

#agoodtimetowrite

Resources to Write Bravely From Anywhere (Grades 6-12)

*"No matter what...you can spill your thoughts and feelings onto paper."
– Pretty S., 826 Valencia, Grade 10*

Welcome Teachers, Families, and Students,

Our communities, classrooms, and learning routines have shifted in significant ways in response to COVID-19. **826 is here to support you.** We've developed this collection of handouts and resources, adaptable for students in grades 6-12, to support and engage young writers at home. They all come from [826 Digital](#), our platform for educators that features more resources to ignite a love of writing.

Now is the time to write and create. Using your pencils, pens, markers, and keyboards, you can imagine new worlds, build understanding and empathy, and make change. Whether you publish a zine, invent a miracle elixir, or tap into young voices nationwide, we believe this is a good time to write. Join us!

What's Inside

This packet includes a collection of handouts followed by excerpts from their accompanying lessons. Handouts can also be used as standalone activities!

Follow the link to see the original lesson on [826 Digital](#).

You can also enjoy the words of young writers across the 826 Network in our [Student Writing Gallery](#).

Submission opportunities coming soon! [Check back next week](#) for an opportunity to have your work published on the 826 Digital Writing Gallery.

- 1. Write Here, Write Now Prompts**
 - Creative writing prompts inspired by student voices across the country.
 - Inspired by the 826 Digital [Student Writing Gallery](#)
- 2. Recipe Zines Template**
 - Students create their own zine that features a creative recipe.
 - From the Spark [Recipe Zines](#)
- 3. Identity Poem Templates**
 - Students start identity-themed poetry with these poem templates.
 - From the Spark [Write With Pride](#)

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4. **Invent a Miracle Elixir Handout**
 - Students invent an elixir that magically addresses an identified issue.
 - From the Lesson, [Miracle Elixir: Inventing Potions To Cure Baldness And Other Things the World Needs Right Now](#)
5. **Setting-O-Matic Handout**
 - Students create their own detailed setting and imagine how that place came to be.
 - From the Spark [Setting-O-Matic](#)
6. **Character-O-Matic Handout**
 - Students imagine fears and desires of a character for their next story.
 - From the Spark [Character-O-Matic Protagonist & Antagonist](#)
7. **Fairy Tale Tweets Handout**
 - Students take on the persona of a fairy tale character and tell their story in 700.
 - From the Lesson [#Teamwolf: Writing Fairytales For Twitter](#)

About #agoodtimetowrite

Writing is an act of joy and freedom. As our communities take to their homes to mitigate the further spread of Coronavirus, 826 National is bringing together young writers and some of their fiercest champions online. We believe now is a good time to write, so we're providing new writing opportunities and encouragement through 826 Digital and beyond. Let's take care and write on.

To learn more about 826 National, The 826 National Network, and #agoodtimetowrite visit us at 826national.org

About 826 Digital

826 Digital is an online platform for educators that makes the 826 approach to teaching writing possible anywhere in the world. By providing adaptable, standards-based resources—designed to captivate young writers and empower their educators—826 Digital aims to reach students everywhere, whether they are aspiring authors or reluctant writers. All content is developed and field-tested by educators, volunteers, and students affiliated with the 826 Network. The platform's pay-what-you-wish accessibility is made possible in large part by the generosity of supporters.

Head to 826digital.com to sign up and ignite a love of writing.

Write Here, Write Now

Prompts & Inspiration from Student Writers Across the Country

Hello and WELCOME!

Thanks for joining the 826 Network student writing community—we're excited to be here together!

Write Here, Write Now is a set of prompts about the power of tapping into your voice and student voices across the country. Each prompt invites you to browse the 826 Digital Student Writing Gallery and spark inspiration from a powerful collection of writing, all published by students like you. Think of this collection as trip to an art museum and library combined, as meeting new friends and taking a cross-country adventure. Read their stories and turn their words into your inspiration. Whether you use one of the prompts below, or respond to student writing another way, use the 826 Digital Writing Gallery to extend your imagination beyond the walls of your home. Here you can use writing to share your story, explore your world, and even create new ones. Let's go!

Ready to get started?

1. Go to <https://826digital.com/writing/> or get out your samples of student writing.
2. Grab a pencil or pen and a notebook—or your writing tools of choice.
3. Make space for your writing: Silence your notifications and turn off the news.
4. Pick a prompt and get writing!

Prompts

Prompt Title	Choose Your Text	Prompt Description
Judging a Book by Its Cover	Find a piece of writing where the title stands out to you. Now stop! Don't read the piece.	Instead, create your own piece of writing with the same title. After you're done, read the original student's piece to compare your creations!
And The Story Goes On...	Any piece of student writing will do. Pick one that you see a future with.	The writing process never really ends... pick up another student's story or poem where they left off! Was there a problem unresolved? What new problems might occur? You decide what's up next!
Poet Perspectives	Using the poetry section of the Writing Gallery, read through some of the poems. Select a poem you find interesting.	Enter the mind of the poet and write an imaginary journal entry from that day. How do you think the poet felt when they woke up that morning? How did they feel while writing this poem? What was their inspiration? What led them to use certain descriptions or literary devices? What else might have been on their mind?
Interdisciplinary Idol	Find two pieces of writing from two different genres and put them in conversation with one another. Pair a narrative with a persuasive essay or a piece of poetry with STEM writing.	What story do the pieces of writing tell together? What might a dialogue between these two authors look like?
Generation Collaboration	Sort the Writing Gallery by age and find students that are two different ages who are writing about the same topic.	How do they understand the topic differently? What could they each learn from one another? Write a dialogue between them, or imagine them discussing something entirely new!

