

## LESSON | Finding Ideas & Inspiration

Encourage students to write original stories with a graphic organizer and kid-friendly advice from author Peter H. Reynolds.

### OBJECTIVE

Students will brainstorm original story ideas with a focus on problem and solution.

### TIME

45 minutes

### MATERIALS

- Story Ideas video at [scholastic.com/writingthefuture](http://scholastic.com/writingthefuture)
- Find Your Story! activity sheet
- Book for a read-aloud

### BOOKS BY PETER H. REYNOLDS

- *The North Star*
- *So Few of Me*
- *The Best Kid in the World*
- *My Very Big Little World*
- *Ish*
- *The Dot*
- *Sydney's Star*
- *Happy Dreamer*
- *The Word Collector*
- *Say Something!*

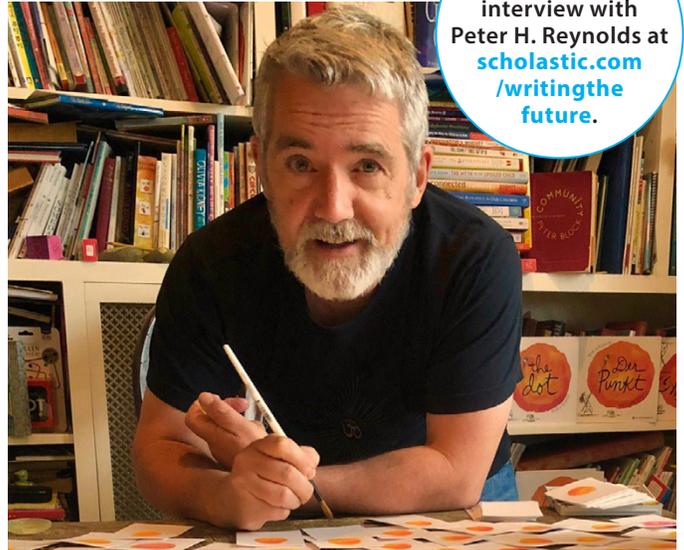
**1 Read** a book aloud to the class. Stop before the turning point and close the book. Ask the students if they think the story is complete. If needed, help students identify the fact that the solution was missing. Discuss the importance of having the problem addressed with a solution or resolution/ending in a satisfying story.

**2 Tell** students that today they will be exploring how problems and solutions make good stories, as well as how authors think of ideas for plots (what happens in a story) that will interest their readers.

**3 Show** students the video of Peter H. Reynolds discussing how he gets ideas for his books.

**4 Ask** students to make connections between the read-aloud and the points the author discussed in the video. If you read aloud a Peter H. Reynolds book, ask the class where they think he got his ideas for that book (or another book of his that they've read).

**5 Reinforce** the idea that almost every story plot contains a problem and a solution. Ask students to identify the problem and solution from the class read-aloud.



Check out an interview with Peter H. Reynolds at [scholastic.com/writingthefuture](http://scholastic.com/writingthefuture).

**6 Distribute** the Find Your Story! activity sheet. Tell students they will now think of story ideas based on their own lives. Inform students that they don't have to write about anything that upsets them. Instruct them to identify a problem and a solution for their new story ideas.

**7 After** students have completed the activity sheet, reconvene to discuss. Ask volunteers to share their ideas for their original stories.

### EXTENSION

Have students choose one of their ideas to write a story about. Students can begin by creating a chart with boxes for characters, setting, problem, and solution.

### Supporting All Learners

#### → Level up

Discuss the idea (during step 2 or later in the lesson) that people often enjoy stories they can connect to. Share stories that you relate to and explain why. Ask students if they have read about characters that feel familiar to them and challenge them to explain why.

#### → Level down

Model at least one example for the Find Your Story! activity sheet.

#### → To support English language learners

Preview the concepts of plot, problem, and solution twice: once before the read-aloud and again before the video. Write them on the board.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# FIND YOUR STORY!

Use these prompts to inspire great story ideas based on things that have happened to you. Remember, you can change the details—that's what storytelling is all about!

WRITE DOWN...	WRITE YOUR STORY IDEA	
A time you were scared	Problem	Solution
A time you were surprised	Problem	Solution
A time you got hurt or lost	Problem	Solution
A time you made a mistake and fixed it	Problem	Solution

