



# Activity One

## CHARACTERIZATION

**OBJECTIVES:** To create a visual representation of a character; to analyze a character.

**MATERIALS:** large sheets of butcher paper 5' or 6' long • construction paper • rulers • scissors  
• markers and crayons • glue sticks

**REVIEW:** Five ways an author creates a character are:

1. what the character says
2. what the character does
3. what the character thinks
4. how the character looks
5. what other characters say about the character

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Divide the class into groups with four members each.
2. Each group selects a character in a book or story that was recently read and discussed in class.
3. Number group members 1 to 4 and tell them to assume the following group roles:
  - **Character's Voice:** Look for examples of the character's speech that reveal important information about him or her. Record at least two direct quotes. Beneath each quote, record what you think the character's words say about him or her.
  - **Character's Deeds:** Search for passages that show something the character does. Write at least two examples of the character's actions. Use direct quotes, or state what the character does in your own words. Beneath each statement, record what you think the character's actions reveal about him or her.
  - **Character's Looks:** Find passages that describe the character's appearance. If you cannot find a direct quote, write what you think the character looks like and why you picture the character this way. Include information about the character's hair color, eye color, age, height, and distinguishing features. Draw a sketch of the character.
  - **Character's Thoughts and Feelings:** Find descriptions of the character's thoughts and feelings. Record at least two passages that show what's inside the character's mind and heart. Beneath each quote, record what you learn about the character by examining his or her thoughts or feelings.
4. Each group member records his or her findings on a piece of scrap paper.
5. A volunteer lies down in the middle of the butcher paper to be traced. After the tracing is completed, group members outline the shape in black marker and erase any pencil marks.
6. Students add clothes and facial features to the "body" to portray the character studied.
7. Each group member adds information about the character's voice, deeds, looks, and/or thoughts and feelings.
8. Each group takes turns presenting their life-size character study to the class.



# Activity Two

## ELEMENTS OF A STORY

### OBJECTIVES:

After completing this interactive story activity, students will be able to:

- identify literary elements and plot components of a familiar folk tale;
- describe the different literary elements of a story, including characters, setting, and sequence of events;
- define literary plot components, including exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution.

### MATERIALS:

Computer, paper, and pencil.

### PROCEDURE:

1. On your classroom computer, go to <http://www.learner.org/interactives/story>. There you will find an interactive version of the story, "Cinderella." Follow the directions on the web page and listen to the entire story.
2. Complete the activities within the story about elements of a story.
3. When you have completed the interactive story, take the "Test Your Skills" section of the activity.
4. When you have finished with the "Test Your Skills," print out a record of your answers and share it with your teacher.
5. Now use what you have learned about elements of a story to write and illustrate your own version of "Cinderella," which takes place in a different setting than the version presented in the interactive. How would the story change if Cinderella's glass slippers were cowboy boots? Or running shoes? Or flip-flops?
6. Finally, ask your teacher to set up a time for you to present your version of "Cinderella" to the class.



# Activity Three

## SYMBOLISM AND THEME

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will investigate the overall theme of primary alphabet books by observing the illustrations the authors used to symbolize the sounds made by each letter of the alphabet. After completing this task, learners will write ABC books of their own centered around themes of their own choosing.

**MATERIALS:** Primary alphabet books from the school library, paper, pencil, crayons, markers, scissors, and other creative supplies.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Students will read several primary ABC books, paying special attention to the theme used in the illustrations of each book.
2. After reading the ABC books, each student will decide on a theme for his or her own ABC book, such as animals (each letter will stand for an animal's name) or flowers or plants.
3. Each student will then construct his or her own ABC book and share it with the class.

### The following definitions will be reviewed and used during the construction of the books:

**THEME:** is the main idea or underlying meaning of a literary work. A theme may be stated or implied. Theme differs from the subject or topic of a literary work in that it involves a statement or opinion about the topic. Not every literary work has a theme. Themes may be major or minor. A major theme is an idea the author returns to time and again. It becomes one of the most important ideas in the story. Minor themes are ideas that may appear from time to time.

It is important to recognize the difference between the theme of a literary work and the subject of a literary work. The subject is the topic on which an author has chosen to write. The theme, however, makes some statement about or expresses some opinion on that topic.

**SYMBOLISM:** A person, place, or object that has a meaning in itself, but suggests other meanings as well is a symbol. Things, characters and actions can be symbols. Anything that suggests a meaning beyond the obvious can be a symbol.

Some symbols are conventional, generally meaning the same thing to all readers. For example: bright sunshine symbolizes goodness, and water is a symbolic cleanser.



# Activity Four

## STORY ELEMENTS

### OBJECTIVES:

After completing the "Story Element Starter" at <http://mrsbrowsersclass.googlepages.com/projects>, students will be able to:

- identify all the literary elements in a book of their choosing;
- complete and print a Power Point project about the literary elements in their books;
- present their completed projects to their class members.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Choose one fiction book that you have read this year. This book will be the topic of your Power Point presentation.
2. On your classroom computer, go to <http://mrsbrowsersclass.googlepages.com/projects>. There you will find an example of a Power Point presentation.
3. Before you get started, please save your project. First click "Save As" and add your name to the file name.
4. Highlight the "Title of Book" and replace it with your book's title. (Don't forget to capitalize the first, last, and all important words in-between!)
5. Next highlight "Author's Name" and replace it with your author's name.
6. Now, add your name to the "Created by" section.
7. Finally, replace the picture with either a picture of your book cover or something appropriate. You may also change the background design.
8. Add any other pictures or captions that you'd like to your project.
9. Print your Power Point Story Elements Starter and assemble it.
10. Share your project with your class.



Title of Book

Author's Name

Created by: Your Name

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



# Activity Five

## ROUND ROBIN WRITING

### OBJECTIVES:

After completing this activity, the students will:

- become familiar with the meaning and use of the literary elements: characters, setting, theme, and plot;
- use their knowledge of these literary elements to cooperatively write a short story and present it to the class.

### MATERIALS:

Pencils, writing paper, markers, crayons, poster board.

### PROCEDURE:

1. The teacher will divide the class into groups of four students each.
2. Each member of each group will receive a blank index card.
3. In each group, one student will be responsible for coming up with the characters in the story. The second person will invent the setting. The third person will create the theme. The fourth person will come up with the basic plot.
4. As a group, students come together and write a story. After you have decided on the four basic parts of story elements, you will each write one paragraph. Then, continue and write as many paragraphs as the timer allows.
5. When time is up, each group will share their story with all the members of the group.
6. The members then design a large poster illustrating the story elements.
7. At a designated time, each group shares its story with the class.



# Activity Six

## PROJECT THEME PARK

**OBJECTIVE:**

After a session of review about the elements of a story, the students will be able to:

- design a theme park that represents their favorite story elements.

**MATERIALS:**

Pencils, paper, markers, crayons.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Divide students into groups of four.
2. Ask the group to choose their favorite type of book (i.e. fairy tales, mysteries, historical fiction, etc.)
3. Now, ask the group members to choose two favorite books from the genre they selected.
4. List the titles and authors of the favorite books.
5. Describe the characters, settings, and details of the stories that were chosen.
6. Develop a theme park based on the story elements from the stories chosen.
7. Share the Theme Park with classmates.