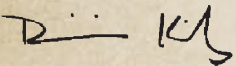


Dear Educator,

Inspire your students to take their writing to new heights by using characters, events, and settings based on the popular collaborative roleplaying game, Dungeons & Dragons (D&D), to teach story elements, creative thinking, and narrative writing. This free standards-based language arts program from Wizards of the Coast and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired provides engaging activities that support ELA and SEL skills.

We hope that you will share this program with other teachers at your school. Please let us know your opinion of these learning materials by visiting [yomiclassroom.com/feedback-bard](https://www.yomiclassroom.com/feedback-bard). We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



Questions? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at feedback@yomiclassroom.com.

Visit [yomiclassroom.com/bard](https://www.yomiclassroom.com/bard) in the fall for additional activities to complement this program and continue the adventure!

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

STORYTELLING WITH THE BARD

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

Grades 6–8

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Available at [yomiclassroom.com/bard](https://www.yomiclassroom.com/bard):

- This teacher's guide
- Three reproducible student activity sheets
- A poster
- A D&D Character Overview handout
- A version of the program for grades 3–5
- A reproducible family letter in English and Spanish
- A standards alignment chart

CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Story elements Story mapping Narrative writing Teamwork	Brainstorming Writing descriptive narratives Problem solving Analytical thinking
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HOW TO USE THE PROGRAM

This program can be used with or without prior knowledge of D&D. Make photocopies of the activity sheets for students. The activities build, so students will need their completed activity sheets for reference. Download and send home copies of the family letter, email it to families, or post it on your class website to engage families in the learning fun.

ACTIVITY 1:**WELCOME, APPRENTICE!**

Have students work in small groups to discuss their favorite stories from books, movies, or games and identify four elements that make them captivating. Ask the teams to share their ideas and highlight common themes such as compelling characters, interesting settings, problematic situations, and inspiring solutions.

Explain that Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) is a collaborative storytelling game in which players develop their own characters and direct exciting adventures. One of the characters is a bard. In this activity, students become apprentices to the bard, and as part of their training, they need to create a story featuring the four elements.

Distribute the activity sheet and review the instructions with the students. Discuss different ways they can organize their ideas and let students choose the method that works best for them. Encourage students to collaborate to brainstorm. Make copies of the

Character Overview handout from the website for descriptions of some D&D characters.

ACTIVITY 2:**THE ADVENTURE TAKES SHAPE**

Explain to students that now that they have the four elements or cornerstones to anchor their stories, they need to fill in details about what happens to create the plot, or events that create the problem and solution.

Distribute the activity sheet and go over the instructions and examples from D&D lore. Once students complete the sheet, have them work in small groups to share their story synopses and practice giving and receiving peer feedback before they draft their complete stories.

ACTIVITY 3:**THE QUEST: FOLLOW YOUR IMAGINATION**

It's time to help the bard finish the story. And every good bard – and bard's apprentice – knows that the best way to captivate your audience is to add some flavor to your story!

Pass out the activity sheet and review the instructions. Encourage students to see where their imaginations take them. Remind them to give the characters diverse traits, keep the reader guessing with an unexpected plot twist, and sprinkle their stories with descriptive, less-common adjectives and verbs. Show how the characters feel and what they've learned instead of telling. When done, have students share their completed stories and images.

Extension Activity: Select a few stories to have groups of students roleplay as their own version of D&D in which they assume the role of the characters, experience the events and problems, and see if they come up with the same solutions.

RESOURCES

playdnd.com
dnd.wizards.com/resources/educators
[yomiclassroom.com/bard](https://www.yomiclassroom.com/bard)



WIZARDS
OF THE COAST

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Illustrations by Caroline Gariba and Rudy Siswanto.

ACTIVITY 1

WELCOME, APPRENTICE!

Congratulations! You are an apprentice to a bard – a master of song, speech, and magic, who travels the land gathering lore and telling stories. As part of your training, you must help them create a story.



PART 1: To get started, brainstorm story elements that you would like in your story – characters, setting, problem, and solution. Choose ideas from the sample Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) story elements below, or create your own.

TIP! Create more than one character because characters generally have companions who help them along the way – just like an adventuring party in a D&D game!

SAMPLE STORY ELEMENTS

Character	Setting	Problem	Solution
Wizard	Ancient ruins	Retrieve a stolen item	Trap or fight the monster or enemy
Paladin	Magical forest	Prevent an attack	Outwit the enemy
Fairy	Distant galaxy	Hunt a specific monster	Hide from the monster
Rogue	Deserted town	Find a magical item	Use magic to defeat someone or escape
Dragon	A roving caravan	Rescue someone	Follow clues or a map/solve a riddle
Monster	Underground city	Escape from a dungeon	Ask for advice from a wise person or wizard/get help

MY STORY ELEMENTS

Characters: _____

Setting(s): _____

Problem: _____

Solution: _____

PART 2: Now, on the back of this sheet, organize your story details by creating a story map, one-pager, or outline. With a story map, the story elements are organized into defined elements using a table or thought bubbles. A one-pager combines sketches and words to represent story ideas. Another option is a traditional outline.

