

TEACHER GUIDE



Making a Character Come Off The Page

With: Marie Powell

Grade: 7/8

Date: October 23rd

Artistic Discipline: Literary Arts

OVERVIEW

Join Marie Powell as she takes your students through the process of bringing a character to life. She will guide your students through a variety of prompts and writing exercises that will lead to them turning their daydreams into a character that could walk right off the page!



CLASSROOM SETUP

Group the desks in small circles so there are 4-5 students in a group

MATERIALS

- Paper and Pencil

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Marie Powell's castle-hopping adventures across North Wales resulted in her medieval fantasy duology, *Last of the Gifted*, set in 13th C Wales. She's authored 40+ children's books with publishers like Scholastic Education and Amicus. Marie also works as a freelance journalist, editor, and English-as-an-Additional-Language instructor, based on Treaty 4 Territory, Regina.



Curriculum Outcomes & Indicators



Grade Seven

CP7.4 Investigate how dramatic character develops from role.	<i>b. Investigate when in role how character may be expressed through actions.</i>
CP7.4 Investigate how dramatic character develops from role.	<i>f. Revise work based upon reflection and critical analysis of the role and character.</i>
CP7.4 Investigate how dramatic character develops from role.	<i>c. Use language with purpose to develop character and achieve dramatic intent when speaking and writing in role.</i>

Grade Eight

CP8.4 Demonstrate how dramatic characters interact in relationships within the drama and/or collective creation.	<i>f. Reflect on sources and functions of tension expressed in relationships among roles or characters portrayed.</i>
CP8.5 Investigate how theatrical elements (e.g., story, character, design, space) are combined to achieve dramatic purpose.	<i>b. Analyze how each character's actions and the consequences of those actions affect the progression of the drama.</i>
CR8.1 Respond to professional dance, drama, music, and visual art works through the creation of own arts expressions.	<i>d. Create own work (e.g., visual or performing arts) in response to a professional arts expression, and describe how own work is inspired or influenced by the original work.</i>

Workshop Vocabulary

Publisher

A publisher is the person/company who take your book, help edit it, print it and then send it out to book stores.

Revise

To revise something is to sit down with what you've already written and figure out all the ways you can make the writing better.

Fiction/Non Fiction

Fiction is something that is invented, like a story we made from our imaginations. Nonfiction is the opposite, something that is true!

Illustrations/ Illustrator

An illustration is a picture in a book and an illustrator is the person who made the picture.

Author/Writer

An illustration is a picture in a book and an illustrator is the person who made the picture.

Author

The author of a book or story is the person who wrote the book or story.

Pre Workshop Exercises



ACTIVITY 1 – Story Starts (Writing with Prompts)

Materials: Paper, pencil or pen (writing implements), a timer (physical or online), a book of elementary school writing prompts or online writing prompts such as <https://www.thoughtco.com/writing-prompts-seventh-grade-4165667> or <https://www.journalbuddies.com/prompts-by-grade/7th-grade-writing-ideas/> or https://www.southampton.k12.va.us/cms/lib/VAO2208188/Centricity/Domain/557/gr_8_writing_prompts.pdf

- This can be done once a week as a warm-up and creative writing exercise.
- Choose a book of writing prompts for elementary schools, or google online for writing prompts geared to Grade 7 or Grade 8 level.
- Choose a prompt from the list. Let the students know the time allowed and set the timer.
- Give a standard introduction, such as Natalie Goldberg's Freewriting Guidelines from "Writing Down the Bones."
- Say the prompt and start the timer. When the timer goes off, ask the students to finish their word or sentence and put down their pens.
- Optional: share the stories in groups or in the classroom. Rinse and repeat.

ACTIVITY 2 – Word Books

Materials: Mini notebook, pen or pencil

- Have the students collect words and phrases they hear throughout the week, by jotting them down in a mini notebook.
- You can get mini notebooks at the Dollar store in packs of 3, or use any notebook or pad that's small enough to carry in a pocket or purse.
- Then once a week or so, have the students choose a specific number of words from their notebook at random, and write a story or poem based on those words in a timed exercise for 3-5 minutes.
- Optional: share the stories in groups or in the classroom. Rinse and repeat.

