Unit 1.2 Who Am I? Lesson: Storyboarding Grade Levels 5–8

Yearlong Objectives
- Express oneself in words and art.
- Work as an ensemble.
- Understand the power and importance of uniqueness.

Essential Questions
- What is special and unique about me?
- Why should I plan out my work before I do it?
- How can I effectively plan a work of art?

Lesson Objectives
- Brainstorm subject matter and decide on a topic to write about.
- Storyboard a unique, true story.
- Identify what about oneself is unique and compelling.
- Understand how the events of one's life contribute to one's unique personality.

Materials needed
- pencils, storyboard templates, guided brainstorming sheet

Time needed
- 90 minutes

Vocabulary for this lesson
Social-Emotional: comfortable, uncomfortable, unique
Visual Arts: storyboard, brainstorm, sketch, compelling
Theatre: ensemble

National Arts Standards
- Demonstrate openness in trying new ideas, materials, methods, and approaches in making works of art and design. (VA:Cr2.1.6a)
- Identify and interpret works of art or design that reveal how people live around the world and what they value. (VA:Re.7.1.6a)
- Generate a collection of ideas reflecting current interests and concerns that could be investigated in art making. (VA:Cn10.1.6a)
- Contribute ideas and accept and incorporate the ideas of others in preparing or devising drama/theatre work. (TH:Cr2-6.b)
Warm-Up Phase (15 minutes)
Circle: “Would you rather” question: Would you rather be happy forever but have no money, or be the richest person alive but never be happy?
Optional follow-up question: Are you feeling comfortable or uncomfortable?

Team-building game: Name patterns, Level 2 (see Team-Building Games)

I Do/ We Do (20 minutes)
Explicitly Teach
■ Access prior knowledge. Have students go over what they learned last class. Be sure to incorporate comfortable, uncomfortable, manga, anime, ensemble, and comic book art.
■ New material: Define brainstorming.
■ Begin with an opening exercise. Have students complete guided brainstorming document (attached) individually.
■ Describe that brainstorming is what writers and artists have to do to come up with an idea. Because we will be writing a whole comic book, we need to make sure we have a good story that will stretch out over several pages. We need to make a plan.
■ Model brainstorming. I am looking at this list of ideas I came up with during the guided brainstorming. The story I think speaks most about the kind of person I am is the one about my first day as a high school teacher. Model circling this idea.
■ Explain that, when selecting a story, students should focus on the story that brings out their own unique qualities the best. This unit is all about knowing what is special about you.
■ Explain that all comic book artists and cartoonists have to storyboard—or sketch and plan—their ideas before they commit their work to ink and eventually publication.
■ Model storyboarding. Storyboarding is the process by which you lay out the book before it is in its draft form. Say: I know that I have to fill all nine of these squares, so I have to figure out how to tell this story in 15 frames. I know that at the beginning of this story, I was nervous getting ready for school. I know at the end of this story I was exhausted and sitting on the classroom floor. I might sketch the first and the last frames first, so I know what I’ll have to work inside.
■ Model sketching. These drawings should not be complete; they’re just plans. Just because I’m drawing stick figures now does not mean I will draw stick figures when I do my final draft. I want to be sure that I’m able to erase easily and start over if I make a mistake. Model adding words: integrate talk bubbles, thought bubbles, and captions. You don’t need to draw anything as long as you write what is going to happen in the panel.

Keep in Mind
■ Go over norms for an art space. Art space needs to be safe, respectful and calm. What needs to happen to ensure everyone feels that way?
■ Go over the different art supplies used and how to use them kindly. What is the right way to use this object? What is a way to use this object that might not be so kind?
■ People will work at different rates on this project. If you finish early, what might you do to add detail to your storyboard? How can you go about this?

You Do (55 minutes)
The project, step-by-step
■ Look at the guided brainstorming list. Find one story you’d like to tell, and fill in the bottom of the form. You’ve answered the questions already; there are prompts for possible stories you might want to tell, or write your own.
■ Think about what happened first and last in the story.
■ Sketch the first and last boxes of the story.
Fill in all 15 boxes with chronological details of the story. Remember: you can erase. In fact, that’s good!

Make sure you use some talk bubbles and thought bubbles.

**Extensions:** Create another story on another storyboard.

**Closure:** Turn to a partner and share how you’d like to make this different in a future iteration.

**Optional Writing Prompt:** Do you feel comfortable or uncomfortable today? Draw a picture to accompany your answer.

**Big Picture**

These storyboards will be used to chart a final draft story next class. Eventually, the final drafts will become our very own comic books.
Guided Brainstorming

Name: ____________________________________________________________

What is your favorite food?
*Write about the first time you ate that food, or a special time you enjoyed that food with people you loved.*

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Who are your closest relatives?
*Tell about a time you spent with one of your relatives.*

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What is your favorite thing to do over the weekend?
*Write a story about a time you did this activity.*

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Who are some of your best friends?
*Tell about a time you spent with one of your closest friends.*

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What is your favorite sport or game?
*Tell about a time you played this game and won or lost. How did that feel?*

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What do you want to be when you get older?
*Tell a story that guides the reader to understand why you want to have this job.*

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What kinds of pets have you had in your life?
*Write a story that explains why a particular pet was important to you.*

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

OR: Come up with your own idea! You are not bound by these ones.