

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# One Sentence at a Time

## Objectives

In this activity, you will work in a small group to:

- Collaborate with group members to write a creative story
- Practice using the elements of a good story

## Activity Overview

Have you ever played a game of “Telephone”? In that game, one person whispers a message to another person in a group, then that person whispers the message to the next person, and so on. By the time the message gets to the last person, it is often very different from the original message. In today’s activity, you will write a story with your classmates where each person writes one sentence at a time. Unlike “Telephone,” the goal is to have a final product that makes sense and includes everyone’s imagination.

## Materials Needed

Per Small Group

- Paper
- Pencil or pen

## Activity Instructions

This activity is meant to be completed in one 30-minute session.

### Prepare to Write: 5 minutes

1. Gather the materials you need for writing.
2. Review the characteristics of a good story.

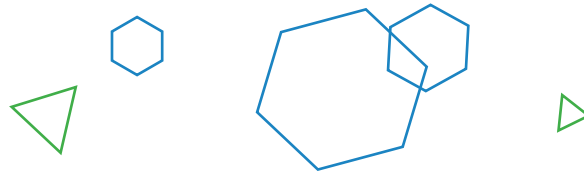
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A good story:

- Has a clear beginning, middle, and end.
  - Includes at least one character; a character may be a person or an animal.
  - Shows a character solving a problem.
  - Tells events in order.
  - Describes a setting, which is the place and time the story happens.
3. Decide which scholar will write the first sentence and in what order each scholar will write. Keep in mind that the first few sentences of the story should introduce the main character, setting, and the character's problem.



### Write the Story: 25 minutes

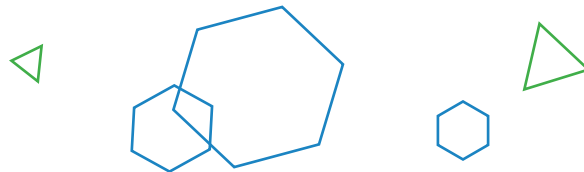
4. Have the first scholar write the first sentence of the story and then pass it to the next scholar. That scholar should read what the first scholar wrote and then add a new sentence to the story.
5. Pass the story to each member of the group. Continue until you finish the story. Remember that a good story ends by showing how the main character solves the problem. Try these ideas if you get stuck:
- Think about the characters that have been introduced. Is there anything more you can say to tell about what the character is like, what they are doing, or why they act in a certain way?

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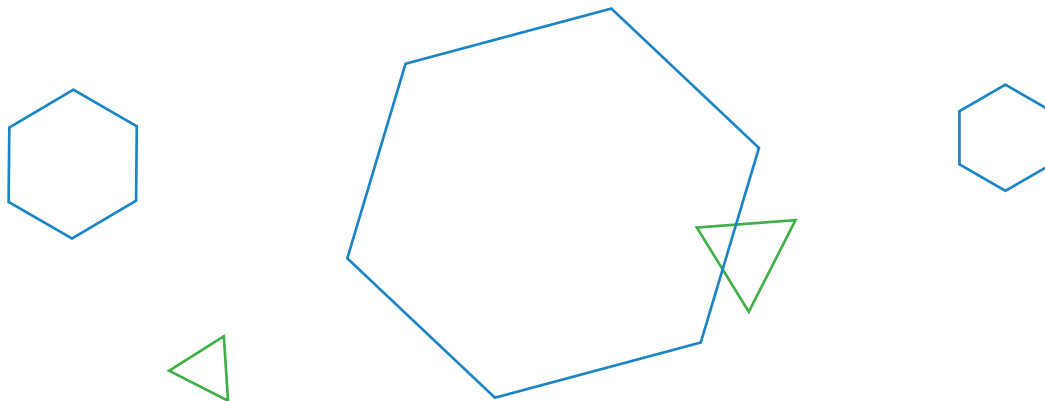
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- Think about the characteristics of a good story and decide what elements your story might be missing. Has the character's problem been introduced? If so, what might the character do to solve the problem?
  - Try imagining the characters in your world. What would happen next?
6. After you finish the story, read it aloud to your group. Try to guess who added which line to the story.



### Questions for Discussion

- Did the story unfold the way you expected? Why or why not?
- Did you like working together with your group to write a story? What was fun? What was challenging?
- If you had the chance to rewrite your shared story, what might you change? Why?



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### TEACHER NOTES

- As an alternative, have scholars add to the story one paragraph at a time. This will allow each scholar to fully develop an idea or event before passing it to the next scholar.
- Consider choosing a story starter sentence as the first sentence of your story and having each scholar add a sentence that builds on the original sentence. Here are a few sites that provide sentences to use to start a story:
  - [journalbuddies.com/creative-writing-2/story-starter-sentences/](https://journalbuddies.com/creative-writing-2/story-starter-sentences/)
  - [scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/story-starters-eight-great-ways-kick-story/](https://scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/story-starters-eight-great-ways-kick-story/)
  - [scholastic.com/teachers/story-starters/](https://scholastic.com/teachers/story-starters/)