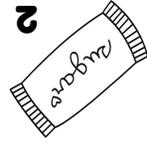
Prompts

Prompt Title	Choose Your Text	Prompt Description
From Author to Author	Find a piece of student writing that makes you think. Maybe it helps you think about something in a way you never had before, transports you to a new world with its vivid detail, or makes you feel like someone REALLY gets you.	Now write a letter to the author! Explain what you liked about the piece, and what parts confused you. What resonated with you and what spoke to you? What other questions do you have for them?
Persuasion Equation	Sort the Writing Gallery by writing type to focus on persuasive writing. Pick one essay that you find especially persuasive.	Consider what parts of the essay are especially convincing. How does the writer convince you? What structures did they use to guide your understanding? Now, try to replicate their methods for a different issue that is important to you.
Narrative Neighbors	Use the writing type function to select two pieces of student writing in the narrative section.	Imagine the main characters of the stories are swapped. Would this change the plot of the story? How might the characters respond differently? Write the stories that unfold.
Writers and Gatherers	This prompt utilizes the entire Writing Gallery! Browse the student writing and gather words or sentences that stand out to you. They can be random words that catch your eye or moving sentences that resonate with you, or even better, a combination of both!	Collect these words and sentences in one place, and once you've found enough, rearrange them to create a poem.
Phone a Friend	Okay, for this one you can pull out your phone. Find a piece of writing to talk about with a friend, and give them a call. Ask them to bring a piece of writing too.	Use the conversation with your friend to inspire your writing. Did they interpret the writing differently? What did you learn about your friend? What did you learn about yourself?

psst...remember measurements!

What makes up _____?
LIST YOUR INGREDIENTS!

Now, sketch your ingredients!



STEP 3

STEP 2

STEP 1

Put your directions here:
Ready to get cooking?



STEP 6

STEP 5

STEP 4

Recipe for



A CREATIVE RECIPE ZINE
BY: _____

Strong Verbs

sear...roast...whip...pour...

Measurements

pinch...tablespoon... $\frac{3}{4}$ cup...

Sizzling Adjectives

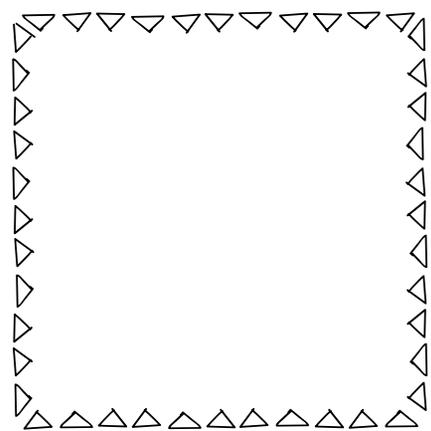
fiery...rich...pungent...gooey...

Imagine you're the host of a brand new cooking show!

NAME YOUR SHOW:

WHAT TYPES OF RECIPES WOULD YOU SHARE?

Draw a portrait of your finished product:



* It's a masterpiece!

Portrait Poem

Template from "8 Portrait Poems and Examples" by Art Belliveau.

I am _____.

First name

Son/Daughter of (or brother/sister of...) _____.

Who needs _____, _____, _____.

Who loves _____, _____, _____.

Who sees _____, _____, _____.

Who hates _____, _____, _____.

Who fears _____, _____, _____.

Who dreams of _____, _____, _____.

Who has found poems of _____.

Resident of _____.

_____.

Last name

I Am Poem

I AM Poem

FIRST STANZA

I am (two special characteristics you have)
I wonder (something you are actually curious about)
I hear (an imaginary sound)
I see (an imaginary sight)
I want (an actual desire)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

SECOND STANZA

I pretend (something you actually pretend to do)
I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)
I touch (an imaginary touch)
I worry (something that really bothers you)
I cry (something that makes you very sad)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

THIRD STANZA

I understand (something you know is true)
I say (something you believe in)
I dream (something you actually dream about)
I try (something you really make an effort about)
I hope (something you actually hope for)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

Just Because Poem

Just Because... _____

Just because I'm _____

Doesn't mean _____

Doesn't mean _____

And doesn't mean _____

Just because _____

Doesn't mean _____

Doesn't mean _____

Doesn't mean _____

Just because _____

Doesn't mean _____

Doesn't mean _____

Doesn't mean _____

Just because _____

(Question) _____

(Question) _____

(Question) _____

(Statement) _____

I Am From...

Adapted by Levi Romero and inspired by "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon.

