



826  
SEATTLE

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## World Wide Telescope: Strange Adventures in Infinite Space Field Trip Pre- and Post-Visit Materials for Educators

### Introduction to the Field Trip

Thanks so much for signing up for a field trip with 826 Seattle! Our mission is to inspire your students to create stories, as a team, which will hopefully build their confidence in writing their own stories at school and at home.

Telling stories is an essential part of being human. Stories help us learn more about ourselves, our age, and our culture by experiencing the thoughts and actions of characters in a story. In this field trip, your students will embark on a storytelling journey that is guided by originality, spontaneity and sheer imagination. After 2 hours of devising characters, compelling settings, action packed twists and embroiling problems, the journey culminates in a personalized book complete with interactive elements like postcards, certificates, and a journal where students will have recorded their own field notes.

And did we mention...your class will have a darn good time. Our goal is for every one of your students to walk away from the field trip with a finished product under his or her arm and a sense of being a real writer.

### Pre-Visit Discussion and Activities

Because our fieldtrip is based on the combination of storytelling and collaborative writing, it's important for all students to be familiar with the elements of a story: character, plot/conflict, ending/resolution, setting. Here are some tips and activities to help your students get ready for the trip.

#### *Character*

Developing strong characters is one starting point for writing. In this activity, students will envision a character and give him or her a voice.

- Have students break into small groups. Provide the same photograph to each group and ask them the following questions:
  - What is his or her name?*
  - Who is this character?*
  - What is special or unique about him/her?*
  - Where is s/he?*
  - How does s/he feel about being there? Why?*
  - What does the character want, need or dream about?*

- After answering the questions and providing details for the photograph, have students write a letter as if they were each the character, asking and making a case for something they want. Encourage students to think of the words the character will use to speak.

### ***Setting***

- Ask students to write a story using the following sentences: “The night was very, very hot—so hot that stray cats stepped lightly on the city sidewalks to avoid burning their feet. In the distance, a siren cut through late-night quiet of the city, racing its way to \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Can students start a story they’ve written with this paragraph and make it work? How does this influence a story? How does a setting change the direction of their story? Does a beginning like this lend itself to a comedy or a dramatic story?

### ***Plot/Conflict***

- Have two students act out a two-person scene in which there is no conflict, or, essentially, nothing happens. Tell the students that they will pretend they are friends who have just met up after returning from their summer vacation.

<p><b>A:</b> I went to Disneyland in July.  <b>B:</b> That’s nice. We went there also. We went on a ride called the Matterhorn.  <b>A:</b> That’s neat.</p>
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- At the end of this activity ask students in the audience if they found the scene interesting? (They should say no.) So, what’s missing from the scene? If nothing is suggested, tell them that conflict is missing.
- Have students redo the activity. This time adding conflict.

<p><b>A:</b> I went to Disneyland in July.  <b>B:</b> Like who hasn’t been to Disneyland? Disneyland is boring. Everybody goes there. I went to Tasmania.  <b>A:</b> Oh, Tasmania is such a long plane ride. What a waste of money!</p>
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- Guide students in talking about why this story is more interesting. It sets up a conflict. Conflict, in fiction, makes stories very compelling and is a very important aspect of writing stories.

### ***Ending/Resolution***

*"...and they all lived happily ever after."*

- Choose three stories that the whole class will know—fairy tales or something the students have read in class. Divide the class into groups of two or three and ask each group to change the ending of each story. Encourage students to invent original endings that will stay with the reader in a way that "... they all lived happily ever after" does not.

### **Roles of the Fieldtrip**

Familiarize your students with the following words, as we use them at 826 Seattle:

*Trip Leader* – guides the group through the trip and elicits creative input from students to keep the story moving.

*Scribe* – assists the Trip Leader by writing ideas down during the field trip.

*Pilot* – controls the World Wide Telescope software and is responsible for navigating the class through the cosmos.

*Typist* – part recorder, part writer, who transforms students’ ideas from concept to reality.

### **On the Day of Your Field Trip To 826 Seattle**

From the moment your students enter 826 Seattle, our team of volunteers will help navigate them through the 2-hour writing experience. During the field trip, teachers are asked to help with any troublesome class behavior since you know the students better than we do. Chaperones are more than welcome to attend, but we do encourage that you limit the number of chaperones attending to a maximum of four people. During the individual writing time, teachers and chaperones are encouraged to join our volunteers and help students with their writing.

By the end, each student will receive a copy of the book, with their own personalized ending. You, the teacher, will also receive a copy.

### **Post Visit Discussion and Activities**

When you return to school, take advantage of the enthusiasm your students have developed for writing and publishing stories. Here are a few suggestions to keep the stories alive:

#### 1. SHOWCASE

- Have your students read their stories to a public audience (e.g. other classes/grades, the school principal, lunchroom attendants, etc.)
- Host storytime at your school’s Literacy Night or Family Night showcasing student works.

#### 2. WRITE A SEQUEL

Write a sequel to the story using the same elements of storytelling: character development, setting, rising action, cliffhanger, and the ending. In the sequel you may want to incorporate a new character to the story. Students may want to resurrect an old villain.

### 3. CREATE PUPPETS

You can invite students to create a puppet of one of their characters. In doing this, they can explore the details of the character's persona.

### 4. WRITE COMIC BOOKS

Translating the story to a visual format allows the students to focus on the pace and tone of the story. This can be easily done by drawing a grid with the chosen number of boxes and asking students to fill them in with the story. Because of the space limitations, students will learn to choose their words carefully and economically.