

Who Am I?

Overview:

This activity encourages students to practice making predictions and write about how they would feel to be another person.

Procedure:

Students are asked to put themselves in the shoes of a famous person. When choosing/writing descriptions of famous people, try to connect it to something the students are learning or will be learning in history or science. Please note that this could be completed individually, in a small group, or in a large group. Students who need more support may benefit from modeling that can take place in a large group instruction setting.

1. Students read about the life of a famous person as if they are that person.
 - a. Students make predictions about who they think they are in the beginning of the text, middle of the text, and after reading the entire text. Students should practice revising and confirming their predictions throughout the activity.
2. After students predict who they are, they write a response to reading about how it would make them feel to be that person or how it would feel to go through the situations that the person went through.
3. It is revealed who the student actually is.
 - a. Students are asked to add more information to their writing now that they know who they actually are.
4. Optional: After it is revealed who the famous person is, ask the students to make one more prediction about what they will be learning. For example, if it is revealed that they are Abraham Lincoln, ask them to predict what they will be learning about (predication choices for Abraham Lincoln may include America, presidents, the Civil War, Slavery, etc.).

Examples of “Who Am I?” Descriptions (Please note that descriptions should either include more or less information/hints depending on the needs of individual students):

Who Am I Description #1:

You were born in 1809 before babies were born in hospitals. You were born at home in a log cabin in the great state of Kentucky. You grew up in that log cabin which only had one room.

Make a prediction! Who are you?

You started working at the young age of seven. You helped your father on the farm. Learning to read and write was very important to you. On the days that you weren't working on the farm, you walked two miles to get to school. Reading was so important to you that you taught yourself how to read!

Make a prediction! Who are you?

As you got older, you wanted to make a difference. You ran for legislation in Illinois. You later became the 16th president of the USA. You wrote the Emancipation Proclamation because you wanted to help end slavery. You were an American Leader who is honored on President's Day!

Make a prediction! Who are you? How did each step of your life make you feel?

***This description could connect to the following history ASOL's:

HS--H1a, HS--H1b, HS--H3, HS--H4, and HS--C4.

Who Am I Description #2:

You are a woman who lived during colonial times. You finished school and then your father sent you to work. You worked at an upholstery company where you learned to sew.

Make a prediction! Who are you?

*You met John and fell in love, but your family did not approve. You moved away from your family and married John. You opened an upholstery business. Sadly you lost your husband in war. **Make a prediction! Who are you?***

You were visited by George Washington. He asked you to sew the first American Flag after America won the war. You agreed and stitched red and white stripes along with thirteen five-pointed stars--a star for each colony.

Make a prediction! Who are you? How did each step of your life make you feel?

***This description could connect to the following history ASOL's: **HS--H1a**

ASOLs Covered in this Activity:

3E--CN1c: The student will identify events or ideas in a familiar nonfiction text.

Extension Idea: Ask the students to stop at certain points of the text and decide how it would make them feel to go through specific events of their famous person's life. If students need support, offer pictures of people with different looks of emotion on their faces (surprised, scared, excited, confused) and ask the students to choose a picture that describes the emotion of their famous person.

3E--CN1e: The student will answer *who* and *what* questions to demonstrate understanding of details in a familiar nonfiction text.

Extension Idea: Ask the students to elicit a few *who* and *what* questions about what they have read to help them make more predictions about who their famous person is, event their famous person were involved in, the time period during which their famous person lived, etc. Based on the answers to these questions, ask the students to confirm or revise their prediction of who their famous person is.

8E--CN1b: The student will provide a summary of familiar informational text.

HSE--CN3c: The student will provide a summary of an informational text.

Extension Idea: After reading the entire text and making predictions about the text throughout, ask the students to summarize what they have read and to discuss the predictions they have made along the way. Ask them to talk about how they may have confirmed or revised their predictions as they read. Ask students to make one final prediction of who they think "they are" based on this summary. This may be a great time to promote communication and sharing between peers by having students work in pairs or small groups.

5E--WP5b: The student will recall information from literary and informational text to support writing (e.g., "Use details from text to describe a character in a story."

"Use details from the text to retell what the text says.").

Extension Idea: After reading (but before revealing who the famous person is), ask

the student to write about who they think they are. Ask students to support their prediction by including at least two details that support their prediction and includes a description of their famous person and details that retell the story of their famous person.

8E--WP5a: The student will write an argument to support a claim with one clear reason or piece of evidence.

Extension Idea: Ask students to support their prediction within their writing by including one piece of evidence from the “Who Am I” text that helps to prove their prediction is correct. Ask students to share their writing with a peer and to practice persuading their peer in believing their prediction is correct.

8E--WP6c: The student will use information from literary and informational text to support writing (e.g., “Compare and contrast themes, patterns of events, or characters across two or more stories or dramas.”, “Determine whether claims in a text are fact or opinion.”).

Extension Idea: Once a student has completed this activity at least twice (with 2 different famous Americans), ask him/her to write a comparison of the historical figures. This might be in paragraph form, Venn diagram, or character maps.

HSE--WP1e: The student will develop writing by planning and revising own writing by adding more information.

Extension Idea: After students have written a few sentences about who they think they are with supported sentences from what they have read, reveal to the students who they actually are. Ask the students to add more information to their writing based on the realization of who they are. To support students in their writing ask them to include information about whether or not their prediction was correct or incorrect.

Materials Needed:

- “Who Am I?” Descriptions (You may want more than one description depending on how you split up the classroom for instruction).
- Paper for response to reading (this could be blank paper or paper that includes sentence frames for fill in the blank responses or premade picture answer choices). Remember to allow students to first write about who they think they are before revealing who they actually are and then allow them to add more information after the reveal.
- Writing utensil or alternative pencil
- Optional: Feelings picture cues

Instructional Setting:

- Classroom
- Consider using large group instruction for students who need teacher modeling as a support

Community Connections and/or Peer Interaction:

After students have learned who they are, have them meet with peers outside of the classroom (or within the classroom if this is the only option). Allow them to play a game of “20 Questions” where the peer asks the student questions about who they are (about their famous person) in order to try and guess who the student is. This activity promotes peer interaction and communication skills.

Functional Activity/Routine:

Making predictions, revising predictions, and/or confirming predictions is a reading comprehension strategy that should be instilled in students as good reading practice. The act of making predictions can be carried into most daily activities and elicits inner thinking. Students can make predictions about what is for lunch, who is going to be in school, what activity they will complete in PE class, etc. The possibilities for making predictions are endless and extremely functional.

Strategies to Collect Evidence:

Include hard copies of a student’s written work as evidence. If your student is a scribbler, or in one of the other early stages of developmental writing, be sure to include an interpretation of the writing in your anecdotal record.

Specific Options for Differentiating this Activity:

- Allow students to use their preferred “pencil” to complete this activity. This may include a writing utensil, keyboard, alternative pencil, or dictating to a scribe.
- A student in any of the developmental stages of writing can complete this activity.
 - *If your student is a scribbler, be sure to reinforce his/her product as authentic writing, and if necessary, help assign meaning.