I am from _____ (an everyday item in your home) from _____
 and _____ (products or everyday items in your home) I am from the
 _____ (description of your home) _____ (a
 detail about your home – a smell, taste, or feel) I am from the _____ (plant,
 flower, natural item) The _____ (plant or tree near your home) whose
 long gone limbs I remember as if they were my own. I'm from _____ and
 _____ (a family tradition and family trait) from _____ and
 _____ (family members) I'm from _____ and _____
 (family habits) and from _____. (family habit) I'm from _____ and
 _____ (things you were told as a child) and _____ (a
 song or saying you learned as a child) I'm from _____ (a family tradition)
 I'm from _____ (place of birth) and _____ (family ancestry, nationality or place)
 _____ and _____ (family foods) From
 _____ (a story about a family member)
 _____ (detail about the story or person) _____
 (description of family momentos, pictures or treasures) _____ (location of
 momentos – under my bed, on the wall, in my heart)
 _____ (more description if needed).

Miracle Elixir

What is it?

What's the biggest problem that the world is facing?

Whose lives are affected by this problem?

What will happen if no one fixes this problem?

Why do you care about this problem?

Inventor's name: _____

Product name

What's the name of your product?

How do you use it?

Write down instructions on how to use the elixir. Who should use the elixir?

Usage:

For:

What's in it?

Write a list of ingredients for your miracle elixir.

Setting-O-Matic

Name:

(What is this place called?)

Pick a specific location that this story will take place.

(Example: A submarine, a cave, ancient ruins, etc.)

Use the five senses to describe what this place is like.

(Example: A rusty, miniature submarine that constantly smells of rotten eggs and is filled with framed portraits of fluffy kittens in teacups.)

**Give us a few details about the LARGER world this story's setting is within.
(Is this submarine on Earth? Beneath Chicago? On a distant planet far, far away?)**

**What are the rules/boundaries of this world?
Do inhabitants have magical powers? Are there inherent dangers to this world?**

What sort of people/creatures live in this world? What are their daily lives like?

Character-O-Matic: Protagonist

Name:

Physical Characteristics:

(What does the Protagonist look like? Are they human? An animal? A mix of the two? What do they wear?)

Mental Characteristics:

(What is the Protagonist like, generally? What is their personality like? Do they have any quirks? Give us at least one positive trait and one negative trait.)

Character-O-Matic: Protagonist

Nickname:

What does the Protagonist spend a typical day doing? What do they love to do for fun? Do they have a job?
(“Every day, the Protagonist...”)

What does the Protagonist want more than ANYTHING in the world?
(Don't worry about deciding what the Protagonist is afraid of - that will come from the Antagonist's character sketch)

Character-O-Matic: Antagonist

Name:

Physical Characteristics:

What does the Antagonist look like? What do they wear?

What does the Antagonist have or do that the Protagonist is afraid of?

This is the crux of your story's problem!

Anatomy of a Tweet 101

1. **Avatar:** Picture of person tweeting
2. **Person's name:** Actual Name of the person tweeting
3. **Twitter name:** User ID of person tweeting. Use this Twitter name after an @ symbol to message this person or tag them in a tweet
4. **When:** Time and date the tweet was sent
5. **Tweet text:** The content of a tweet and the message a user wishes to send. This is limited to 140 Characters
6. **Link to article:** URL to another website, often related to the content of the tweet
7. **Tweet hashtag:** A word or linked series of words following a # symbol used to identify messages on a specific topic. Clicking on a hashtag will take you to all tweets that have used that hashtag in the past
8. **Click to reply:** Send a message to this twitter user with your thoughts on their tweet
9. **Click to like:** Indicate to Twitter user that you like their tweet
10. **Click to retweet:** Share this tweet in its entirety to your own Twitter followers
11. **Click to direct message:** Send this tweet as a direct message to one or more of your followers

Tweet Anatomy 101:



Fairy Tale Characters In 700 Characters

Fairy tales are stories that have what is called “longevity” – even though they were first written and told many years ago, their lessons are still interesting to people in modern times.

What would the characters in these fairy tales say if they could use Twitter? Re-tell the story of the fairy tale in five Tweets or fewer.

Things to remember:

- One Tweet = 140 characters, or two short sentences.
- Hashtags are a way of sorting Tweets and adding humor to your writing. **You must use at least two hashtags** in your five Tweets. We’ve suggested a few, but feel free to use your imagination!
- Vibrant word choices will help you write concise Tweets.

The fairy tale I am retelling is:

The character I am portraying is:

My character’s Twitter handle would be:

(A Twitter handle identifies each user on Twitter. Examples: @BeanstalkJack, @TheRealCinderella, @BigBadWolf_05. You may use numbers and letters in your Twitter handle.)

My Character’s Tweets:

1. _____

Fairy Tale Characters In 700 Characters (Continued)

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Fairy Tale Characters In 700 Characters (Continued)

5. _____

When You've Finished Re-telling The Story:

A Twitter bio is an opportunity for a Twitter user to tell the world something interesting about who he or she is. It is also limited to 140 characters, or two short sentences. You may use hashtags and other users' Twitter handles in your bio.

