



STORY CREATORS

after school art + literacy

OVERVIEW

The Story Creators program encourages student creativity and teaches writing and illustration techniques.

Creative writing lessons in poetry and fiction emphasize imagination, imagery, rhythm, setting, character, conflict, and plot, encouraging students to tap into their own interests and creative ideas. Each session begins with a writing prompt for imaginative exploration. Each session ends with interested students sharing their ideas with the class.

Art lessons teach students illustration techniques they are likely unfamiliar with, such as watercolor pencil and pen, water soluble oil pastels, and Matisse-inspired cutouts. Students explore each method before deciding on the two methods they'll use for the final collaborative book project.

This is a ten-week program to serve up to 15 students in 2nd grade at East Lake Elementary School. One lead instructor and one assistant teacher will lead the class, and a school sponsor will be present but not actively involved in activities. The program is scheduled for **Wednesdays from 3.15 to 4.30 pm, February 4 - April 15**. We will not hold class on April 1 (Hamilton County spring break).

Each student will leave the program with a professionally printed copy of the collaborative book. We will hold a school or community presentation and celebration of the students' work.

STAFF COMMITMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Before the start of the program	training session: 2 hours	mandatory for all staff
February 4 - April 15	lesson planning: 1-2 hours per week	recommended for lead staff
February 4 - April 15	instruction: 75 min per week	mandatory for all staff
February 4 - April 15	2-3 classroom observations	mandatory for all staff
TBA	mid-program meeting: 1 hour	mandatory for all staff
TBA after April 15	celebration event: 2 hours	mandatory for all staff
TBA after celebration	final staff meeting: 1 hour	mandatory for all staff

UTC student interns must attend all class sessions and mandatory meetings, and complete the following activities for ThinkAchieve credit: pre-program survey, mid-program survey, and final reflective essay. Attendance is required during UTC holidays—Story Creators programs follow the [Hamilton County school calendar](#).

All staff members work one 75-minute instructional period per week during the ten weeks, not including transportation, student dismissal, set up, and clean up. Lead instructors are required to prepare for each session based on the suggested lessons plans. Assistant instructors are expected to help with set up and clean up. Lead and assistant instructors must manage student dismissal.

Please review the [Hamilton County school calendar](#) and sign up for [Hamilton County's NotifyMe text messaging service](#) for information regarding school closures.

Substitute Procedures

If you are unable to attend a session, contact the coordinator and all instructors as soon as possible. The director can usually fill in for a sick staff member with a few hours notice.

Payment Procedures

Your employment stipend will be disbursed as a single payment at the end of the program. You must complete a W-9 during training for your check to process. Payment may be prorated if you miss staff meetings or class sessions.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS

(75-min sessions)

Session 1: Poetry Rhythm/Repetition and Image + Watercolor Pencils

15 min: Welcome and introduction plus snacks

****REQUIRED Pre-Program Survey during snack time****

10 min: Journal Prompt

Consonant Train: Give students a starting word then ask them to repeat the beginning consonant sound in new words. Students may work individually or as a class. For example, give students the word “lake” to create a consonant train like “lake, low, like, little, lilies.” You may choose to develop the train as a sentence, such as “the lake is low like little lilies.”

15 min: Model Texts and Class Discussion - **Rhythm/Repetition and Image in Poetry**

Read **“Rapper’s Delight”** from *Hip Hop Speaks to Children* using the book and CD. Get students physically involved with clapping or stomping. Discuss repetition of words and sounds.

Image is the foundation of poetry. Encourage students to imagine with all five of their senses to create comparisons in the form of similes and metaphors.

Rhythm is the beat in a song or poem—you can hum or clap along with it. You can create rhythm by repeating consonant sounds at the beginnings of words (the snake sat on a stick and snuck a snack), vowel sounds within words (who knew you liked the zoo too), or sound repetitions like the “tics” at the end of each line in Douglas Florian’s “The Ticks.” And remember: poems don’t need to rhyme to have rhythm.

