

A Funny Thing Happened to Me

Felicia Bedwell, Wasatch Range Writing Project

Summary:

Students will use questions about themselves to recall events in their lives. They will write stories based on these events, share them with a partner, and revise to clarify and add detail. They will then illustrate their stories, using the graphic novel format.

Objectives:

- Read selections of published ideas as model.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Work in groups to expand and clarify writing.
- Revise writing using partners' comments.
- Learn about and use graphic technics.

Context:

- 6th grade, but can be easily adapted to grades 3 – 9.

Materials:

- *Share Your Smile: Raina's Guide to Telling Your Own Story* by Raina Telgemeier
- *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *El Deafo* by Cece Bell
- Paper
- Writing utensil

Time Span:

About two weeks.

Procedures:

In class

1. **Day 1:** Read, share, and discuss *Share Your Smile*, pg. 14 “Idea Building.”

Read the following examples from *The House on Mango Street*:

- “Hairs” pgs. 6-7
- “Boys & Girls” pgs. 8-9
- “My Name” pgs. 10-11

Have students brainstorm ideas of their own, then distribute the *All About You* questions found on pages 22 – 23 from *Share Your Smile* (questions in the index). Ask students to answer the questions.

2. **Day 2:** Students will choose an idea to turn into a story and briefly write down events that happened.
3. **Day 3:** Students will work in pairs to read their stories and comment on them, i.e., what did they like, what was confusing, what needed more explanation, etc.
4. Students will rewrite, add, expound upon their stories in preparation for illustrating.

5. **Day 4:** Show students pages of *El Deafo*, examining the comic strip/graphic novel's format.
6. Ask students to draw pictures of themselves, showing various emotions. Refer to *Share Your Smile*, pgs. 36 – 37.

Online Options:

- Place the information on Google Classroom as a writing assignment.
- Create groups where students can collaborate with each other on their stories.
- Use the website Read, write, think for interactive comic strips.
- <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson-docs/195-comic-strip-planning.pdf>
- <http://www.readwritethink.org/resources/resource-print.html?id=30237>
- <https://www.makebeliefscomix.com/Comix/>
- <https://www.pixton.com/>
- <http://stripgenerator.com/strip/create/>

Extensions:

- Create a mini book of student's writing and illustrations.
- Create a classroom book of students' writing and illustrations.

Rationale:

When students first remember and then explore events from their own lives, they learn to value their own experience, and to make sense of their own lives. They also learn to connect to others through sharing of memories.

Resources:

Bell, Cece. *El Deafo*. New York: Amulet Books, 2014.

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. New York: Vintage Books, 1984.

Telgemeier, Raina. *Share Your Smile; Raina's Guide to Telling Your Own Story*. Broadway: Scholastic, Inc., 2019.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson-docs/195-comic-strip-planning.pdf>

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All About You pgs. 22 - 23

From *Share Your Smile: Raina's Guide to Telling your Own Story* by Raina Telgemeier

What's your name?

Where do you live?

Have you ever lived anywhere else? If so, where?

What grade are you in?

Who's in your family?

What three words describe you best?

What are some of your favorite things to do?

What are your unique talents?

Who are your friends? What do you enjoy most about hanging out with them?

Describe a time when you felt really proud.

If you feel scared or embarrassed, how do you make yourself feel better?

What's your favorite childhood memory?

What was the worst accident you ever had? How long did it take you to get better, and what did you need to do?

Write down a funny family story that you like to share over and over.

Hometown Happenings

Felicia Bedwell, Wasatch Range Writing Project

Summary:

Students will describe where they live, including description of place and narrative of events. They will work in pairs to clarify and add detail. They will add illustration to their pieces.

Objective:

- Read selections of published ideas as model.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Work in groups to expand and clarify writing.
- Revise writing using partners' comments.
- Learn about and use graphic technics.

Context:

6th grade, but can be easily adapted to grades 3 – 9.

Materials:

- *Share Your Smile: Raina's Guide to Telling Your Own Story* by Raina Telgemeier
- *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *El Deafo* by Cece Bell
- Paper
- Writing Utensil

Time Span:

About two weeks.

Procedures:

1. **Day 1:** Read, share, and discuss *Share Your Smile* pg. 42, "Hometown Inspiration."

Read the following examples from *The House on Mango Street*:

- a. "The House on Mango Street" pgs. 3 - 5
- b. "Gil's Furniture Bought & Sold" pgs. 19 – 20

Have students write down places in their neighborhood. Then distribute the *Your Hometown* questions found on pages 46 – 47 from *Share Your Smile* (questions in the index). Ask students to answer the questions.

2. **Day 2:** Ask students to write about their hometown, including any events, exciting news, etc., that they remember happening.
3. **Day 3:** Ask students to work in pairs to read their stories and comment on them, i.e., what did they like, what was confusing, what needed more explanation, etc. Ask students to rewrite, add, clarify their stories in preparation for illustrating.

4. **Day 4:** Students will be shown pages of *El Deafo*, showing students the comic strip/graphic novel and its format.

Ask students to draw pictures of places in their hometown. If they have mentioned something happening, students can draw those scenes as well. Refer to *Share Your Smile* pgs. 36 – 37.

Online Options:

- Place the information on Google Classroom as a writing assignment.
- Create groups where students can collaborate with each other on their stories.
- Use the website Read, write, think for interactive comic strips.
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Extensions:

- Create a mini book of students' writing and illustrations
- Create a classroom book of students' writing and illustrations.

Rationale:

Students learn to value their own experience through their writing of personal narratives. They also learn how narrative and illustration can work together to tell a story'

Resources:

Bell, Cece. *El Deafo*. New York: Amulet Books, 2014.

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Your Hometown pgs. 46 - 47

From *Share Your Smile: Raina's Guide to Telling your Own Story* by Raina Telgemeier

Where is your hometown?

What's your favorite thing about your hometown?

Where do you like to hang out?

How would you describe the people in your hometown?

What's the weather usually like?

How does your hometown make you feel?

Describe something in your hometown that helps shape who you are?

If you could change one thing about your hometown, what would it be?

What school did you attend?

What's your favorite thing about your school?

What's your least favorite thing about your school?

Describe how you've met different friends.

What makes your hometown and school unique places to write about?