Example: @TheRealCinderella

#Princess #TheGoodSister #NeatFreak Just a girl who met my @PrinceCharming. BFFs: @Rapunzel @TheSleepingBeauty @SnowWhitest

My character's Twitter bio would be:

* SPARK

Recipe Zines

GRADES 3–8

TYPE
INFORMATIONAL
NARRATIVE
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
LEARNING

With a little folding and loads of creativity, students make their own zines that feature abstract recipes.

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN

Students will produce and publish a zine featuring a creative recipe. They'll consider ingredients that make up themselves, their family, or their community, provide step-by-step directions, and write with strong verbs and adjectives.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Recipe Zine Template — Handout (print one for each student)
- Scissors
- Pens, colored pencils, markers, etc.
- Collage materials and glue stick (optional)

WHAT YOU WILL DO

This zine-making Spark asks students to consider a central question: what makes you, you?

Students will create zines that feature creative recipes. They can choose to write a recipe of themselves, their community, their family — or something else altogether.

If students are new to the wide world of zines, it may be

helpful to grab a few examples beforehand or show a few versions online. We recommend this [introduction to zines](#) from YA author Celia C. Pérez. Remind students that they'll be using a zine template today, but it is just a starting point. If they'd like to start with a blank piece of paper instead of the template, tell them to go for it! As Pérez writes, "There are no set-in-stone rules for making zines...Making a zine is all about self-expression and creativity."

Next, walk through the directions for folding and cutting their mini-zine. You could [watch a video](#) of how it's done, or model the process following the directions below, from [Umami Design Studio](#):

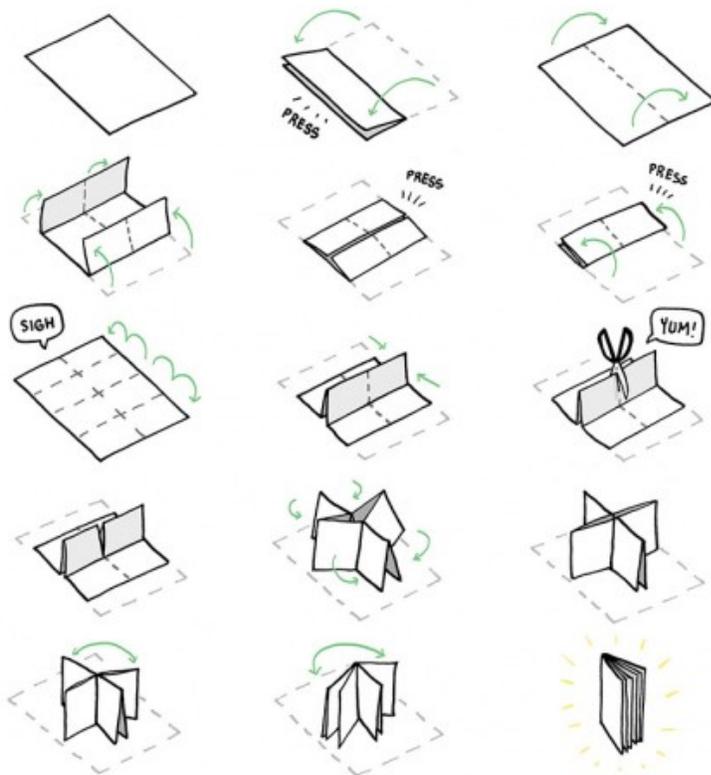
Zine Making Instructions Article by Cecilia C. Pérez

Title: How to Make a Zine: A Kid-Friendly DIY Guide
url: <https://www.readbrightly.com/how-to-make-zine/>

Zine Folding Instruction Video (Youtube)

Title: How to make a zine from one piece of printer paper
url: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ixqr9e3wCxI&feature=youtu.be>

HOW TO FOLD A
SHEET-O-PAPER
 INTO A
8-PAGE ZINE



Once the mini-zines are folded and cut, prompt students to unfold their paper and complete their zine. Students will write, draw, and sketch out a recipe on their chosen topic. Encourage students to make their zine both highly visual and highly personal, something *only* they could have created.

For an optional group activity, you could ask students to complete the word banks on the “back cover” of their zine. What strong verbs, measurement types, and sizzling adjectives can they think of? Share

out the strongest words from the brainstorm to create a class word bank for students to pull from as they write.

When everyone is finished, have students swap to read each other's zines, and then consider who else they'll share it with: zines are made to be given away!

Get inspired by even more [Creative Recipes](#). This Spark, written by Jillian Wasick at 826 Valencia, directly inspired our printable zine.

* SPARK

Write with Pride

GRADES 7–12

TYPE
POETRY

Students consider the influence that labels hold and write poetry to become empowered to describe themselves however they want.

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN

In this Spark, your class will create an open and safe space, free of judgment, for discussion and creativity. Students then consider the meaning and effect of labels and write portrait poems, where they can use writing to become empowered to describe themselves however they want.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Internet, projector, writing utensils
- Poem Templates — Handout

WHAT YOU WILL DO

Share the YouTube video clip [“Coming Out: I am Gay, I am Human”](#) with students.

Next, give students five minutes to freewrite on what labels mean to them, specifically when it comes to LGBTQIA issues (or any other letter they feel should be included in that acronym). Some questions to help students get started:

- How do labels make you feel?
- Do you like them? Hate them?
- Does it depend on the label or who is using it?