10 min: Group Repetition

Ask students to look back at their consonant trains and lead the class in a clapping beat as each student shouts a word from his or her list.

15 min: Art Lesson - **Watercolor Pencils + Water + Paintbrushes**

Introduce the Story Creators mantra: **There are no mistakes in art, only opportunities. No erasers needed!**

Work with students to identify and circle images from their consonant trains, such as “snake sandwich” Introduce watercolor pencils and washes and challenge students to draw their images then create color washes using paint brushes and water.

5 min: Group Share

Encourage students to share their consonant trains and illustrations with the class.

5 min: Clean up

Students return journals and art supplies.

Session 2: Rhythm/Repetition in Poetry + Water Soluble Pastels

5 min: Snack

10 min: Journal Prompt

****REQUIRED Writing Assessment Prompt****

Describe yourself two or three years from now. What will you look like? What will you like to do? What will you think about school?

15 min: Model Text and Class Discussion - **Rhythm/Repetition in Poetry**

Read “**The Rosa Parks**” from *Hip Hop Speaks to Children* and Douglas Florian’s “The Ticks.” Discuss rhythm, especially the repeated sounds, words, and phrases.

Rhythm is the beat in a song or poem—you can hum or clap along with it. You can create rhythm by repeating consonant sounds at the beginnings of words (the snake sat on a stick and snuck a snack), vowel sounds within words (who knew you liked the zoo too), or sound repetitions like the “tics” at the end of each line in Douglas Florian’s “The Ticks.” And remember: poems don’t need to rhyme to have rhythm.

10 min: Journal Prompt

I will be...Look back at your journal entry describing yourself in the future, choosing either a word, phrase or sound to repeat. Experiment with the repetitions to build a poem.

20 min: Art Lesson - **Water Soluble Pastels + Water + Paintbrushes**

Teach students to use pastels by taking off wrappers, smudging with torn paper, creating washes with water, etc. Ask them to draw pictures of their future selves or any other images they developed when responding to the journal prompt.

10 min: Group Share

Encourage students to share their journal writing and illustrations. If there’s time, discuss how the images and words could be combined into a collaborative poem.

5 min: Clean up

Students return journals and art supplies.

Session 3: Image in Poetry + Cutouts

5 min: Snack

10 min: Journal

I Am: Pretend to be something—a house, an animal, a stone, a river, etc. Put as many images together as you can think of as you describe what it’s like to be the thing you’ve chosen. Here’s an example to inspire you: “I am the floor of a house. I laugh when people step on me because it tickles.”

Images are really important in poetry (and stories too!). To create an image, describe a thing, especially how it looks, tastes, feels, smells or sounds. Sometimes poets compare one thing to another to create an image, like “the bear’s fur is soft as cotton” or “My ears are sharp like an owl’s listening for the footsteps of tiny creatures in the night.”

15 min: Model Text and Class Discussion - **Image in Poetry**

Read the cutouts section of *Henri Matisse: Drawing with Scissors* by Jane O’Connor.

Discuss the cutouts by Matisse such as *La Gerbe*, the excerpt from *Jazz*, and *Blue Nude III*. What things do they represent? Do they look simple to make?

30 min: Art Lesson - **Construction Paper + Scissors + Glue**

Teach students to create cutouts without first drawing the shapes. Encourage them to play with the technique then challenge them to make cutouts for the image(s) they developed in their journal entries.

10 min: Group Share

Encourage students to share their journal entries and cutouts.

5 min: Clean up

Students return journals and art supplies.

Session 4: Characters in Stories + Watercolor Pencils

5 min: Snack

10 min: Journal Prompt

Character in the Mirror: Imagine a character, give your character a name, then imagine your character is looking in the mirror. What does he or she see? What do these physical traits say about who the character is on the inside?

