

**Title:** If Wayne Lived in Tucson

**By:** Eva Sierra

**Education level:** Elementary

**Genre:** Poetry

**Time frame:** One hour

**Objective:** Explore identity by creating a story using places from our hometown and neighborhoods.

**Prior knowledge and skills:** None.

**Required materials:** Pen and paper. Markers/crayons are optional. Video projection or printed handouts of the literary model.

**Literary model:** “Wayne the Stegosaurus” by Kenn Nesbitt

### **Sequence of activities:**

#### **Share poem with class (15 min):**

This poem is very silly and sweet, and students enjoy it. There is a video by Motionpoems that illustrates the poem in a fun way. I came across this video on the Poetry Foundation’s website, in the children’s section:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/video/147896/wayne-the-stegosaurus>

For comprehension, I recommend watching the video two times. I also recommend reading as an entire class off the board (for ages that can read off the board). Lead the cadence loudly, with a pointer object or marker.

Spend a few moments asking students to share their favorite parts of the poem. Ask if there are any parts they did not understand.

#### **Brainstorming activity (20 min):**

We will be creating three circle maps on the board, brainstorming questions that imagine Wayne the Stegosaurus as one of our neighbors, here in Tucson.

For each brainstorming question, ask supplementary questions to help students think about the places, foods, and traditions in their city and neighborhoods.

**Where would be his favorite places to go to?** What are some of YOUR favorite places to go? Harkins or AMC? Favorite park to play at? Yes, grandma's house counts!

**What would be his favorite things to eat?** Imagine if Wayne was your neighbor and your parents invited him over to help cook—what would he learn to make? Are the hot dogs better El Güero Canelo, or from the carts? Raspados vs. Eegee's?

**What traditions might he learn?** What do we celebrate at home? What are some important parts of these traditions? Día De Los Muertos, quinceañeras, tamales at Christmas are examples students shared.

**Writing activity (15 min):**

**Prompt:** What if Wayne was from Tucson? Imagine what sort of adventures and lessons he would encounter in our desert city.

This prompt is meant to give students the opportunity to look at their city and neighborhoods in a wacky way. This lesson can be adapted for other cities or neighborhoods.

Let students know how much time they will have to write. Ask them to try to write without stopping, and to allow their ideas to flow uninterrupted. Encourage students to be silly, serious, and creative. Keep the writing prompt visible as students write. A visible timer is also helpful.

As students write, walk around and look for anyone who might look stuck. Remind students to ask themselves about their favorite things to do, eat, and celebrate. Ask them to imagine Wayne as their neighbor, classmate, or friend.

You may give students the option to use the last five minutes of their writing time to draw/decorate their work.

**Sharing (5 minutes):**

Call upon three or four students who volunteer to share their poems. Remind them to be loud and confident. Remind class to pay close attention. Optionally, after performers have returned to their seats, ask the class what are some things they noticed from their classmates' poems.