What’s Your Story?  
*Using Perspective to Understand Others*

**BIG IDEAS**
- Different people see the same situation in different ways.
- Everyone is the main character of their own story.

**THEME**  
Appreciating Diversity

**GRADE LEVEL**  
4-8

**TIME**  
30 minutes

**MATERIALS**
*What’s Your Story?* worksheet (attached); pens/pencils

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**
Students will:
- Select details from stories that show an understanding of different characters’ goals and the obstacles they face.
- Compare the perspectives of multiple characters within the same story.

**VOCABULARY**
- **Goal**: something you want to do, have, or accomplish; goals can be short-term or long-term
- **Obstacle**: a challenge or block to a goal
- **Perspective**: your point of view; the way you see things

**CHARACTER CONNECTION**
This activity provides a foundation for students to learn about empathy, by teaching them how to seek out multiple perspectives.

**Directions**

1. Introduce students to the *Somebody Wanted But So* strategy, using the examples on the attached worksheet. (If you are unfamiliar with the Somebody Wanted But So reading strategy, you can learn more about it here: [http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/Somebody-Wanted-But-So.html](http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/Somebody-Wanted-But-So.html))

2. Write the words ‘goal’ and ‘obstacle’ on the board. Ask students what column in the chart shows characters’ goals, and what column in the chart shows characters’ obstacles. Have students pair up and discuss this question with a partner for 1 minute before sharing out.

3. Clarify that the ‘Wanted’ column shows characters’ goals. In other words, what a character wants is their **goal**.

4. Clarify that the ‘But’ column shows characters’ obstacles. In other words, something that stops a character from getting what they want is an **obstacle**.
5. Next, you will have students practice the strategy using a story of your or their choice. Have students choose one character from the story and complete one line of the worksheet, identifying that character’s goal and an obstacle that is keeping them from that goal.

6. Tell students that in that example, they were looking at the story from the point of view, or perspective, of one character. Now they are going to look at the story from the perspective of another character.

7. Have students choose a different character in the same story and complete another line of the worksheet for that character. Check for understanding by moving around the room to monitor students’ progress.

8. When all students have finished this task, ask students what differences and similarities they noticed between the goals and obstacles of the two characters. How does the story seem different from the second character’s perspective?

9. Students can add more characters to the worksheet as time allows, or as needed for clarity.

WRAP-UP

In pairs or small groups, or in a written reflection, have students answer the following questions:

1. Who is the main character in the story you are using?
2. How can you tell they are the main character?
3. Are there main characters in real life?
Pretty much all stories include somebody who wants something, but something stops them from getting it, so they think of something to do about that.

If you think about it, you can probably break down almost any story into these parts. Let’s try it….

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOMEBODY</th>
<th>WANTED</th>
<th>BUT</th>
<th>SOMEBODY</th>
<th>WANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter</td>
<td>to live a happy, healthy life</td>
<td>who was a wizard</td>
<td>Count Olaf</td>
<td>to steal the money that ©ier ©la© and Sunny found out he was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violet, Klaus, and Sunny</td>
<td>to be an inventor</td>
<td>because she had to care for her brother and sister</td>
<td>Violet</td>
<td>to help her and her siblings escape from him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violet, Klaus, and Sunny</td>
<td>to find a safe and loving home</td>
<td>they wanted to steal their money</td>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>skills to escape from him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three siblings named Violet, Klaus, and Sunny</td>
<td>to live with Count Olaf</td>
<td>who treated them badly and wanted to steal their money</td>
<td>the children outsmarted him, learned wizarding skills and made a plan to help him along the way.</td>
<td>he went to Hogwarts School to learn wizarding skills and make friends to help him along the way.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What's Your Story?

Worksheet
In the last example, it’s like three different stories are going on at once. That’s because you are looking at the same story from three different points of view, or perspectives.

Now you try it! Using your favorite story or one your teacher has assigned, see how many characters’ perspectives you can identify.