15 min: Model Text and Class Discussion

Read *Hairs* by Sandra Cisneros.

Discuss how Cisneros' characters are all unique, based on descriptions of their hair.

Characters are the people (but they don't have to be humans!) in your story, and they are a lot like you. Characters have likes and dislikes, and they definitely don't like to sit still and do nothing. Be sure to describe what they do in your story plus what makes them unique. For example, what do they look, sound, and smell like? Do they have particular likes, dislikes, memories, or dreams?

30 min: Collaborative Art Lesson - **Watercolor Pencils + Water + Paintbrushes**

Divide the students into groups and give each a large sheet of watercolor paper with the outline of a person's head or entire body. Have them work together to brainstorm and draw this character using a least one characteristic from each student's journal entry. Encourage students to consider the following questions as they work:

- who is the character?
- where does he or she live?
- what does he or she like best?
- what does he or she not like at all?
- what's his or her favorite thing to do?
- where does he or she live?
- what's his or her hair like?
- what are his or her eyes like?
- what's his or her mouth like?
- what does his or her skin look like?
- what do his or her clothes look like?

10 min: Group Share

Encourage groups to share their characters, discussing the who they are, what they like, and what they do.

5 min: Cleanup

Students return journals and art supplies.

Session 5: Conflict and Plot in Stories + Cutouts

5 min: Snack

10 min: Journal Prompt

What If? Read a brief story (see below) to the class and ask, “If x happens, how would that change the story?” Ask students to write the new story individually or in pairs. You might even work with the class to decide what change the story needs to direct the “What if” question. A variation on this exercise is to stop reading before the end of the story and ask students, “What happens next?” and encourage them to resolve the conflict.

Example story: A green caterpillar lived in a land of wild grasses and leaves. The caterpillar’s mother warned her to stay hidden under the leaf of a tree in the daytime, waiting until nighttime to eat the leaf and move to a new one for hiding. But this caterpillar became very hungry one afternoon, and she ate five big holes through the leaf she’d been hiding under all day. When she poked her head through the fifth hole she’d eaten, she looked up to see the orange beak of a robin.

“Hello,” said the robin.

Not knowing he was a very kind robin who had already eaten that day and had no intention of eating her, the caterpillar ran toward the trunk of the tree. In her rush, she accidentally brushed the tail of a lizard.

The lizard flicked her head and tongue out quickly and said, “Ooh—lunch!”

What if...the caterpillar had talked to the kind robin instead of running away?

or **What happened next?**

15 min: Model Text and Class Discussion - **Conflict and Plot in Stories**

Read *Bow-Wow Bugs a Bug* by Mark Newgarden and Megan Montague Cash.

Discuss what happens in the story, focusing on cause and effect. If they choose students may add dialogue for the characters to help them describe what happens in the story.

Plot includes all the things that happen in a story. Something happens in every story, and the order that the events happen matter. Think about what happens in a story you’ve read, and how the characters react.

Conflict - Just like you and a friend can disagree, or you don’t always get to do exactly what you want, conflict is what writers call the problems their characters face. You might think about your own stories this way: Who is the most important character? What does he or she want? Who or what stands in the way?

30 min: Collaborative Art Lesson - **Construction Paper + Scissors + Glue**

Divide students into groups, giving each group a large section of butcher paper with four pre-drawn rectangles like you'd see in a comic book. Have students work together to create cutouts (and dialog bubbles if they have time) that show forward plot movement for the caterpillar based on their journal responses.

Example: (frame 1) The caterpillar said hello to the robin, and the robin picked the caterpillar up with its beak (frame 2) the caterpillar screamed, afraid she'd be eaten (frame 3), then the robin flapped its wing to lift them into the air just as a lizard darted its mouth toward the caterpillar, and (frame 4) the robin said, "That was close! Are you okay?" In plot, every character action causes a response or reaction, which propels the story forward.

10 min: Group Share

Encourage students to share their cutout comics.

