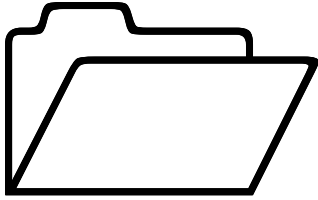


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Story Strategies



Overview of Story Lessons

Story Matrix

The chart below shows nine stories about people in history who were nonconforming thinkers. They all had ideas that strongly challenged prevailing thinking of their time and place. Acting on their ideas in the face of authority and tradition brought on serious consequence for some. A few met with good ends or much fame. All made a mark in history.

Time Period	Stories of Independent thinking in:		
↓	Religion	Natural Science	Politics
Ancient Times	<p><i>New experiences prompt Siddhartha to leave his familiar way of life (Hindu) and invent other ways to live. (As he lives and teaches his new ways, he lays the foundations of Buddhism.)</i></p> <p>#1: “The Prince is Shocked to Learn”</p>	<p><i>Aristotle and Thales pose logic and empiricism as the essential method of rational inquiry, thus confronting existing beliefs that knowledge comes from the gods.</i></p> <p>#2: “The Greek Gods Meet Their Match”</p>	<p><i>Socrates, in the Golden Age of Greece, challenges the young people of Athens to think for themselves and is convicted of heresy.</i></p> <p>#3: “The Man of Many Questions”</p>
Renaissance and Enlightenment	<p><i>Martin Luther questions tradition and authority, initiating from within the Catholic Church what has come to be known as the Protestant Reformation.</i></p> <p>#4: “One Priest Rattles Rome”</p>	<p><i>Copernicus and then Galileo study the solar system and conclude from observations that the earth goes around the sun (a conclusion that conflicts with church dogma).</i></p> <p>#5: “When Galileo Saw Things Differently”</p>	<p><i>Voltaire’s candid views challenge powerful institutions and feed public discontent with the reign of the French monarchy.</i></p> <p>#6: “The Candid Littérateur”</p>
Beyond the Enlightenment	<p><i>Countering scriptural authority and prevailing tradition, Stanton joins with other activists to press for women’s rights and the abolition of slavery.</i></p> <p>#7: “The Ladies Clamor for Change”</p>	<p><i>Darwin’s careful and extensive observations lead to his formulating one of the most powerful science ideas of modern times.</i></p> <p>#8: “The Hungry Learner’s Big Picture”</p>	<p><i>Thomas Paine’s ideas and actions encourage democracy and progressiveness but provoke notoriety of two kinds—first admiration, then vilification.</i></p> <p>#9: “One Pesky Patriot”</p>


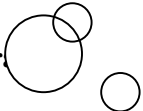
There are three major **themes** (see column headings of the matrix). These ideas are not mutually exclusive. One theme is independent thinking within a religious setting (or religious tradition). Another is the realm of thinking within the natural sciences. The third focuses on primarily political thinking within a societal setting.

There are three broad **time frames** encompassing these stories (see labels for the rows). In general, world history teachers will find the first two rows more useful, whereas American history teachers will probably target the third row. But, a story may be used at any grade level if suited to the reading skills of the students. Each of the stories can stand alone in order to be used to illustrate a point regarding the role of free and independent thinking in history.

Procedures

You can use any of the nine stories in numerous ways. The table beginning below (continuing on the next page)suggests several of the major methods you might wish to employ with any story. You may combine approaches as you see fit, or invent your own.

These first three tools are **generic**. They focus on conforming/nonconforming and may be used repeatedly. You will find a duplication master sheet for each of these three tools immediately following this section (see “Story Lessons, Analysis Sheets” in fine print at lower right corners).

