

Roll of the Die

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Education Level: K-5

Genre: Poetry/Fiction

Time frame: 45 minutes, plus some prep

Objective: Create stories/poems using randomized words as a base.

Prior knowledge and skills: none

Required materials: Big pad of paper, markers, a big die

Pre-class prep:

Make a big die out of a cardboard box. Draw the dots on all six sides and use packing tape to keep it together.

On a big pad of paper (preferably the kind that is sticky at the top) write a list of verbs, adjectives and nouns, each comprised of 6 words.

Example:

Verbs

1. sing
2. fly
3. run around in circles
4. whisper
5. eat ice cream
6. open the window

Adjectives

1. slippery
2. crunchy
3. bright
4. friendly
5. brave
6. upside-down

Nouns

1. bicycle
2. dream
3. treehouse
4. bottom of the ocean
5. bird that just hatched from its egg
6. garbage truck

Sequence of activities (45 minutes):

Word Choosing and Story Writing (5 minutes):

Hang the sticky-note paper on the board in front of the class, or show the list of words however is most convenient for you.

Give the die to one student, who rolls it on the floor in the middle of the classroom.

The number it lands on will correspond to the words with the same number in your lists, to use in the stories. For example, if the die lands on ONE, the words

bicycle
slippery
sings

must be used.

Group Revision (5 minutes):

Call on a few students to share their stories. Encourage them to add characters and details from their imagination to create a well-rounded scene that is more than just “the slippery bicycle sings.”

I had the students talking and sharing their ideas out loud, and we created some stories together. I sound-recorded the whole session because the students had so much to share, I was not able to write it all down. I also used these recordings to combine several of their responses in a collaborative poem.

This can also be a more writing-oriented activity, where the students spend most of the session working on just one or two poems and editing them.

Repeat (as many times as time allows):

After the students have shared all their creative thoughts from the first die roll, hand the die to another student and roll it again. We ended up with just enough time to go through every number, but if not that is okay too!