5 min: Cleanup

Students return journals and art supplies.

Session 6: Setting in Story + Water Soluble Pastels

5 min: Snack

10 min: Journal

Flying High: Pretend you are flying over your neighborhood or an imaginary place you'd like to live. What do you see?

15 min: Model Text and Class Discussion - **Setting in Story**

Read *Abuela* by **Arthur Dorros**.

Discuss how the girl and grandmother in *Abuela* learn about where they live by flying over it. What might they have missed if they'd looked from inside the setting instead of above it? What do they learn about the place they thought they already knew so well?

Setting is the physical space where a story takes place. Some settings are real (like your house or apartment), and some settings are magical ones that you imagine. Setting can affect characters and their actions in a story—wouldn't you do different things in a dark and scary forest than you would at an ice cream shop?

30 min: Collaborative Art Lesson - **Water Soluble Pastels + Water + Paintbrushes**

Divide the students into groups and give each a large sheet of watercolor paper. Ask them to draw a single setting with pastels using a least one characteristic from each student's journal entry.

Challenge the groups to consider the following issues:

- is this setting real or magical?
- what people or creatures live in this setting?
- what do houses and buildings look like in this setting?

10 min: Group Share

Encourage groups to share their settings with the class.

5 min: Cleanup

Students return journals and art supplies.

Session 7: Overflow or Review Day

Review a writing or illustration technique you had to cut short before, or one the students seemed especially interested in exploring. Use the instructor resources document for additional writing prompts, poems, etc. For example, you might review poetry and image using poems from *Hip Hop Speaks to Children* or the instructor resources packet to discuss repetition and rhythm and remind students that poetry is an option for the final collaborative book. Or you could explore one of the following books with relevant art techniques:

- *Looking Like Me* by Walter Dean Meyers and Christopher Myers: poetry, rhythm, cutouts
- *John Coltrane's Giant Steps*: images and the five senses, pastels
- *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*: Fairytale Starring Me journal prompt, watercolor pencils

Alternatively, you may choose to begin the collaborative story or poem during this session depending on the speed with which your students have completed previous activities.

Session 8: Collaboration

5 min: Snack

10 min: Class discussion

Ask your students whether they want to write story or a poem for the collaborative book.

30 min: Group writing

Prompt suggestions for story:

Pass the Line - Ask each student to write a fantastic line such as, “When the purple dinosaur walked into my kitchen, I grabbed a banana.” Ask the student to pass the line to the right, add a new line, and so on. Tell your students to try to keep the characters doing things to create conflict and plot.

Fiction Q&A - Develop a character as a group then have the students take turns being the character while the rest of the question asks questions such as, “Where do you live,” “What’s your favorite thing in the world,” and “What would you do if it was taken away?” Collect the answers to begin piecing together to group story.

Prompt suggestions for poetry:

Poetry Q&A - Ask students to respond the work of their peers by writing question and answer poems in pairs, small groups, or as a whole class. For example, one student might ask, “How high does the sky reach?” and another could respond, “Higher than your dreams.”

Wish List - Poet Kenneth Koch asked individual elementary school students to respond to this simple prompt: “I wish I was ____.” He encouraged students to include their wildest wishes. Some of the students wished they were on the moon or in a spaceship, and others wished they could see a loved one who had passed away. This is a great way to let the students explore their imaginations while also building a collaborative list poem.

30 min: Storyboard and Individual Assignments

Work with the class to develop a rough storyboard for their collaborative poem or story. Assign each student one full spread with text plus illustrations using at least two illustration techniques: cutout, watercolor pencil, and/or water soluble pastel.

Session 9: Student Pages

Have snack time then begin final student spreads. Set up stations for all three art techniques for students to self-select, and make student journals and all classroom books available for the students to review.

****Students should sign their pages and the inside cover of the book, but they must not include their full last names (last initial is fine) for safety/legal reasons.**

Session 10: Finalize the Collaborative Book + Celebrate!

