

# Group Story Project

This project guides students in creating their own fairy-tale or story as a group. It takes four class periods to complete.

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## PERIOD ONE

### Talking

We begin by talking about STORIES. What makes a good story? A good story has a PROBLEM. (Conflict)

What are some PROBLEMS in familiar stories?

The end of a story usually comes when the main character(s) solve the problem. How do the problems we've mentioned get solved?

### New Solutions

Start with a story and a problem that are familiar to the group.

If necessary or desirable, add a few characters from other stories.

Have the class come up with alternate solutions to the problem in the story.

Do this as a verbal exercise with the whole class.

### Small group stories

Break into small groups.

Each group takes the same (new) story/problem and comes up with an individual solution, which they act out.

Watch that each group does their own work rather than trying to eavesdrop on each other.

### Talk

What is a character? What two main kinds of characters do you find in stories? (Protagonists and Antagonists-"Good Guys" and "Bad Guys.")

How do these two kinds of characters relate to the PROBLEM?

**On board, come up with two lists-one of "Good Guys," and one of "Bad Guys."**

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## **PERIOD TWO**

### **Preparation**

After the first day of the project, make up two sets of index cards-"Good Guy Cards," and "Bad Guy Cards." Put all of the characters generated in the last part of the lesson on these cards so that each card says either "Good Guy" of "Bad Guy" on the back, and has the name of one character on the front. You will use these cards in the next class.

### **Pair scenes**

Warn students that not everyone will necessarily get a chance to be in front!

In front of class, two students at a time select cards-one from each stack-and act out a short scene between these two characters.

Whole class helps to determine what the PROBLEM will be, and also makes suggestions on how to construct the story.

Do this as many times as time allows.

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## **PERIOD THREE**

### **Talk**

Review last period's lesson. Can you remember any particular combinations of characters that were especially fun?

Have the class vote on one combination of "Good Guy/Bad Guy" they like best.

Stress that they are not voting for their favorite SCENE from last time, but only on the combination that seems to offer the most possibilities.

### **Write**

Write the chosen combination at the top of the board as a title-"Superman vs. The Big Bad Wolf"

Brainstorm a PROBLEM for our story. (Keep stressing that it need not be the problem we saw last week.)

Write the PROBLEM on the board as a story synopsis. "The Big Bad Wolf kidnaps Lois Lane and locks her in a closet full of Kryptonite."

**Begin adding details to the story by asking questions:**

Do we need any other characters?

Where is our story set?

What is the very first thing that happens in the story?

How will Superman solve the problem? (Or will our story have an unhappy ending?)

What questions you ask will depend on the story that is developing. But by the end of this period, we should have a fairly detailed outline of the story.

## PERIOD FOUR

(This shouldn't take a whole period. It's really just the icing on the cake. Plan something fairly physical for the remainder of the period, to make up for the fairly sedentary last class.)

### Preparation

After the last class, you should have carefully typed up the story, complete with a title page including the names of all of the members of the class, and made professional-looking copies for everyone in the class.

### Story Party

Hand out the copies of the story to everyone.

Read the story in class, having students take turns reading.

There is an element of role-play here. We are authors celebrating the arrival of the first printing of our new book. Make it festive. THIS IS IMPORTANT! A lot of what makes this lesson work is the pride and ownership students take in their work and in the process of writing.