



## My Name My Story!

**Topic: Identity**

**Key Stage: 3 and 4**

*This activity is ideally done after the circles of me and backpack activities.*

Famous authors have used various methods to express their ideas, feelings and fantasies. Many have written autobiographies and / or poems about their lives. Through different literary genres, such as prose and poetry, authors have been able to immortalise their ideas into dramas, novels, poems, sonnets, but they have also been able to open windows into their lives and break down barriers.

Ask the class, why is there power in sharing personal narratives / story with others?

- It helps you make sense of your life – why certain events happened the way they did
- It helps make sense of who you are and your own identity
- It humanises people instead of putting everyone in the same box
- Opens windows into the lives of others
- Breaks down barriers and stereotypes

### **Write yourself out!**

In this activity students will be asked to write and think about their name.

Ask students to write responses to the following series of prompts. Teacher can model and give examples throughout each prompt question. Students should spend two minutes maximum on each prompt. Tell students to not think too much about it and write whatever comes to mind first.

Prompt 1: List five things that the sounds in your name remind you of. These may be words that rhyme with your name; things that you associate with individual sounds; or a combination.

Prompt 2: Make five statements beginning “My name is...” You may name yourself after any person or thing you choose.

Prompt 3: List one sight, one sound, one taste, one smell, and one texture you remember from your childhood.

Prompt 4: Make three statements beginning “My name means...” You may use the actual etymological origins of your name; you may also make some up.

Prompt 5: List three things that are holy / sacred / important to you.

Ask class to get into pairs and share what they've written with each other. Encourage one or two students to share what they've written with the rest of the class.

### **Reflection questions**

- How did you find the process of writing with a specific time limit?
- Did you find any of the steps easier / difficult? Why?

### **My name, my story!**

Ask students to look back at their circles of me worksheets (if they have done this activity) and the language they generated in the writing.

Ask students to a poem or short piece of prose which reflects their own name and aspects of their identity.

Students may use as much or as little of the language generated in the 'Write yourself out!' activity as they choose, and they may also add new language. There is no formal constraint for this assignment: students can write in any way that seems useful or interesting to them.

Students may make use of prompt questions below or none at all.

### **Prompt questions:**

- Write about your name and its meaning (do you like it? Do you have a nickname? Were you named after someone in your family? How did you come to be named?)
- Write about your experience of having this name
- What's one of your earliest childhood memories?
- What are some of your best qualities / traits?
- Write about one of your most useful talents
- Describe a physical feature of yours that you really like
- Write about a trait you inherited or picked up from a parent / family member
- Write about how you fit the stereotype of people from a specific city / country... or about how you don't fit the stereotype at all
- Tell your story about the importance of having a faith / beliefs / religion or lack thereof
- Tell your story about when you met someone that inspired you Invite students to share their writing with the class.

### **Reflection / Plenary**

Ask the class:

- How did you find the process of writing about your name and yourself?
- How did you feel when you listened to your peers' or classmates' personal narratives?
- Did anybody hear somebody challenge a stereotype that you once bought into? If so, what?

### **Extension activity**

Students to turn their stories into a music, a film, a play etc.