20 min: Art Stations

Set up stations for all three art techniques, allowing students to put the final touches on their pages for the collaborative book.

10 min: Journal Prompt

****REQUIRED Writing Assessment Prompt****

Describe yourself two or three years from now. What will you look like? What will you like to do? What will you think about school?

10 min: Survey

****REQUIRED Pre-Program Survey****

35 min: Celebration

Distribute pizza and drinks, then present the best piece produced by each student. At the end of the celebration, return all work **EXCEPT**:

- student journals
- post-program survey
- one exemplary piece of art produced by each student (only include the first name of the student on the back)
- the final collaborative book

We'll give students their journals and a printed copy of the collaborative book at the gallery reception.

Gallery Reception with friends and family: Details TBD

****Final Note:** You won't be able to cover everything in the curriculum, and that's okay. You must, however, finish the program with a finished collaborative book, pre- and post-tests, plus the initial and final writing assessments.

SUPPLEMENTAL POETRY

My People

by Langston Hughes

The night is beautiful,
So the faces of my people.

The stars are beautiful,
So the eyes of my people.

Beautiful, also, is the sun.
Beautiful, also, are the souls of my people.

Vowels (Voyelles)

by Arthur Rimbaud, translated by Kenneth Koch

Black A, white E, red I, green U, blue O—vowels
I'll tell, someday, of your secret origins:
A, black hairy corset of dazzling flies
Who boom around cruel stench,

Gulfs of darkness; E, candor of steam and of tens,
Lances of proud glaciers, white kings, Queen-
 Anne's-lace shivers;
I, deep reds, spit blood, laughter of beautiful lips
In anger or in drunkenness and penitence;

U, cycles, divine vibrations of dark green oceans,
Peacefulness of pastures dotted with animals, the
 peace of wrinkles
Which alchemy prints on studious foreheads;

O, supreme trumpet, full of strange harsh sounds,
Silences which are crossed by Worlds and by Angels—
 O, Omega, violet ray of Her Eyes!

The Delight Song of Tsoai-talee

by N. Scott Momaday

I am a feather on the bright sky
I am the blue horse that runs in the plain
I am the fish that rolls, shining, in the water
I am the shadow that follows a child
I am the evening light, the lustre of meadows
I am an eagle playing with the wind
I am a cluster of bright beads
I am the farthest star
I am the cold of dawn
I am the roaring of the rain
I am the glitter on the crust of the snow
I am the long track of the moon in a lake
I am a flame of four colors
I am a deer standing away in the dusk
I am a field of sumac and the pomme blanche
I am an angle of geese in the winter sky
I am the hunger of a young wolf
I am the whole dream of these things
You see, I am alive, I am alive
I stand in good relation to the earth
I stand in good relation to the gods
I stand in good relation to all that is beautiful
I stand in good relation to the daughter of Tsen-tainte
You see, I am alive, I am alive

You can find this poem online at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/175895>

Things I'm Not Good At

by Jeff Moss

What a shame I'm not good at making my bed
Or washing the dinner dishes.
What a pity I'm awful at broccoli-eating
And feeding my sister's fishes.
So sad I've no talent for cleaning my room,
All those jobs—it's so hard to get through them.
(If I tell you I'm no good at those kinds of things,
Maybe then you won't ask me to do them.)

You can find this poem online at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/176307>

The Ticks

by Douglas Florian

Not gigan-tic.
Not roman-tic.
Not artis-tic.
Not majes-tic.
Not magne-tic.
Nor aesthe-tic.
Ticks are strictly parasi-tic.

You can find this poem online at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/176364>

All Good Slides are Slippery: Poetry Selected by Lemony Snicket and Illustrated by Chris Raschka

is available online at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/article/246328>.

Additional Poetry Resources, including writing resources and poems, are available at

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/article/246434>.