TEACHING TOOL	USE OF APPROACH
<p>Balloon Cartoon</p> 	<p>This simple diagram is especially suited to stories that center on a lone thinker whose idea(s) quite clearly depart from the mainstream notions of the times. It also can be used in classes where the reading level is low. The nonconforming thinker is a free-flying balloon cut loose from a “similar-thinking” bunch of balloons.</p>
<p>Venn Diagram</p> 	<p>This type of diagram is very helpful for placing emphasis on the historical context and the outcomes of free or independent thinking in a group. The conforming thinking can be explored, as can the degree of overlap between the nonconformer and the mainstream group.</p>
<p>Story Analysis Table</p>	<p>This approach is suitable for many stories and may be most helpful for analyzing more complex stories. It requires more analytical, reading, and writing skills on the part of students, who would be discussing and then filling in the chart.</p>

Story Strategies

The next two tools listed (see the portion of the table below) vary with the story, and so you will find these tools beginning on the page immediately following the individual story.

Story Questions	Each story provides a set of “questions to consider.” These questions can be used to guide the student to an understanding of the story. A few of the questions may help you to relate the story to the present day or better link concepts to the students’ own lives.
Story Quotations	Most stories provide some quotations from the main character(s) in the story. Often these will help students to infer why an historical figure acted the way he or she did. Some quotes reveal the reasoning of associates or persons who influenced a character’s outlook.
TEACHING TOOL	USE OF APPROACH

Generic Tools

BALLOON ANALYSIS

The idea here is that the bunch of balloons represents some group of people, and the single balloon represents a nonconforming person whose thinking is somehow different from the group’s.

Members of the group conform—the “idea strings”—whereas in some respect, the loner either does not hold or is not held to the notions that they share. [This type of independent thinking person may be willing to leave the group and go his/her own way.]

VENN DIAGRAM ANALYSIS

You may ascribe meaning to the circles as best fits the particular story.

The large circle could represent “most all the people in a given society” (or some segment of it, such as the scientists or the bureaucrats) and their shared (mainstream) thinking. [Alternately, it might represent tradition or authority.]

Either of the smaller circles might represent an individual (or some small group of people) whose outlook or reasoning in some respect(s) challenges the thinking of the main reference group or lies outside the mainstream.

Although the bottom circle might be used to show someone acting to totally reject the governing view(s), the other (overlapping) one better illustrates the typical situation in which the nonconforming element continues partially in sync with the dictates of the dominant outlook.

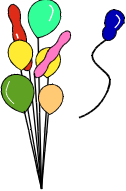
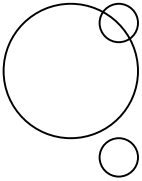
STORY ANALYSIS CHART

This is a more classical “information seeking” analysis, with guiding questions and space within which students can write responses.

Generic Strategies

Here is a further look at how you may use each of the generic teaching tools. In the table beginning below, the right-hand column contains suggestions on techniques to use with the five teaching tools. Please note that the listing is *not* intended to be comprehensive, only *illustrative*.

(Note: The answers to the questions below will vary depending on the story. The italicized question’s response will depend on the terminology you employ to achieve your intent. For example, you may be emphasizing the term “nonconformist,” or “independent thinker” or, if applicable, “freethinker” or perhaps “different drummer.”)

TOOL	TEACHING TECHNIQUES
 <p>Balloon Cartoon</p>	<p>Ask questions such as the following to guide your students’ thinking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The single balloon represents a nonconforming thinker in our story. What is his/her name? 2. The bunch of balloons represents a group of people in the story. In your mind, who seemed to be the “bunch” of people? 3. Notice that the single balloon is moving apart from the group. <i>What is the name we give to a person who thinks (or acts) different from how the group thinks (or acts)?</i> 4. Did the nonconformist have any problems in the story? 5. What are some of the problems that a nonconformist might have in life?
 <p>Venn Diagram</p>	<p>The following questions can steer thinking about mainstream vs. nonconforming ideas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let’s let one of the small circles represents some nonconforming thinking that our story shows us. Who in this story thought unlike most other people? 2. If a small circle is to be a different thinking individual (or group), then let’s let the large circle represents the conventional thinking. How might you describe the mainstream notions of most of the society (or the group of people) in the story? 3. <i>How can we label the one (or group) that isn’t going along with the mainstream notions represented by this large circle?</i> 4. Do the people in the large circle find out about the independent thinker’s views? 5. What is their reaction? 6. What are the consequences for the nonconformer? 7. Let’s choose which of the two smaller circles might better represent the nonconforming person(s) in our story. Is there still overlap of thinking, or is there total separation?