From there, ask students to discuss their thoughts in small groups and share their writing if they want.

Then discuss the video and student thoughts in a large group:

- What did you think?
- What stood out to you?
- What was the overall message the video was sending?
- Does anyone agree or disagree?

Introduce Portrait Poems

Tell students that they are going to write their own “I Am” poems, called Portrait Poems, so that they use writing to become empowered to describe ourselves however we want. This doesn’t have to focus solely on LGBTQ pieces of their lives; the poem should address any and all parts of their identities.

Show examples of Portrait Poems, of which a variety of examples can be found here:

<http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/portrait.html>

Portrait Poem Writing

Now, it's time for students to write their own portrait poems. You can provide templates that students can use if they want. Students can write multiple poems exploring different parts of themselves.

To conclude, students who want to share can share a few lines of their poem.

Or, do a **bonus activity**: Write a list poem using one of the following phrases as the beginning of each sentence of your poem:

1. I wish people knew that I...
2. Being myself is....
3. I am proud because...

*** SPARK**

Invent a Miracle Elixir

GRADES 5–6

TYPE
PERSUASIVE

Students will use creative thinking to innovate an imaginary elixir that targets a problem they see in the world.

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN

This activity will encourage students to identify and think critically about real world problems by creating a product description, ingredients list and usage instructions for an elixir that fixes their targeted problem.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Copies of “Miracle Elixir Inventor” handout

WHAT YOU WILL DO

Start by asking your students to raise their hand if they’re interested in becoming an inventor. Next, ask them if they know what a miracle elixir is.

Then, provide a definition and examples of what a miracle elixir is. For example: “A miracle elixir is a liquid that can cure any illness or transform any object into something amazing through magic. One of the very first miracle elixirs ever invented could turn ordinary metal into gold.

A miracle elixir can also be a medicine. A liquid that when you drink it, can cure any illness you may have.

Together as a class, brainstorm a few ideas for elixirs your students would like to see exist. What kind of problems would they like to solve?

Next, give each student a copy of the “Miracle Elixir Inventor” handout. Ask them to identify the biggest problem that the world is facing and come up with an imaginary elixir that would fix it.

* SPARK

Setting-O-Matic

GRADES 4–7

TYPE
NARRATIVE

Students learn to incorporate setting as a key element of a story, starting with inspiration from collages.

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN

Students ground a character in a world using sensory details and vivid imagery, and incorporate setting as a key element of a story.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Copies of “[Mighty and the Three Kids](#)” by Oscar
- Copies of the Setting-O-Matic – Handout
- Copies of *National Geographic* magazines or other publications or photographs with visually striking settings (optional)

WHAT YOU WILL DO

A mini-lesson on setting applies to many kinds of writing and can be applicable to a host of student-inspired characters. Among other iterations of this lesson, this activity worked well as part of a project where students crafted short stories to explore an original, student-inspired monster’s fears, desires, and daily lives.

Where possible, we like to have students begin this activity by creating a collage using *National Geographic* magazine pictures—a new world and setting for their original character. They will end up with a setting that they find

engaging, and the mash-ups lend themselves to some really interesting narrative—perfect for a human or a monster!

You can choose to share the student example that accompanied the original project, “[Mighty and the Three Kids](#)” by Oscar, or a story of your choosing. Have students pay close attention to how the setting inspires the story. Together as a class, fill out a Setting-o-Matic with Oscar’s story, or that of your chosen character.

What setting do your students envision for their characters? Give students a few minutes to sketch out the world that they imagine for their characters, including an unexpected “rule” of this new world (Do fish turn to paper when it snows? Does everyone turn into a rainbow-crying fairy at midnight on Halloween? Does everyone use magic?.) All of the rules of a story can be written through the setting!

Students should fill out their Setting-O-Matic, taking inspiration from the collage they made. Share out in pairs or groups.

99 WRITING

Mighty and the Three Kids

by Oscar, 826CHI

TYPE
NARRATIVE

This is the story of a lifetime, starting in the village called Dullahan Village. The village was a kingdom ruled by a king. The village was made up of brick houses, a forest, mountains, and a huge waterfall. The village was like a festival, full of decorations, pearls, crystals, and jewelry. All of the Dullahans were half-man, half-horse, with no heads. They wore decorations like rings, headbands, bracelets, and necklaces. All the jewelry gave them great powers like magic defense, magic attack, and magic strength. They were fearless.

The king's son, Mighty, was so different that none of the Dullahans wanted him anymore. Mighty had once challenged three kids named Jared, Nyne, and Carly. He tried to defeat them, but he lost the fight. Jared had spiky hair that was dyed red and wore a shirt with a symbol for peace on it. He was adventurous and curious and he'd never give up on anything. Nyne had neat, well-kept hair that was light brown. He always wore shorts and a shirt with a symbol for

curiosity on it, and he was good at climbing rocks. Carly had beautiful long, black hair, and wore a dress that flowed in the wind. She also wore pearls and a headband that was black but patterned with leaves like a princess. Jared and Nyne thought she was beautiful and always full of happiness.

