

Into the Wild

by Sarah Beth Durst

Lesson Plan: Creating Characters

Julie is Rapunzel's daughter. Really, she is. And her brother is Puss-in-Boots. (Yes, he's a cat.) In *Into the Wild*, many familiar fairy-tale characters appear, but not always as we remember them. In this lesson, students will learn about characterization by delving into the heart of a well-known fairy-tale character.

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GOAL: Learn about characterization by developing the motivations of a standard fairy-tale character.

PROCEDURE:

1. Choose two well-known fairy tales (for example, "Cinderella" and "Little Red Riding Hood").
2. For the main character in one story, answer the following questions:
 - a. What does he or she most want? Why?
 - b. What does he or she most fear? Why?
3. Imagine that this character is now the star of the other story. (For instance, imagine that Cinderella meets Little Red's wolf or that Little Red Riding Hood attends the ball.)
4. Through shared writing (i.e. the teacher holding the pen but students contributing ideas), create a story. The story should start off in the traditional way, but it does not have to keep to the original tale. The important thing is for the character to behave according to the answers from step #2.

EVALUATE: Discuss how changing the character changed the original story.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES: Working independently, students can repeat this activity but for the other main character. (If you put Cinderella in Little Red's story the first time, now put Cinderella in Little Red's story.) More advanced students can choose another set of tales and pick their own characters.