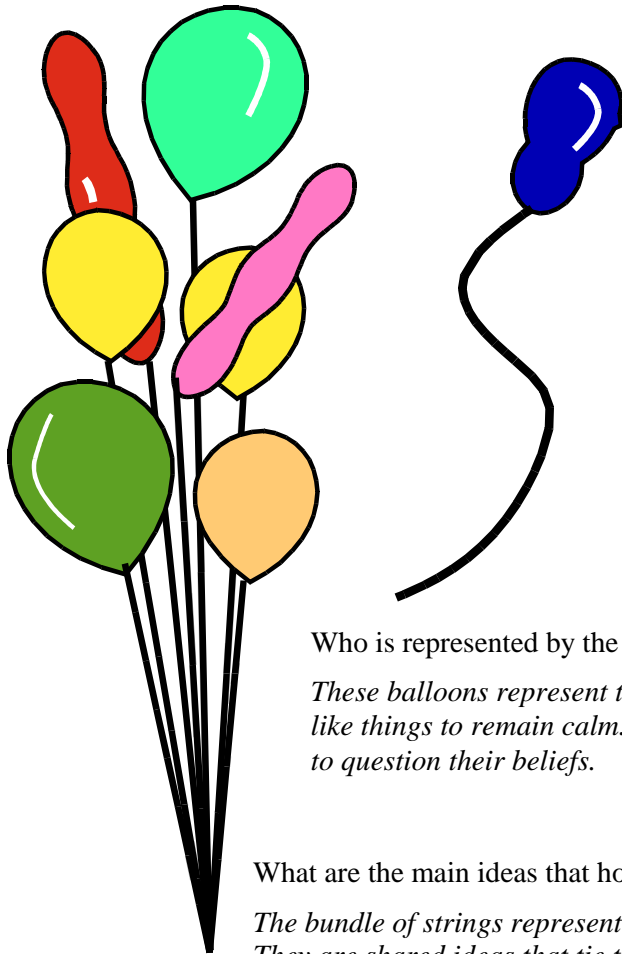
Story Strategies

Story Analysis Table	The analysis tasks are given on the table itself, but you may have to explain what each question means before having the students fill in the various spaces with their thoughts. You may wish to guide the entire class through the questions, or you may prefer to assign the analysis to small discussion groups (or individuals) in preparation for subsequent class discussion.
Story Questions <i>(immediately follow each story)</i>	The story questions will prove most valuable for prompting or guiding discussion. (They are <i>not</i> intended merely as assignments to students to write responses.) You may have to explain what a question means, and then have the students provide their thoughts. It is important that students be given adequate time for reflection and for reference to the story.
Story Quotations <i>(immediately follow each story)</i>	These can be read aloud. Ask questions such as the following to guide students' thinking. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Who can say the quotation in normal language, such as you might hear on TV?2. What do you think the quotation means?3. Might someone get mad after hearing this statement? Who?4. Is the person who makes a statement like this conforming, or a nonconformist?

Sample Use of Story Tools

Here is an illustration of using each of the teaching tools in turn. First you see a completed “Balloon Analysis,” then a “Venn Analysis” and so forth, as they apply to Story #3 on Socrates, “The Man of Many Questions.” That story lesson begins on page 83. Find and refer to it as necessary while you examine the examples that follow.

Sample Balloon Analysis



Whom does this balloon represent?

It represents Socrates. He was always saying things that people and politicians didn't like to hear.

