finger character then walks 'through' (in reality, past) the open door (Figure 17).

Story 3: Bedtime

In this story, a single-finger character approaches a closed fist and flips the fist open. The fist unrolls to create a blanket on the ground. The character then lies down on the blanket and goes to sleep.



Figures 18–21

Start with both fists closed (Figure 18). One then becomes a finger character (Figures 19 and 20). The finger character approaches the fist (Figure 21).



Figures 23–25

The finger character unrolls the fist in a flicking motion (Figures 23 and 24). The fist becomes a flat horizontal surface. The finger character lies down on it (Figure 25), saying 'Goodnight', before starting to snore.

The number of stories you can invent is infinite. The important point is that the action always develops in short increments that can be easily copied. I recommend practising a story using a mirror several times before trying it with your students.