



of Greater Indianapolis

WRITING A SHORT STORY

Ages:

9-11, 12-14, 15-18

Description:

Hello Girls! It's time to use our imaginations by writing a short story. During this activity we will develop our ideas on a story map, build characters and determine a plot to follow. Grab a pencil and paper and let's get started!

Time:

60 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Pencil
- Paper

Instructions:

Before we begin, take a minute to clear your mind. Spend one minute with your eyes closed, breathing in and out slowly, focusing on your breath. This will help you be in a positive mindset during this activity.

During this activity, we will create a story map, and think about setting, characters, problem, resolution, and events. Organizing your ideas will help you on your exploration or your imagination.

One way to get inspired is by reading books! Who are your favorite authors? [J.K. Rowling](#), is a legendary author. Most famous for creating the wonderful story of Harry Potter, Rowling wrote her first book at the age of six – a story about a rabbit, called 'Rabbit'. At just eleven, she wrote her first novel, a book about seven cursed diamonds and the people who owned them. Where do you think she got her inspiration?

Generating Story Ideas

Thinking of a good story idea can feel like magic! To help spark that magic, use your senses; whether you find inspiration from examining the world around you or by imagining one that doesn't yet exist - the possibilities are endless! Here are a few story starters to get you going.

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Story Starters

- During a thunderstorm your character suddenly remembers...
- Your character must choose between two things they love
- Your character is running late and must walk instead of taking the bus
- Your character sees an animal... what does that animal look like
- Your character finds something they lost
- Your character wins a big prize
- Make up one of your own!

What if?

- What if the students made all the rules at school?
- What if I had superpowers?
- What if I suddenly was in a different place or time?
- What if I was running for president?
- What if wild rabbits took over our cities?
- Make up one of your own!

Developing Your Story Map

Now that we have an idea for your story, let's fill in our story map. We will explore how to build each section. Some sections may be more important to your story than others. Have fun and be flexible.

We will think about:

- Setting
- Characters
- Problem
- Plot/ Events
- Resolution
- Using Adjectives

Before we begin, take a blank piece of paper and create a map to organize your story. Use the chart below as an example or create your own format.

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Setting:	Time:	Place:
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Characters:



Problem:



Plot/Events:

Resolution:

It is time to create your masterpiece! Use the prompts below to think about each section of your story map. Jot down notes on your chart to refer to when writing your story.

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Section 1: Setting

Where does the story take place? Is it daytime or nighttime? Use as much detail as you can to get a really good picture of where this story will happen. For example, is it springtime in a small town near the bank of the Wabash River? You can add more details about setting as you write your story.

Section 2: Characters

When developing characters think about the people in your life and their complexities.. Be inspired by people that you know. Find your character's name, interests, quirks, motivations, fears, & loves. Think of the ways you will be able to explain your character to the audience.

Section 3: Problem

What happens to the characters? Think of your favorite movie... did the characters overcome something? Without a big obstacle the story might not be very interesting. Using problems that many people face may make your story relatable to a wide audience..

Section 4: Plot / Events

A few common plot types to consider are adventure, change, romance or mystery. The plot answers the question, "What is this story about?". What type of themes will you use? What type of events will occur? Will there be a big race? A big moment? This is where you will express high or low points in the story.

Section 5: Resolution

Every story should have a good ending! What are your favorite endings? Do you ever wish you could change the endings of a story you read? Help your characters solve their problems and be creative!

Bringing Your Story to Life

During this section you will learn helpful tips to use when writing your story. Having a strong first line and use adjectives will bring your story to life.

First Line

Now that you have a framework, it's time to bring your story to life! Start with a really vibrant opening line to hook your readers. Here are a couple of examples of famous opening story lines.

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ACTIVITY RECAP

Discovery Questions:

- What type of characters did you create? Were they like you or different from you? Did you imagine a new world, or tell a story that already happened?
- Why is storytelling important? Is it important to use our imagination?
- Now that you have these story writing tools how will you use them? Do you think you can tell stories through video? Would you use the same map?
- With a parent/guardian's permission, share with us your story on our Instagram page with the tag @girlsincindy.

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