Why is the single balloon not with the bunch of balloons?

Socrates had different ideas. He allowed his thoughts to fly free. He asked people questions about their ideas.

Who is represented by the bunch of balloons?

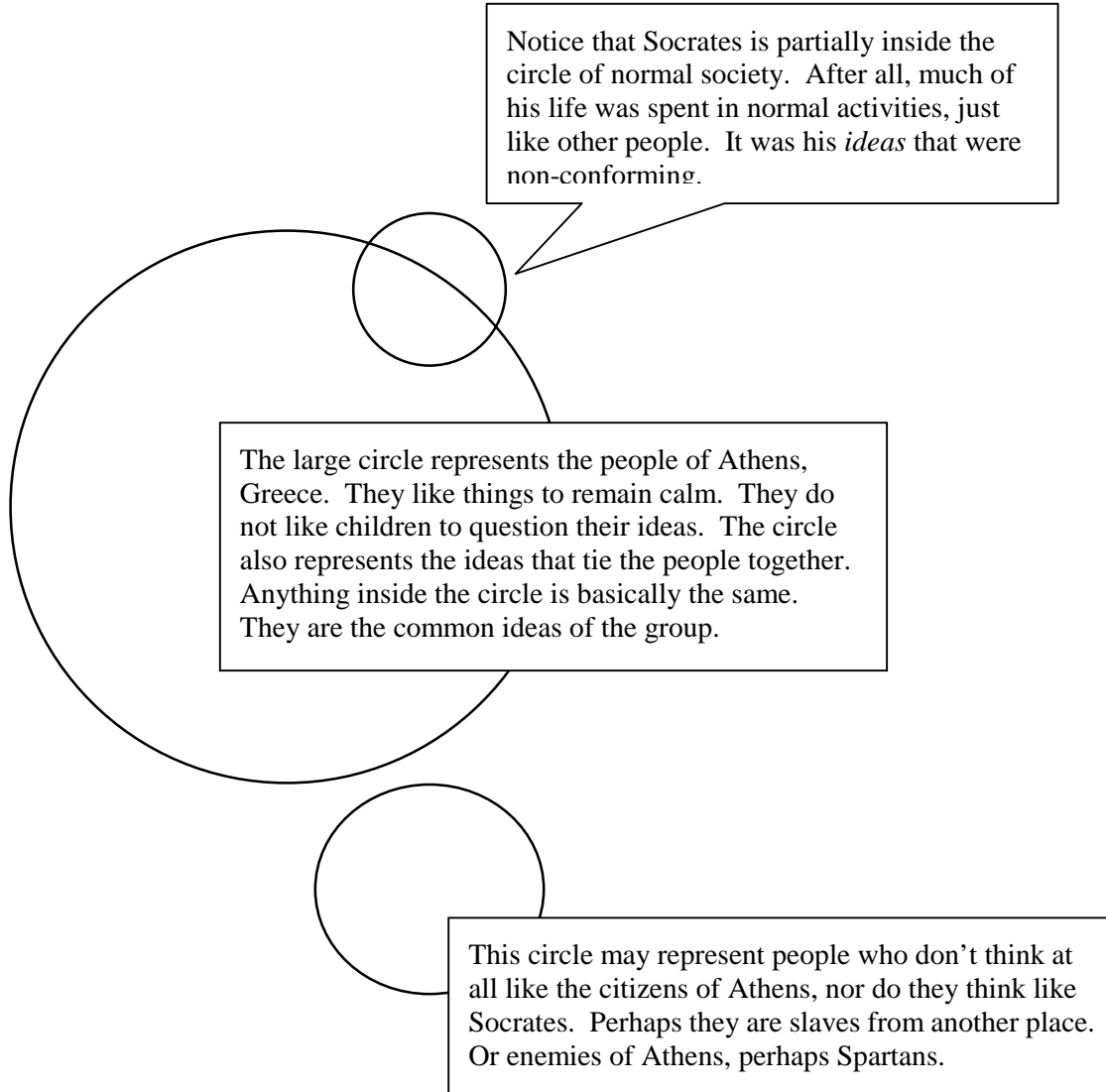
These balloons represent the people of Athens. They like things to remain calm. They do not like children to question their beliefs.