One day, mysterious creatures came to Dullahan Village and attacked. Everyone was like, “I’ve never seen this creature before.”

The king called out, “Attack!” and Mighty came to accept his challenge. He started to fight with swords. Mighty made the last attack and wounded the enemy’s shoulder. The creatures’ dirty-faced leader cried, “Arghhhhhh! I’ve never seen anyone fight like this!”

And off they went. The enemy leader went away, and people were cheering for Mighty.

His father was impressed, and he made Mighty a knight to protect people.

The next day, his father and Mighty were sitting together. His father said, “You did great out there, son. You protected our village.” Mighty thanked his father. Then his father bid him good night.

“Good night, Dad,” Mighty replied.

When Mighty went to sleep, his darkened room filled with dark spirits flying around.

They went inside Mighty's head. The next day, when Mighty woke up for lunch, he was talking in a scary voice, saying that all the Dullahans should be banished forever!

His father replied, "How dare you? This is how you repay me? You are kicked out of this village. Leave! Leave this instant!"

It was a harsh punishment, but hearing that the Dullahans would be banished had filled Mighty's father with fear. All the Dullahans were super angry and upset. The Dullahans scolded, "You are a disgrace to your father! Mighty, why would you do this? We're very disappointed, Mighty. Leave. You are banned from this village forever."

When he tried to return, the other Dullahans just looked at him. They exclaimed, "Go away. Remember, you've been banned from this village."

Then, Mighty made an announcement that he wanted forgiveness. He told his people that he was sorry because something was controlling his head, making him do what he did to his father.

The Dullahans responded, "No," so Mighty cried and ran away.

He had nothing to eat or drink, but he still had his jewelry. He made fire. He had no comfort, he had no father, and something was happening to his brain. He got insanely crazy. He went out of control. He was not feeling good, and he was acting like

something else—all of his body had changed. His eyes changed color, and his DNA changed. He had a headache and was complaining that his head hurt. His skin and his whole body were in pain.

Meanwhile, Jared, Nyne, and Carly heard a voice say, "Swallow these light spheres," so the kids swallowed some blue spheres they'd found. Something weird was happening. Their throats were burning and their shadows were different. Three mythical shadow creatures came out of their shadows. Nyne's was a tiger, Carly's was a gecko, and Jared's was a bearded dragon. Now, the kids had even more magic and powers.

They left on a journey to get back to Snowflake Village, a village full of wooden houses and a wooden bridge. The village had a lot of snow and windmills. On the way, a giant lizard that was tied to a rope made them fall into a tunnel and into some ancient ruins. Nyne noticed something: a dark cave full with treasures and mythical creatures. They discussed that the place looked familiar, and Jared said, "Yes, this is the ancient ruins, full of treasures and creatures like Poo Snake."

Nyne was trying to explain the place to the others, and Carly was scared that the ancient ruins could be dangerous. In the ruins they met this creature who was a half-robin, half-human and wore a blue shirt. His legs were covered with feathers and his name was Bird Boy. Together, they joined forces and were more powerful. Together, they traveled all the way to their families.

Then, they saw something coming, and you know who it was? It was Mighty, running to those three kids. Mighty again accepted their challenge to fight, and the three kids used magic—all different kinds of magic. Mighty was using his sword and his power of Earth's realm. Mighty tried to beat them, but they were too powerful. Mighty started getting weaker and weaker because the three kids had been upgrading their magic with the light spheres.

Mighty was defeated and thwarted by the three kids. The three kids cheered for their victory.

Back in the Dullahan Village, the Dullahans were sad and crying about Mighty, because they hadn't seen him for a long time. They missed him after he was banished.

Meanwhile, inside the house, The King was watching the news and he heard that Mighty was dead. Mighty's dad shouted, "Nooooooooooooooooo! Mighty, I am so sorry."

The king made an announcement that Mighty was dead, and all Dullahans gasped and

cried, saying, “Mighty was a great man, we’re so sorry.”

The king decided that the Dullahans should walk into the waterfall as a tribute to Mighty, since that was how Dullahans showed that they were in mourning. One by one, the Dullahans walked through the waterfall, and once the last one passed through, the entrance to their village became magically sealed.

To this day, the waterfall is still known as the Waterfall of Sadness.

* SPARK

Character-O-Matic Protagonist & Antagonist

GRADES 4-7

TYPE
NARRATIVE

In this activity, students create original monsters in archetypal protagonist and antagonistic roles by focusing on internal and external characteristics.

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN

Students will create original monsters, focusing on internal and external character traits.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Character-O-Matic Antagonist Handout
- Character-O-Matic Protagonist Handout

WHAT YOU WILL DO

Character-O-Matic: Protagonist

Have students think about and name their favorite monsters—or characters—from books, movies, or TV. As students provide examples of favorite characters, ask: What do they love about them? What do they know about the character's fears? Using students' examples, ask questions that point to how a character's fears and desires shape a story.

Have students tear through *National Geographic* magazines to build a collage of visual inspiration for a monster of their own.

Students should now brainstorm ideas about their monster using the Character-O-Matic “Protagonist” Handout.

