



The Stories We Tell: Transforming Teaching Through Celebratory Narrative

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Sample Stories



Sample Stories: Reflection



1. How did these stories make you feel?
2. What do these stories make you think about?

Write individually for a few minutes, and then share with the people around you.

Powerful Stories

Powerful stories draw on an **emotional moment**, akin to a **snapshot** that focuses on a specific detail



Principles for Story-Writing

1. **Sensory:** Use all the senses to convey the moment, whenever possible.
2. **Evocative:** Set a mood and create an impression that helps the reader identify with you.
3. **Precise:** Only the words and details that are necessary to communicate that precise moment.
4. **Frugal:** In this case, 100-800 words max, for a sense of urgency.
5. **Eaten quickly, but digested slowly.**



Why Stories...?

“These stories we tell about ourselves – they’re almost like our infrastructure, like railroads or highways. We can build them almost any way we want to. But once they’re in place, this whole inner landscape grows up around them.

So maybe the point here is that you should be careful about how you tell your story, or at least be conscious of it. Because once you’ve told it, once you’ve built the highway, it’s just very hard to move it.”

- Michael Lewis

Why Stories...?

Personal Identity

- Help us to establish, revise, recreate, and articulate our individual narratives
 - Build confidence and self awareness

Community Perception

- Inform how our communities perceive us and how we perceive our communities
 - Identify and celebrate values

Why Stories...?

Institutional Culture

- Create, change, and partially define and reinforce institutional culture
 - Challenge dominant discourses
 - Reveal and strengthen new narratives

What does success look like for you?





What is Success?

To laugh often and much;

To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;

To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends;

To appreciate beauty;

To find the beauty in others;

To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition;

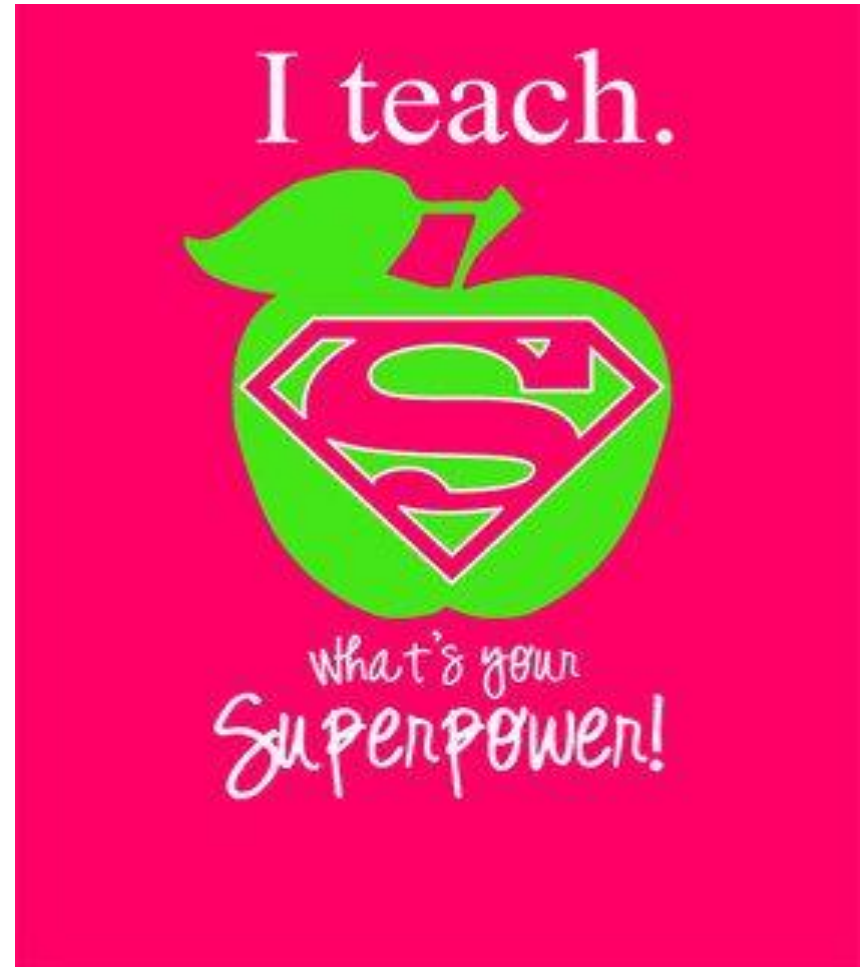
To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived;

This is to have succeeded.