What are the main ideas that hold these balloons together?

The bundle of strings represents the common ideas of the group. They are shared ideas that tie the people of Athens together. Untie the strings, and the group may fly apart. Socrates was trying to loosen some of the strings.

Story Strategies

Sample Venn Diagram Analysis



Sample Story Analysis Table

Story Title: <i>The Man of Many Questions</i>		
Where and when in history did the events in this story take place?	<i>In Greece, in ancient times (over 2000 years ago)</i>	
Who are the people and/or groups of people in the story?	<i>normal everyday people, citizens (priests, politicians, scholars, students)</i>	<i>Socrates</i>
Analyze::	Traditional View	Nonconforming View
Describe the contrasting views presented in this story.	<i>The people of Athens lived in a democratic society. They believed in their gods and goddesses. They didn't like to entertain questions about whether their way of living was best or not.</i>	<i>Socrates questioned all viewpoints, including religious and political ones. He also taught his students to question all views.</i>
Describe what happened to each outlook because of the conflict between them.	<i>Many citizens became irritated and angry, especially politicians and priests. They held to their outlook, and they brought Socrates to trial and found him guilty. They were in power.</i>	<i>Socrates felt he was doing the right thing, upholding laws and being a good teacher. Socrates held to his outlook and refused to budge. He drank poison rather than give in.</i>
What were the long-term effects (if any) of the independent thinker's ideas and actions?	<i>Luckily, his ideas were recorded by his pupil, Plato. So, now scholars and philosophers think of Socrates as one of the smartest philosophers who ever lived. People still read his ideas in books. And many people still believe in constantly asking questions and trying to get satisfactory answers to them.</i>	
Reflect:	Today	
Have the nonconforming thinker's actions been of any benefit to our present society?	<i>(student opinion)</i>	

Story Strategies

Sample Answers to the Story Questions

<p>1. Suppose you are Socrates' pupil. One day he tells you: "The unexamined life is not worth living." What does he mean by this? What do you think he hopes you will do?</p>	<p><i>Socrates meant I should examine my own life. And he would want me to do that with questions about what I know and what I think I know. He hopes I will habitually ask myself about the "truths" I think I know and believe and keep checking and reevaluating them.</i></p>
<p>2. Socrates asked his pupils about being fair, about what is good, about right and wrong, and about rules. Suppose he asked you a question and you honestly answered. What happens next?</p>	<p><i>Socrates will ask me another question. He will have me examine my own answer more carefully.</i></p>
<p>3. If Socrates did not break any laws or tell any lies, what did he do that was so wrong that he should be put to death?</p>	<p><i>Socrates challenged the very fabric of the Greek society. He was a threat because the people in power didn't want the regular people thinking for themselves too much. If they didn't question their beliefs, they would not be dissatisfied with the status quo. If they did, they might want change!</i></p>
<p>4. Socrates criticized both political and religious institutions. The story does not say who brought the charges against Socrates. Can you suggest some possibilities?</p>	<p><i>Probably the religious powers or the governmental ones, or some combination. Socrates would bother parents and general citizens, but he would likely bother priests and politicians more. Priests and politicians tend to worry about keeping their power, and they wouldn't like questioning or criticizing of their domain.</i></p>
<p>5. To some people, it looks like Socrates is simply a busybody or agitator of other people. Do you think it was his thinking and questioning alone that makes him such a nuisance? If not, then what was it?</p>	<p><i>Asking questions is not a habit with most people, so it could be generally irritating to be around someone who is constantly querying everybody on everything. But, it could be that since people are "comfortable" having things as they are, they would prefer not to be shaken in own their beliefs, even if the validity of those beliefs is in question.</i></p>
<p>6. (the issue of a pupil who today would constantly ask questions)</p>	<p><i>Questions can make others think, and if you were to ask questions like "Why is the sky blue?" probably no one will be bothered. They might even try to find out. But if you ask "Why do teachers make us stay in line...?" then teachers will be bothered. If you ask too many questions, you will also be a bother. You could get in trouble after a while.</i></p>
<p>7. (the issue of someone today who is in the news or on TV or radio or in movies questioning kind of like Socrates and bothering many of his fellow citizens)</p>	<p><i>(highly varied responses are likely—Andy Rooney, on "60 Minutes" is one possible suggestion)</i></p>

