

# CHARACTERS ARE IN CONFLICT

## ROLL ON THE WALL - A PRE-IMPROVISATION EXERCISE

GRADES K-6

TH:Cr1.1.a  
TH:Cr2.b  
TH:Pr5.a

Lesson by  
Penny  
Caywood

DURATION: 10 - 20 min. depending on age

### 21st CENTURY SKILLS:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Information literacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creativity        | <input type="checkbox"/> Media literacy       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration                | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology literacy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication     | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility          | <input type="checkbox"/> Social skills         |

### BACKGROUND

Role on the Wall is a strategy that invites students to figure out the mind of a character and to visually map the relationship between characteristics (emotions) and actions (behaviors) onto a simple outline of a human figure. This can be a very in depth activity where you can create the map and keep adding to it as you read a story/book/play.

For improvisational purposes, students can collectively brainstorm what characters might say or how they might feel in a certain scenario before launching into an improvisation. This allows students to more deeply understand what a character wants in a scene.

### DIRECTIONS

1. Draw a large outline of two human figures - a gingerbread man shape - on the board; leave plenty of space to write inside and/or outside the figure.
2. Name the character for the group and provide any necessary context.
3. Invite the group to call out words, phrases, or messages that this specific person might say or be thinking. Write student ideas on the outside of the figures.
4. Next, ask students how the character might feel inside, based on the outside messages, and write those feelings on the inside of the figure.
5. Once you've written all sorts of phrases or emotions in and around the figure, your students won't be stuck for something to say in an improvised scene. They can use anything from the board and interpret it as they wish.

### MATERIALS:

- a bit of open space is preferred - (front of classroom, library kiva, auditorium - but this activity can be done at desks.
- a white board and markers
- or poster paper and markers

### REFLECTION:

- What did you discover about the characters or conflict?
- Was your character successful in reaching their goal/objective? Why or why not?
- What are the outside forces that are influencing the scene/characters?