Have students read the filled out portions of the “Character-O-Matic ‘Protagonist’” handout aloud to a partner and have their partner draw what they picture based on their description. Review the drawing together. If parts feel like they’re missing, students should add them!

Character-O-Matic: Antagonist

If time allows, students may create another collage using *National Geographic* magazines to use as inspiration for an antagonist to their monster protagonists.

Have students explore an antagonist and their relationship to students’ protagonists by filling out the “Character-O-Matic ‘Antagonist’” handout. Similarly, students may read aloud their antagonist’s characteristics to a partner to have their partner sketch out how they imagine this monster, and to prompt discussion for what may need to be added to the description.

{ } LESSON

#TeamWolf: Writing Fairytale for Twitter

by Christopher Ankney,
AT Bianchi, and Amy
Wilson, 826michigan

GRADES 7–8

TYPE
NARRATIVE
VISUAL, PERFORMING,
AND MEDIA ARTS

COMMITMENT
1 SESSION, 90
MINUTES

Twitter plays an important part in our collective culture. It connects people across the world in real-time. It showcases diverse perspectives, authentic voices, and gives us access to new worlds of information, ideas, and opinions previously unknown to us.

Here are some essential questions that will come up in this lesson:

- If I only had a certain number of words to say what I wanted to say, how could I get across the most meaning?
- Are the words I'm using getting across my actual meaning or is there a better way to say this?
- If the Big Bad Wolf had a Twitter account, what would he tweet about?

SESSION:

Students apply the features of Twitter to construct a profile for the persona of a Fairytale character.

YOU WILL NEED

- Optional: access to a Character Counter such as Charcounter.com
- Physical and/or online copies of several popular fairy tales. It's important to choose fairy tales from around the world, such as:
 - The Thunder and The Lightning (Nigeria)
 - Urashima Taro (Japan)
 - Little Red Riding Hood (France)
 - Vasilisa The Fair (Russia)
 - Hansel and Gretel (Germany)
 - The Rabbit and The Coyote (Brazil)
- Copies of the "Anatomy of a Tweet 101" handout
- Copies of the "Fairy Tale Characters in 700 Characters" handout
- Copies of the "#TeamWolf Synonym Game" handout

HOW TO BEGIN (5 MINUTES)

Start off by asking for a show of hands: "Who knows what Twitter is? Who has a Twitter? Who has Tweeted in the last week?"

Hand each student a copy of the "Anatomy of a Tweet 101" handout. Explain to your students that Twitter is a social networking site which allows users to share short updates about what they are doing, thinking, reading or watching. It's important to note that Twitter messages are only 140 characters (or about 30-35 words).

Next, open a discussion on the significance of Twitter. Why is Twitter important?

Here are some talking points for your discussion:

- Twitter is far-reaching
- Many people use it
- People of all ages use it
- It connects people across the world instantaneously
- It showcases diverse perspectives and opinions

STEP 1 (10 MINUTES)

Next, split your students into small groups (3-4) and give them 5 minutes to think, talk, and write at least two sentences about how Twitter has changed the world.

Below are some discussion questions and talking points to help students get thinking about Twitter's impact. You can either display these questions on the board or print them off in a worksheet for the groups to work on together.

Ask your students:

- How might faster information flow be useful in an emergency?
- What might happen if we know more about people from other cultures? For example, it may increase our empathy or open us up to differing world views
- How might twitter help us make new friends we wouldn't have known before?

Next, open these questions up for a class discussion. Have each group share their sentences as to how Twitter changed the world.

STEP 2 (3 MINUTES)

Transition

On the board, write down a few of the shared sentences to create a single “Tweet” about how Twitter has changed the world. But... it’s too long! Remember: Tweets are only 140 characters (or about 30-35 words).

Explain to your students that you need to work together to make this tweet shorter. How can we do that? That’s right, by taking out some words. What’s that called? Editing!

Note: Be sure to save these shared thoughts, as they will be useful later on in the lesson.

STEP 3 (5 MINUTES)

Introduction to Editing Tools

Start by opening a discussion on editing. Ask your students, “who can describe editing?”

Define editing for your students: “Editing is the process of condensing and changing what we’ve already written, either to make it better or more clear, or to make it fit into certain guidelines.”

Explain that one great tool for editing and thought-condensing is using synonyms. Ask your students: “Who knows what a synonym is?”

Define synonyms for your students: “A synonym is a word that means the same thing (or almost the same thing) as another word.”

To build an understanding, start by writing JAR on the board and ask your students: “Who knows a

synonym for the word JAR?” Some possible answers could be can, vase, bottle, pot, crock, or vat.

Next, ask your students: “What about a word like EXCEPTIONAL?” Some possible answers could be odd, rare, strange, unusual, or unique.

Explain to your students that finding synonyms for words can help us make our sentences and our meanings more clear, and they can definitely help us reach the 140 character limit on Twitter.

STEP 4 (10 MINUTES)

Assign each student (and volunteer if needed) a different word, using the “Synonym Game” handout. On the handout, these words are paired off so that every student will have a synonym match for their word. There are also blank spaces included so that you can create your own synonym matches, if you so desire.