Sample Quotations from Socrates

Quotation	Interpreted in Today's Words
<i>You must train the children to their studies in a playful manner, and without any air of constraint, with the further object of discerning more readily the natural bent of their respective characters.</i>	Socrates meant that teachers should make learning comfortable for children so they can better extend learning in a fruitful direction. Children naturally asks questions about what interests them, and if permitted to do so, many of those questions will be valuable to their instruction.
<i>These, then, will be some of the features of democracy . . . it will be, in all likelihood, an agreeable, lawless, parti-colored commonwealth, dealing with all alike on a footing of equality, whether they be really equal or not.</i>	Athens Greece was a democracy, in some ways similar to the one we have in the U.S. in which the presumption under the law is equality of treatment for all, no favoritism irrespective of wealth, power, etc. Socrates said that at times democracy is messy with lots of different kinds of people. All the different people want to be heard.
<i>Wars and revolutions and battles are due simply and solely to the body and its desires. All wars are undertaken for the acquisition of wealth; and the reason why we have to acquire wealth is the body, because we are slaves in its service.</i>	Wars are efforts to secure wealth, more land or more power. The reason each person wants wealth is because we are human and naturally covet it. (Our biology requires we sustain our bodies to live.) Therefore, war is caused by a natural desire for wealth.

Step-by-Step Summary of Teaching Strategies

BEFORE CONDUCTING A CLASS.

1. Read and select for use those stories you wish to use with your students. (Select from the row in the Story Matrix to match your curriculum level, or prepare to adapt material if necessary to fit your students' level.)
2. After reviewing the explanations of how to use the five teaching tools, select and combine whatever tool(s) you favor in a preferred sequence for each selected story.
3. Produce your lesson plan(s) and do any duplication necessary.
4. (You will need copies of the story for students to read individually if you plan to assign in-class reading or give the story as homework. You also need copies of analysis tools per grouping, etc.)

DURING A CLASS.

1. Students read the story, or you may read the story aloud to them (or select one or more students to read it).
2. After the story has been read, continue with your planned lesson strategies using whichever of the teaching tools you have chosen.
3. Amplify free and independent thinking themes and/or add interest to your lesson. If you have no particular ideas of your own, select from the varied Activities in this module or use one or more of the following additional teaching options:
 - *Dramatic Oration:* Volunteers can assume the independent thinking role(s) and issue one or more pronouncements before the class. Guide the class in interpreting any given statement(s) and suggesting how such a statement might be received differently today than in the time the historical figure lived.
 - *A Play!* Students can write a short drama based on the story, and then perform it.
 - *A Debate!* Several of the stories lend themselves to your convening panels of accusers (e.g., of Socrates) and defenders.
 - *Illustrations of Events:* Encourage students to produce a drawing or mural of some aspect of the story.

