

Writing Activity: Origin Stories

In *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run*, we eventually learn more about what makes King Poseidon act the way he does. Even though he is the villain in the story, there are details that explain how he ended up that way. This makes him a more interesting and fully developed character.

In stories, the most memorable heroes are usually not perfect and the best villains are not pure evil, but have a mix of character traits that make them complex. Villains have reasons for their bad behavior, and heroes often have character flaws to overcome. We often learn about the root of these things in a character's origin story.

Origin stories are backstories or accounts that reveal how characters became who they are now. You're going to create an original villain character and write their origin story, but in order to do that, you have to build your character's backstory first.

Writing Prompt

Using your Brainstorm Activity, create an original character and write an origin story that reveals how they became a villain.

In some ways, a good villain can be a story's most important character to balance the hero out and to make the story's plot more interesting too. Writers should spend just as much time developing an interesting and complex villain for a good story.

All characters, like people, are shaped by their experiences. What were your villain's experiences in life that made them into who they are now?

Maybe your character wants to take over the world but the reason is because they never felt truly loved and just want to be recognized as being special. Whatever the details are, an origin story should reveal something about the events that happened to a character in the past that impacted how they view the world.

How do you know if you've written a good character? The reader will be hooked to know what happens next with them in the story...even if they're the villain.

Origin Story Template

Use your Brainstorm Activity to write an origin story that reveals how your character became a villain.

Once upon a time, there was a _____ named
(DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CHARACTER)

_____ who wanted _____
(CHARACTER'S NAME) (WHAT YOUR CHARACTER WANTS MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD)

because _____.
(WHY YOUR CHARACTER WANTS THIS)

Before they _____, they used to
(WHAT MAKES THEM A VILLAIN)

(WHAT YOUR CHARACTER WAS LIKE AS A BABY)

But now, _____ only _____
(CHARACTER'S NAME) (WHAT MAKES YOUR CHARACTER ANGRY)

_____ and tries to _____
(WHAT YOUR CHARACTER WANTS)

so that _____.
(WHY YOUR CHARACTER WANTS THIS)

In _____, _____ will always be known as
(WHERE YOUR CHARACTER LIVES) (CHARACTER'S NAME)

(WHAT MAKES YOUR CHARACTER KNOWN AS A VILLAIN)