Ask each student to affix their synonym to their forehead without looking at it. Next, ask your students to talk to each other, and without looking at their own word, or saying the words on anyone else’s forehead, to try to find their synonym partner. Possible questions or prompts for students are: “What does your word mean? Describe your word to me.”

Once each student has found their synonym match, they should work together in pairs to come up with at least five other words or phrases for their synonyms.

STEP 5 (5 MINUTES)

Editing Tools Discussion

Synonyms

Next, have a quick wrap-up discussion on synonyms. Synonyms are a great tool to help us with editing and word choice.

Ask your students: “Why would the words we choose be important? Could we just select any two pairs of words from our Synonym game and use those words interchangeably?”

A great example of this is the use of “hard” vs. “difficult”. They are certainly synonyms, but if someone is talking about a piece of wood [knock on a desk], would you say “This desk is really difficult?”

So why is word choice important? For the purpose of clarity. Having the right words is important for us to be able to get across our intended meaning in the best way possible.

Repetition

Another very useful editing tool is looking for and removing repetition in our writing. This can help writers combine two or more thoughts into one, in order to save space and make their writing more concise.

Together as a class, work on the following example. What words or ideas are repeated in the following?

“The mayor of Pink Chair City escaped on a stolen unicorn. Meanwhile, the citizens of Pink Chair City rejoiced.”

Work together to edit the above down to this:

“The citizens of Pink Chair City rejoiced as the Mayor escaped on a stolen unicorn.”

Great job! But, looking for and removing repetition in writing isn't always that obvious and easy. Below are some less obvious examples to work on together as a class.

“The naughty puppies jumped into the swimming pool. They thought the swimming pool would be a great way to cool off after running around the yard. The naughty puppies were digging holes in the flower beds while running around.”

Working together, edit the above down to:

“The naughty puppies jumped into the swimming pool to cool off after running around and digging holes in the flower beds.”

Here's another challenge:

“Mary really loves cupcakes. She loves them so much, she eats cupcakes for breakfast, lunch and dinner.”

Working together, edit the above down to:

“Mary loves cupcakes so much she eats them for breakfast, lunch and dinner.”

STEP 6 (3 MINUTES)

Editing our thoughts about Twitter

Next, return to your class' shared thoughts from Step 2. How has Twitter changed the world? Work together to edit these down into a single tweet (140 characters).

This is a great way to test your students' newfound skills in using synonyms and eliminating repetition.

At this point, throw a wrench into the works! Tell the class they have to write a tweet using this hashtag: #TeamWolf.

STEP 7 (5 MINUTES)

Discussion: How do people use hashtags?

Next, launch into a discussion of hashtags: "What is a hashtag?" You can define for your students that a hashtag is a phrase, which acts as a category that Tweets are then sorted by.

How do people use hashtags? There are a few reasons a Twitter user may add a hashtag to their tweets, for example:

- To declare themselves as part of a group, for example #TeamJacob, #ChiefKeefFans, #Beliebers
- To narrow the large conversation of Twitter into one topic that is either general or specific to one conference, event, TV show, or sporting event. For example, #CleanWaterInternational, #glee, #DWTS, #superbowl, #NCAA
- To add your own thoughts on a trend, or large-group discussion, for example #WhyBelnARelationship, #YouKnowYoureFromEarthWhen, #ProudToBeAFanOf

Students should use a hashtag in the tweets they're about to write, so they can find them later, and anyone who wants to connect with and/or follow the class can do so easily.

STEP 8 (5 MINUTES)

Retelling Fairy Tales

For the remainder of this lesson, students will be asked to take fairy tales from around the world and, using the editing and word choice tools that they've just learned, craft tweets retelling these tales from

the perspective of a character living in the story.

As an example, work together to write tweets from Little Red Riding Hood's Perspective.

- TWITTER ID: @LittleRedHood
- Ask someone to briefly retell the story. What should the first tweet be? What happens next?
- Make sure each tweet is only 140 Characters (or about 30/35 words) long.
- Make sure to create and use a #Hashtag in each tweet of the story.

STEP 9 (25 MINUTES)

Work Session

Make sure each student has at least one copy of the "Fairy Tale Characters in 700 Characters" handout, as well as and copies of available fairytales to choose from.

Have them choose their favorite fairy tale and select one standout character from it. They will then be tasked with creating a Twitter handle, Twitter bio, and five tweets from the perspective of their character. Remind your students that they must create one hashtag and use it in every tweet that they create.

If students finish early, have them select another character and complete the task from second, different perspective.

STEP 10 (15 MINUTES)

Conclusion

Wrap up the session by sharing as a group. Ask for student volunteers who would like to share their tweets with the class.

A fun variation would be to ask students to write each tweet on a separate 3" x 5" note card and set up a display of student twitter feeds in the persona of these characters.

99 WRITING

Percy Jackson Tweets

Percy Jackson finds a problem related to him and Zeus. He goes through a tough process to stop it.

#epic #book #about2inchesthick

by Alex, 826michigan

TYPE
NARRATIVE
VISUAL, PERFORMING,
AND MEDIA ARTS