

# WHAT DO STORIES REVEAL AND CONCEAL? HOW CAN STORIES LEAD TO CHANGE?



WRITE 4 CHANGE

## PROJECT: story

This project focuses on the power of stories for making change by exploring the power of students' own stories and stories that may not otherwise be shared or told. Students explore the iterative nature of writing by revising and remixing stories to create a new story that weaves together different perspectives.



#INQUIRE

#MAKE

#ACT

#REFLECT

# #INQUIRE

What is the power of stories? Whose stories get told and how?

In this stage, students should find a powerful story that inspires, motivates, or has had some broader impact. They should spend some time investigating what makes this story so captivating.

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITES:

### OPTION A: WHERE DO WE FIND STORIES?

Teachers can help students uncover stories by:

- Interviewing family or community members
- Chronicling the work of an organization that contributes to the community
- Conducting historical research to find important figures in national or cultural histories to highlight
- Identifying powerful stories that have moved them in books, movies, or other media
- Reading stories written by other teens on Wattpad

### OPTION B: WHOSE STORIES ARE TOLD?

Teachers can help students discuss power, perspective, and oppression by asking about:

- What famous people get stories told about them and whose perspectives are not included?
- How are women's stories often told and who can tell those stories? What about stories of people who do not conform to gender norms?
- Who is represented in stories we see, read, and tell, and why does representation matter?
- What beauty and importance can we find in the everyday stories that surround us, even those that are not big, bright, and shiny?

### OPTION C: HOW DO PEOPLE TELL STORIES?

Teachers can help students explore the modes and methods of storytelling by:

- Looking at advertising, mainstream media, blogs, songs, etc. to identify what is included and what is left out
- Playing with the languages used to tell a story (through mixing of languages, using subtitles, using music instead of dialogue, etc.)
- Exploring broadly the modes in which stories are told, such as **quilting**, hip hop, or social media accounts

## WRITE 4 CHANGE SITE ACTIVITES:

### POST:

- Find a powerful story that inspires you, motivates you, or has had some broader impact. Spend some time thinking about what makes this story so captivating for you.
- Post the story in the ASSET LIBRARY.
- Tag your story with the hashtags #inquire, #findstory, and any others you'd like

### INTERACT:

- Go to the ASSET LIBRARY and search for #inquire or #findstory. Choose 3 posts that inspire or inform you
- Like and comment on these posts. Comment on something specific, such as what the post has inspired you to think/do or an aspect of the writing in the post that you think is particularly good

### REMIX:

- Take one of the assets and remix it. Create a WHITEBOARD that includes the asset but is a response to the story. Make sure you tag the person who posted the original work.

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# #MAKE

What story do you want to tell?

In this stage, students create their own telling of a personally relevant or meaningful story. This can be done individually or as a group, and students can tell many types of stories, from fictional to historical to biographical.

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

### OPTION A: TELLING CREATIVE STORIES

*Teachers can help students imagine or re-imagine stories in creative ways, such as:*

- An autobiographical poem, memoir, podcast, or digital story
- A written, performed, or drawn fictional or fictionalized story
- A fanfiction story, perhaps drawing on other stories from the #inquire stage as inspiration
- A blog or vlog (video blog)

### OPTION B: TELLING ACADEMIC STORIES

*Teachers can guide students in telling a research-based story, such as:*

- A fictionalized version of a historical person or event they have researched
- A documentary or written account of a community organization, neighborhood, or school they have researched
- An informative story - such as an infographic or video - about a little-known topic they have researched

### OPTION C: TELLING ETHNOGRAPHIC STORIES

*Teachers can lead students through the complex process of relaying others' stories by having them:*

- Interview a friend, elder, or leader and then compose that person's story in textual, visual, or oral form.
- Work with a community organization or group and create a narrative about the experiences or about the history of the group, perhaps in the form of a promotional video

## WRITE 4 CHANGE SITE ACTIVITIES:

### POST:

- Create a new story of your own using a WHITEBOARD.
- Post your story in the ASSET LIBRARY.
- Tag it with #make and #mystory and add content-related hashtags and a description too, if you'd like.

### GET FEEDBACK:

- Use a WHITEBOARD to re-post your story. On this whiteboard, explain your intended audience and ask for specific feedback, such as "where can I revise this?" or "how well does this align with my audience?"
- Repost in the ASSET LIBRARY with the hashtag #feedback

### GIVE FEEDBACK:

- Search the library for #feedback and give specific suggestions to several other people. Remember to keep their intended audience in mind.

