

## Short Story Writing

### About this activity

'Short Story Writing' is a writing activity in which learners write a narrative based on their own context.

<b>Stage 1: Starter</b>	Watch the <a href="#">video</a> or read aloud the transcript and key facts if the video is not accessible - 'The Ugly Truth About Children's Books'. What are learners' thoughts/feelings/comments after watching this? Can they relate to the frustration of books not including characters or contexts similar to theirs?
<b>Stage 2</b>	Explain that students will write a short story with their home as the setting and characters that come from their backgrounds. This could be a retelling of a local tale/folk tale, an actual event that has taken place in their community, or they can rewrite a classic story with a change in setting/characters. Encourage learners to think about the gender roles in their story – can they challenge these? For example, in their story is the female cooking the dinner and the male going to work? Does the female need rescuing and the male saving her? As an additional challenge, ask learners to try to challenge these stereotypes within their writing.
<b>Stage 3</b>	Give learners 30 minutes or as long as you think is needed to plan their story. After this time, ask for learners to volunteer to share their plot, setting and characters. Offer any feedback or gain feedback from other learners about whether this is combatting the 'ugly truth about children's books'.
<b>Stage 4</b>	Give learners an additional 30 minutes or longer to write.
<b>Stage 5</b>	On completion of the task, you could collate the stories written by all the students to have a class book of stories that reflect them.

**Gender Responsive Notes**

Ensure gender neutral language throughout; ensure answers are taken from a variety of learners; the opportunity to discuss any decisions based on gender stereotypes applied during the story writing.

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