Evaluation of Story Lessons

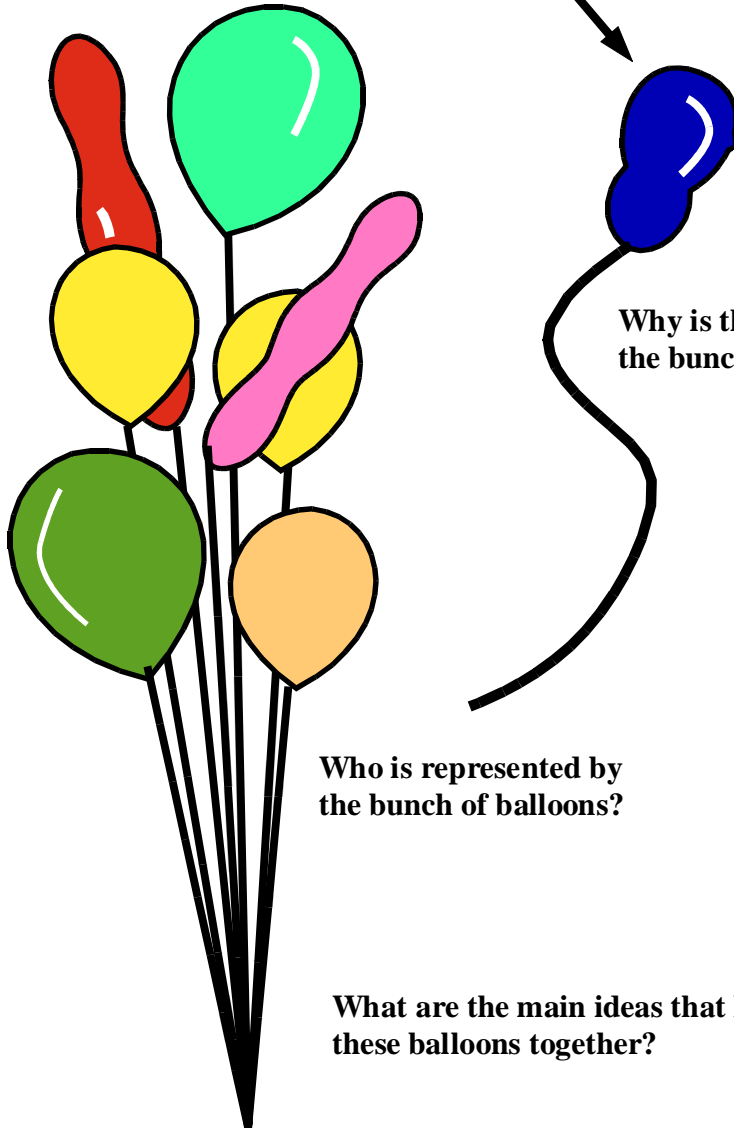
1. Evidence. You can use a student's Story Analysis (table, diagram, cartoon) or answers to questions as written evidence of understanding.
2. Assessment. Students could be presented with a blank (table, diagram, cartoon) to be completed. The written material could be evaluated and graded.
3. Transfer: Students could be provided a different analysis tool other than whatever they had used before and asked to explain the story using that tool. (The results could be evaluated and graded, if desired.)

Describe a Story:

Name of story _____

Your name _____

Whom does this balloon represent?



Why is the single balloon not with the bunch of balloons?