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# #ACT

How can the stories you create make an impact on the world?

This stage builds on the #make stage, encouraging students to bring in perspectives and voices to make their story more impactful and further reaching. We encourage teachers to help students post their stories in other places, enter them into contests, or use them to help promote different causes.

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

### OPTION A: REMIXING STORIES

*Teachers can help students build on and enhance stories, increasing their impact by:*

- Adding a new character or perspective to their story
- Adding another language to or translating their story
- Adding a new modality to their story, such as image, song, or video, or remaking their original story in a new medium
- Writing collaboratively to add to and enhance each other's stories.
- Bring in the work of another story-teller, and explore how to give credit to multiple authors represented in a single story.

### OPTION B: CREATING STORIES THAT DO WORK IN THE WORLD

*Teachers can encourage students to share their stories in way that impacts others, such as:*

- Creating a public art piece, spoken word poem, oral story, or song that can be shared publicly
- Making a digital story that can be shared online, with family and friends, or with the W4C community
- Making a documentary about an important issue and finding a venue to screen it, either at school or in the community
- Creating a promotional video, website, or printed material that highlights the stories and mission of a community organization or group

## WRITE 4 CHANGE SITE ACTIVITIES:

### POST:

- Curate your enhanced and collected stories on a WHITEBOARD.
- Post your whiteboard in the ASSET LIBRARY.
- Tag it with #act and #manystories and add content-related hashtags

### COMMENT:

- Browse posts tagged with #act and #manystories to find stories that resonate with you
- Leave a comment on a few posts, explaining what you admire and asking the author about her or his writing and creative process.

### COLLABORATE:

- If you find a story you really admire, ask its author(s) to collaborate with you on a story-telling project. Invite them to work on WHITEBOARD with you to create a story together.

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# #REFLECT

## What is the impact of your stories?

This stage encourages students to look at the stories they've told with the same critical lens they used in the #inquire stage. Through audience and data analysis, they are encouraged to reflect on the impact of their stories.

### SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

#### OPTION A: REFLECTING ON IMPACT

Teachers can help students see the impact of stories on the Write4Change platform by asking:

- According to the IMPACT studio, which stories have the most activity?
- Why do you think some stories have more impact and get more attention than other stories?
- What do authors on Write 4 Change do to increase the impact of their stories?
- What role does audience play in the way we share and shape our stories?
- In what ways are stories amplified or ignored within the Write 4 Change community?
- Which stories on the Write 4 Change site do you feel deserve more attention?

#### OPTION B: REFLECTING ON PROCESS

Teachers can help students reflect on their storytelling process by asking questions such as:

- What did this project change or reinforce about the kind of stories you want to tell or hear?
- How is your conception of stories different now than it was at the beginning of this project?
- What was the most challenging part of this process, and how did you meet this challenge?
- How have you changed as a storyteller and a story-hearer during this project?
- What about your storytelling abilities do you want to continue to improve?
- How did hearing other people's stories impact your own way of thinking about or telling stories?

### WRITE 4 CHANGE SITE ACTIVITIES:

#### EXPLORE:

- Look for posts tagged with #findstory, #mystory, and #manystories.
- Which posts do you find to be the most meaningful or interesting to you?
- Leave a comment on a post you find inspiring, explaining what you liked and why.

#### ANALYZE IMPACT:

- Go to the IMPACT STUDIO and look at the data there
- Choose an asset that has had a lot of activity. Write a message to its creator about how they made it.
- Analyze the impact of your own assets. How did people respond to your posts? How could you make them more impactful?

#### ENGAGE:

- Choose an asset on the site that you believe deserves more attention or should have greater impact
- View, comment on, and share this asset.
- In your comment, explain what you found impactful about the story.

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: (click each for more information)

### EXAMPLES AND INSPIRATION:

[StoryCenter](#)

[Faith Ringgold's Quilt Story](#)

[#1000BlackGirlBooks](#)

[Biographical Stories \(Nelson Mandela\)](#)

[Aboriginal Dot Art](#)

[Documentary Story about Philadelphia Mural Arts](#)

[What's Your Story? Student Identity on the Walls](#)

[Malala Yousafzai's Blog](#)

[Youth Stories on Wattpad](#)

[Story-Telling in Youth Work](#)

[One-Minute Stories](#)

[Story Corps](#)

[Hip Hop as Storytelling](#)

[The Moth](#)

TEACHER  
RESOURCE  
DISCUSSION BOARD  
(link)

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