Pre Workshop Exercises



ACTIVITY 3 – Meet the Character

- Listen to a song video and then describe a character in it.
- Listen to “Brave” by Sara Bareilles. ...” - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUQsqBqxoR4>
Or “Breakaway” by Kelly Clarkson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-3vPxKdj6o>
- The singer is also playing a character in the video. Imagine that you are have a conversation with the character who sings that song. What would you talk about? Start with that singer/character saying Hello to you... (Write for 1-2 minutes.)
- Variation: Imagine yourself as a character in a music video and write a rant (an opinionated speech about a current topic) (<https://mrdeppe.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/6/3/22639892/rant.pdf>).
- First, set a timer for one minute. Either as a group, class, or individual, brainstorm a list of things that are wrong in the community or in the world. These can include anything from personal pet peeves to world issues.
- Then choose one that has “high stakes” or that you really care about.
- List all the negatives; include personal stories not just generalities (but don’t be personal or resort to name calling). Don’t stop at “I hate it” but write until you figure out what really bothers you about it.
- Decide on a tone: sarcasm, irony, and satire are fine.
- Now set a timer for 5 minutes and begin to write about it.
- State three important points, and prove it with a specific example, detail, statistic etc. Save the most annoying for last.
- Then at the very end, suggest a solution.
- Optional: share the rants in groups or in the classroom.

Broadcast Program

00:00 - 00:05:

- Artist Bio Video + Introduction

00:05 - 00:10:

- Introduce writing prompts and writing; introduce writing circles and freewriting guidelines

00:10 - 00:20:

- Writing Prompts and sharing

00:20 - 00:30:

- Character prompts and sharing

00:30 - 00:40:

- Mashup prompts and sharing

00:40 - 00:50:

- Questions, talk about being a writer, etc.



Post Workshop Exercises



ACTIVITY 1 – Collage Prompt

Materials: Old magazines, tourism guides, etc; scissors, paper, glue, markers, pen/pencil

- Have the students think about a character for a story. Look through the magazines you've gathered as collage materials to find pictures and words related to that character: favourite colour(s), decorations in their room, where they like to go during the day, special holidays they've been on, other questions from the list used in the workshop.
- Have them choose 10-20 pictures or words/phrases at random, cut them out, paste them onto a paper in any order they choose.
- Optional: have them show-and-tell the resulting collage in small groups or with the class.
- Finally, write about the character using as many words or images from the collage as they can.
- Optional: share the stories in small groups or with the class.

ACTIVITY 2 – Illustrated 8-Part Zine Story

Materials: One sheet of paper, Post-it notes, ruler, scissors (or X-acto knife), glue stick or glue, drawing materials (pencil, pencil crayons, markers etc); video guidelines like How to Make a Zine from 1 sheet of paper [8-page or 14-page] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTEZTVwAWIO> or Folding a Printed (Drawn) 1-Sheet 8p Mini-Comic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=QQCm9Yo4hGO&t=20s>

- Fold a page into an 8-page Zine as shown in the first video, label the pages, and draw a short comic or story.
- Students can write and draw a story in 8 parts as shown in the video.
- Before your students start, have a conversation with them about the way that character can be revealed through actions that that character takes. Ask your students for examples of a surprising action that one of their favorite characters made in a piece of media they like
- Challenge your students to create a story where someone's character is revealed just by their actions. Ask each of them to choose 1-2 specific actions that will happen in the first 4 parts of the Zine that is revealing of one of the characters in the story.

Resources:

Spotify playlist

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6Tyhahqm1EJ2IHOytwMYDq>

<https://music.amazon.com/user-playlists/308c5cbceff44643bf2ad5b26962c0acsune>

How to Write a Rant - <https://mrdeppe.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/6/3/22639892/rant.pdf>

Additional Information

Upcoming Workshops

(French/English)	Nov. 18-20	Julien Hamon-Fafard – Visual Arts (Coil Pots & and an Intro to Clay)
	Jan. 21-22	Lindsay Harpham – Contemporary Dance
	Feb. 11-12	Eric Gabriel – Literary Arts (The Art of Performance/Performance Poetry)
	Mar. 18-19	Ray the Nihilist – Music (Making A Hip Hop Beat)
	Apr. 15-16	Kamisha Alexson – Visual Arts (Designing the 12 Tipi Teachings)
(French/English)	May 5-7	Gabrielle Dufresne – Theatre (Puppetry)

Find out more about Marie on her website:

<https://mariepowell.ca/>

