

A Stuffy Story with Cuddly Characters

Use the activity below to help students tell an original story about, and explore the physicality of, their favorite stuffed pal.



Materials Needed: one stuffed animal per student (if students don't have one, provide one for them)

1. First, have students spread out in the room so they have enough space around them to move and explore. Make sure each student has a stuffed animal (aka stuffy or cuddly). If a student doesn't have one, give them time to choose one from the classroom!
2. Start by guiding students through an exploration of their furry friends' stories. Ask them questions like: *Where does your stuffy come from? How were they created? What is their name? Do they speak? If so, what language? How did you come to know your stuffy?* You may want to play some soft instrumental music while you hold space for this exploration.
3. After some time, ask students to make their stuffed animals breathe in and out, and move and walk through space. Ask them: *How does your stuffy walk? What sounds do they make? How do they jump? How do they sit?* Then, tell them they are going to embody their friends for this activity and tell a story from their perspective. Have students stand in their own space in the room and lead them in a full-body shake out to reset themselves.
4. Ask them questions similar to those in Steps 2 and 3, this time focusing on the way they physically embody their characters.
5. Give students enough time to feel comfortable embodying their furry friends. They should all feel as though they've had sufficient time to explore and experiment, giving life to their pals.
6. Then, let students know that in a moment, they will each get the opportunity to introduce themselves to another classmate as their stuffy, and to demonstrate how they sound and move around the classroom.
7. Give students the opportunity to walk around the room as their stuffy character and, pair up and introduce themselves as their stuffy, embodying all of the characteristics they've explored throughout the activity.

Reflection Questions:

How did it feel to act as your cuddly?

What did you notice about your friends' portrayal of their characters?

How were others' characters different from yours?