Next, write a brief summary of your chosen characters, setting(s), problem, and solution. Use additional paper as needed.



ACTIVITY 2

THE ADVENTURE TAKES SHAPE

It's time to add details to the bard's story to develop your plot. In the plot, events lead to the problem, then the climax of the story, which is the most exciting part of the story when the problem is usually solved. Great stories also contain themes, which are important messages or lessons learned. This usually happens at the resolution, or conclusion, of the story. The theme and plot connect the four story elements and drive the growth of the characters.



PART 1: Create a plot timeline for your story using the four story elements you created and the diagram below. Finish with the resolution/conclusion and the theme or lesson the characters learn. Use the examples from D&D in the table below to help you, or think of your own.

The Problem		Climax	The Solution		Resolution/Conclusion
Beginning/Conflict	Rising Action Event		Falling Action Event	Falling Action Event	

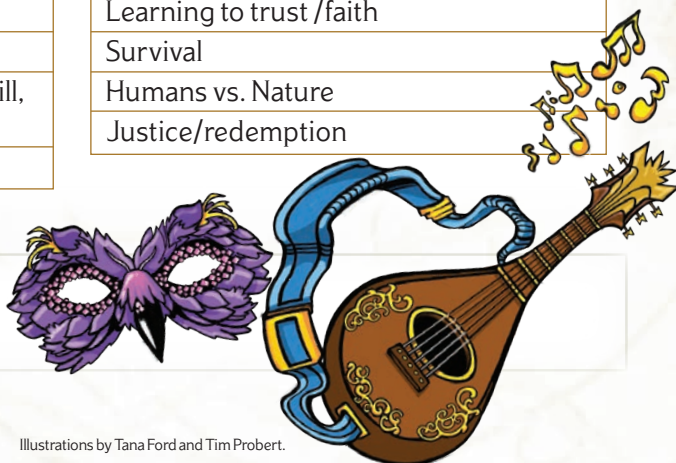
Theme or lesson learned by characters: _____

EXAMPLES FROM DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

Events
Thieves steal a precious item
Spies reveal an army is about to attack
A monster is terrorizing a nearby town
A magical item belonging to the Queen has gone missing
The royal dragon was kidnapped
Your enemies have trapped you and your companions in a dungeon
A mysterious figure appears and gifts you a magical item
You use your wits and smarts to escape a trap
You work together with your companions, each using a unique skill, to defeat an enemy
You receive valuable advice from a wise person

Themes or lessons learned
Perseverance
Courage/Bravery/Heroism
Teamwork
Good vs. evil
Problem-solving
Friendship
Learning to trust /faith
Survival
Humans vs. Nature
Justice/redemption

PART 2: Using your answers from Part 1, write a brief summary of your story on the back of this sheet.



THE QUEST: FOLLOW YOUR IMAGINATION

You have worked hard as the bard's apprentice! The bard is thrilled with your story so far and thinks you have what it takes to become a bard. But first, you must write the full story.



PART 1: On a separate piece of paper, use the plot timeline you created and the tips below to guide you in your writing.

TIPS

- **Draw the reader in.** Start the story by introducing your characters in a unique and interesting way.
- **Show the setting instead of telling.** For example, instead of *telling* the reader that the companions are in a dark, cold forest, describe tall trees that block the light, shadows covering the ground, and *show* that it's cold by having the characters shiver and stomp their feet to keep warm.
- **Add conflict.** A little tension can pay off when your characters (companions) must work together later in the story, and it sets them up to learn an important lesson, whether that lesson is about teamwork, perseverance, or forgiveness. Dialogue is a good vehicle to introduce conflict.
- **Describe the problem and how the characters react to it.** People react to problems in different ways. Think about how each character will react to the problem (especially if they are in danger), and how that might strengthen — or weaken — the team.
- **Highlight the theme.** After the characters solve the problem, have their actions demonstrate the theme. What did your characters learn? Did the theme help them find a solution to the problem? What lesson will they carry with them? Leave the reader wanting more by providing a hint at the end of your story that the companions may face more adventures in the future!

Write notes below about how you will incorporate these tips into your story.

PART 2: On the back of this page, create an illustration for your completed story to share with the bard.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have helped the bard write an exciting story, and now you have completed your training to become a bard!