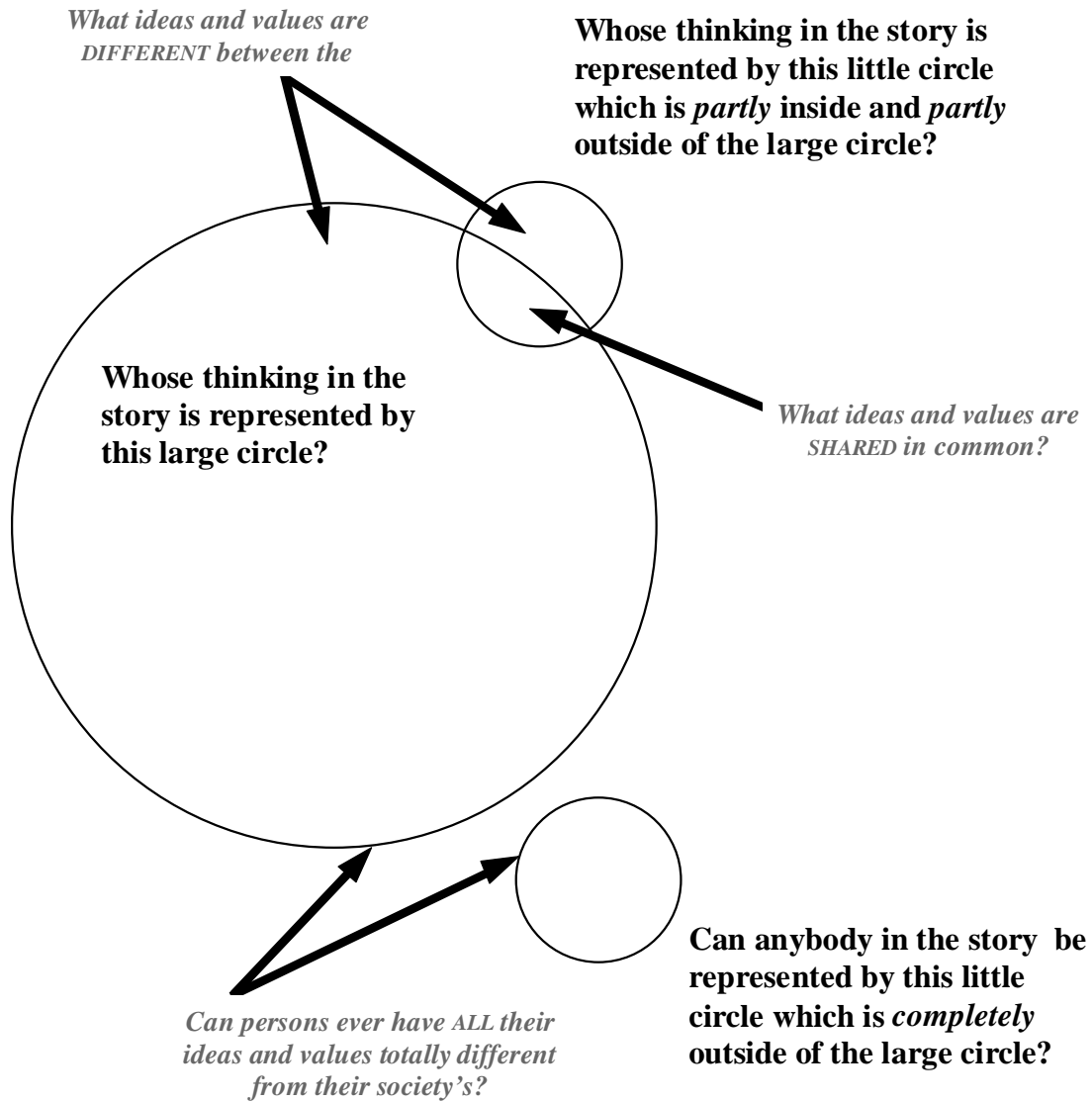
Who is represented by the bunch of balloons?

What are the main ideas that hold these balloons together?

Describe a Story:

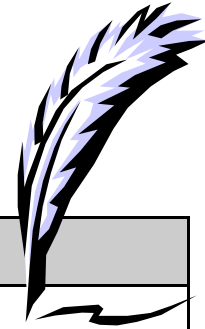
Name of story _____

Your name _____



Describe a Story:

Name _____



Story Title:		
Where and when in history did the events in this story take place?		
Who are the people and/or groups of people in the story?		
Analyze::	Traditional View	Nonconforming View
Describe the contrasting views presented in this story		
Describe what happened to each outlook because of the conflict between them.		
What were the long-term effects (if any) of the independent thinker's ideas and actions?		
Reflect:	Today	
Have the nonconforming thinker's actions been of any benefit to our present society?		