

8G: Advanced Story Writing

In this unit, students get to practice their creative writing skills. They'll learn the elements of storytelling and character development, and the power of vivid language to grab readers and pull them into a story. Students gain a sense of ownership over their writing as they experiment with the impact of their choices on sentences, language, character traits, and plot twist. As students consider how to use these elements to create a story of their own, they also strengthen their ability to analyze how these elements work in a piece of literature.

Students begin with creating a believable, multifaceted character by identifying a possible character, then observing and recording details about their character as they describe them in a particular setting. They experiment with narrative point of view, including working with multiple narrators. As students develop their storyline, they explore how their character reacts to both internal and external conflict, and think through how their character changes and grows when the story resolves. Students pull all their drafting and thinking together to write a final draft of their story and practice the most important part of creative writing—revision.

What my student will do/learn:

- Students work to create a believable character, setting, and problem for their short story.
- Students apply their understanding of plot elements and the shape of a story to develop their own story.
- Students explore point of view and its effect on readers; and experiment with external and internal monologue, sensory details, and multiple perspectives, determining what works in their own story and incorporating those choices into their narrative.
- Students consider their character's inner conflict, using that conflict to inform their character's change and growth.
- Students revise their writing to incorporate variety in sentence structure to influence pacing and provide a more vivid reading experience.
- Students revise, paying particular attention to sentence structure, pacing, and sensory details.
- Students edit their paper, paying particular attention to conventions and transitions, and create a final copy.

Here are some conversation starters that you can use during this unit to promote discussion and encourage continued learning with your student.

1. What problem does your character face? How did this problem help reveal your character's personality?
2. Who tells your story? Why did you make this choice?
3. How does your character change and grow?
4. Imagine I'm a movie executive or major publisher. Read me your favorite part of your story, the part that will convince me that this is the next big blockbuster film or bestselling novel. (Provide feedback to your student by finding something in their story that you can respond to as a reader. For example, "I like that your story takes place in a school. When you describe how he walks through the cramped hallways 'feeling as

invisible as a ghost,' the character's problems and emotions feel believable in that setting.")

5. What worked well for you in this writing process? What might you do differently the next time you craft a short story?