

# ARTS • BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

• middle school •  
• elementary • • high school •

title **This Belongs to Me!**

skill



theatre

about the strategy

Theatre games are a staple in the training of actors of all ages and are easily put to use in the classroom as a means of increasing student engagement and creating an ensemble quickly and with little preparation. Learning to look and really “see”, students enjoy playing this game in which they learn to deeply endow objects with personal meaning and create stories that are shared with the larger group.

visual

Close observation of endowed objects and of students sharing their stories

auditory

Listening to subtleties as students tell endowment stories

kinesthetic

Reading body language and gestures

instructional steps

objective Students endow objects with deep meaning and create stories around them, which they share with the larger group.

materials ordinary objects

procedure

## **Modeling and Applying**

- Break students into groups (size of groups depends on the size of the class, anywhere from four to ten in a group is recommended)
- Have each group go to a separate part of the classroom
- Ask each group to decide *among themselves* upon a common object that one of them has with them, (a pen, a set of keys, a wallet, any common object)
- Tell students that each one of them will have to tell the group “This belongs to me” and a short story or bit of background about the object. Only one person in the group will be telling the truth.
- Have each group get in front of the class and tell their stories, holding the object as they speak.

### This Belongs to Me!

#### instructional steps

##### procedure

- Ask the class to vote on who they thought was the true owner of the object, and ask them to tell why they voted for this person. What exactly did his or her voice and body do to make it look real? Why do we believe people? What was unbelievable? What made it more interesting? Which stories were the most believable, why? Which students were most successful at endowing and personalizing the objects? How did they succeed in doing this?

#### strategy for curricular connections



##### social studies

- Create a tableau around an object that is the center of an important moment in history (e.g., Ben Franklin's kite, someone giving Harriet Tubman a shawl to keep her warm on her journey, Frederick Douglas being given his first book to learn to read)



##### science

- Ask students to create a monologue around a certain object necessary for a scientific experiment and to elaborate on why this particular object, (e.g. microscope, chemical), is essential. Have a student pretend to be a historic scientist, (e.g. Madame Curie, Pasteur) holding an emblematic object signifying the scientific breakthrough he or she made and describing it while relating to the object in a way that demonstrates a high level of personal endowment.



##### language arts

- Ask students to create and read or perform a monologue in which a character from literature talks about an important object, (e.g. Ophelia's love letters to Hamlet, Anne Frank's diary, John Steinbeck's pearl), while holding the object in hand and bearing in mind the tremendous amount of personal involvement and endowment the character has with the object. Have the character tell the audience why this object is so important and what it means to them.



##### visual arts

- Have students create a collage using an object or objects that are highly endowed for different reasons, (guns, junk food, diamonds), with images taken from magazines and newspapers, and to write a short poem or essay on the endowment, positive or negative of this object in society past or present. Ask students to think in terms of what these things symbolize and are metaphors for in society.

## ARTS • BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

### This Belongs to Me!

multiple intelligences target



verbal • linguistic



interpersonal



visual • spatial



bodily • kinesthetic



intrapersonal

adaptations

to simplify

- Have students use only objects that really do belong to them and tell how they got the object and how they use it with no imaginative additions.

to challenge

- Have students write monologues based upon their real or imagined “relationship” to the object of choice, starting with the writing prompt: “This belongs to me”, or imagine they are giving the object away with the writing prompt: “I really want you to have this because...”

special needs

- This activity is accessible for most learners.