Free-Write: Capturing Our Stories

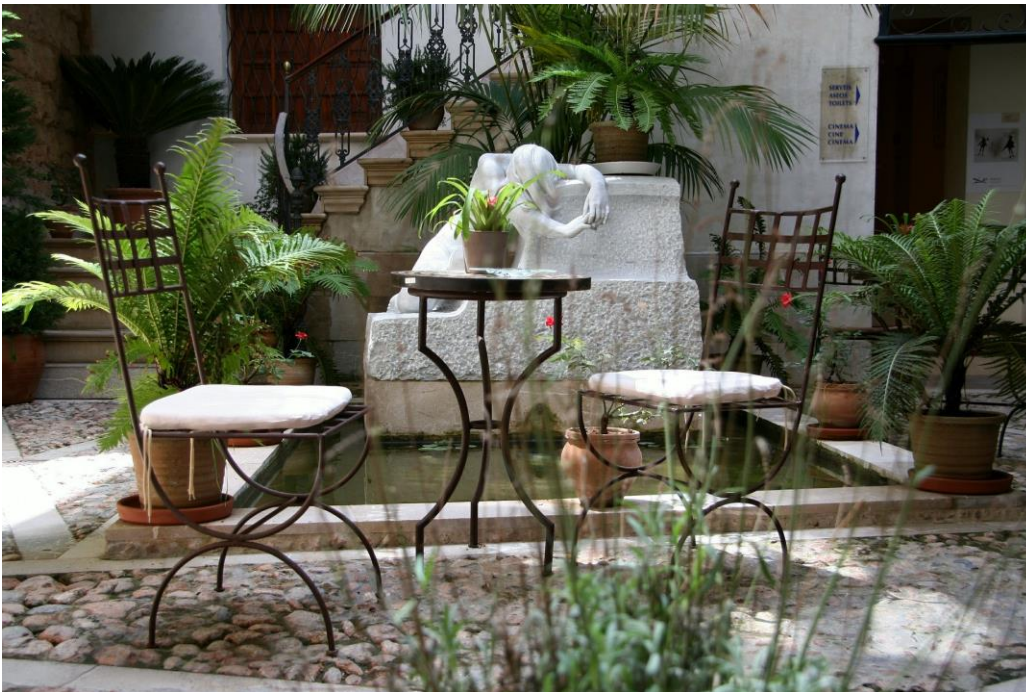
Think back over your entire teaching career, and pinpoint situations in which you felt you had been a success as a teacher.

- First, think and write.
- Then, share with those around you.



Examining Our Stories

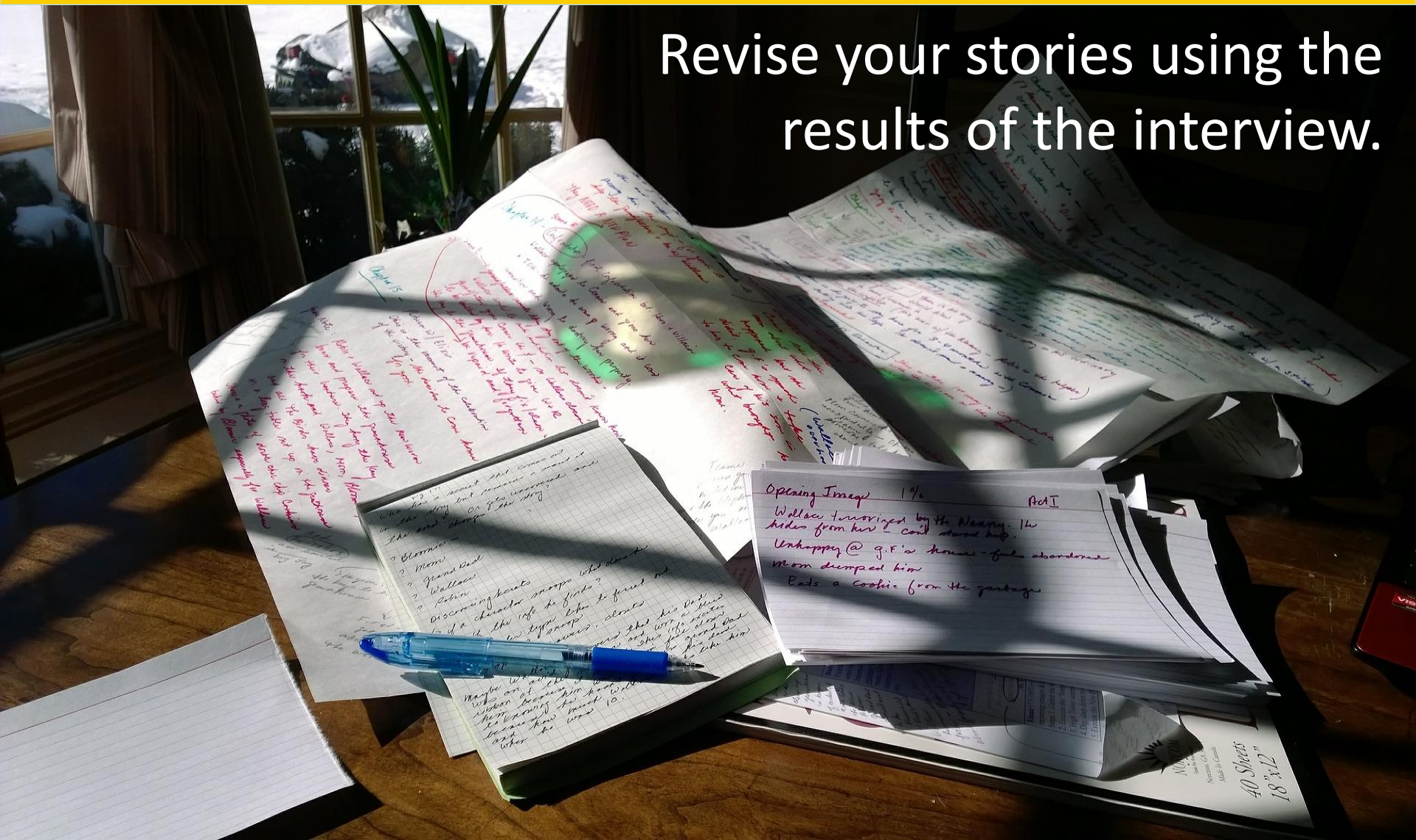
In pairs, take turns interviewing one another using the interview questions included in your handout.



Interviewers, record your partner's answers.

Revisiting Our Stories

Revise your stories using the results of the interview.



Sharing Our Stories

Volunteers – share your story with the group?

