

# STORYTELLING FOR STUDENTS

## YES! AND...

In small groups, students practice the foundational theater exercise of “Yes, and...” to build a story collaboratively. Each student adds to the narrative, reinforcing active listening, adaptability, and group creativity.

### Differentiation

**Grades K-2:** Keep it simple with a “Yes, and...” story circle where each student adds one sentence. The teacher can guide the story if needed to keep it focused and positive.

**Grades 3-5:** Allow students to create “Yes, and...” stories in small groups. Use prompts like, “Once upon a time, a magical creature...” to get them started. They can work together to build a unique story.

**Middle/High School:** Encourage more advanced, unstructured improv stories. Introduce challenges or twists in the middle of the story that students must incorporate creatively, building critical thinking and adaptability.

## WALK IN THEIR SHOES

This exercise encourages students to embody another character’s perspective. Pair students up to perform short, improvisational dialogues from the character’s viewpoint, prompting reflection on different personalities, emotions, and perspectives.

### Differentiation

**Grades K-2:** Simplify by giving students specific emotions to act out. Have them work in pairs, responding with expressions and body language.

**Grades 3-5:** Introduce character role-playing with prompts like, “Imagine you’re a brave knight or a curious explorer.” Have students interact based on these roles and respond to questions in character.

**Middle/High School:** Give more complex character profiles, asking students to consider motivations, conflicts, and relationships. Have pairs or small groups improvise scenes based on character-driven scenarios.

## CHARACTER IN A BAG

Have students select items that represent their character’s personality, background, or emotions. Each student shares their character's "bag" with a partner to develop storytelling skills through empathy and imaginative thinking.

### Differentiation

**Grades K-2:** Use simple, familiar objects for character bags (e.g., a toy, crayon, feather). Encourage younger students to share why they picked the items and use guided questions like, “How does this toy feel today?”

**Grades 3-5:** Let students choose objects that represent a character's traits or background. Have them pair up to introduce their characters to each other.

**Middle/High School:** Add layers by asking students to write a backstory based on the objects. They can perform short monologues or dialogues in character, building depth in their storytelling.

