

Activity #5: Writing in Role

*This activity invites students to think critically about events in **Outside**. Specifically, they will analyze an excerpt in which Krystina tells Jeremy about the time the teacher, Mr. Williams, does not intervene when students call Krystina a “dyke” because she is promoting a gay-straight alliance club. The goal is to have students put themselves in Krystina’s shoes and give her the power to respond in writing to the situation she encountered.*

Materials Needed:

Excerpt; Writing-in-Role Assessment Rubric (found at bottom of attached document);
Paper, Pens, pencils

Instructional Procedures:

Distribute the excerpt to each student. Ask for volunteers to read the excerpt aloud in order to re- fresh students’ memories of the scene.

Ask the students to re-read the excerpt silently, jotting point-form notes about what is happening in the scene, their reactions to the scene, and what they remember from the live performance of the scene. Discuss their opinions with the class.

Now ask the students to view the scene from Krystina’s perspective, focusing on her, thoughts, feelings and opinions. As Krystina, ask them to write answers to the following questions:

- How old am I?
- What grade am I in?
- Where am I at the beginning of the scene?
- For what purpose?
- What problems do I face in the story I'm describing?
- How do I deal with these problems?
- How do I feel about each of the other characters in the scene? (Mr. Williams, girls in the hallway)
- If I could change the outcome of the scene, what would I want to happen?

As a writing-in-role exercise, have students consolidate their answers into a diary entry or a letter to Mr. Williams composed by Krystina that details the event, her feelings about the event, and her thoughts as to what should have been done about the situation. Distribute the Writing-in-Role Assessment Rubric.

Ask for volunteers to read their diary entry aloud.

Discuss with the class how Krystina would change the ending of the scene.

Writing in Role - Excerpts

KRYSTINA: As I was trying to put up that banner, the first time, the door was open to the hall, and these girls saw me and they shouted at me as they passed.

JEREMY: What's they shout?

KRYSTINA: I don't know what to say.

JEREMY: C'mon, what's they call you?

KRYSTINA: "Dyke!"

JEREMY: That's original. Who was it?

KRYSTINA: Niners. Mocked by niners. They're the new kids and yet they're calling me a name.

DANIEL: "Are you still a faggot?" I look up and I can't tell where it's coming from, who sent it. I'm standing there, sweating, spinning around, trying to see who's watching me, who's laughing, but the cafeteria is packed and I can't tell. It was...scary and...humiliating. You know that feeling?

JEREMY: Report it.

KRYSTINA: Mr. Williams was standing right there.

JEREMY: What?

KRYSTINA: Yeah

JEREMY: And he heard?

KRYSTINA: He sort of called after them, they were already way down the hall, he was like, "hey...hey girls..." but they didn't hear him, and so he turned and looked at me and sort of shrugged like "well, I tried, but you know, what do you expect?" And then he came over and closed the door so that kids in the hallway wouldn't see me putting up the banner. "Maybe just keep this closed for now, while there's a lot of traffic in the hall," and I said "thanks." I can't believe it, I said thanks...

Writing in Role - Assessment Rubric

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
References made to events in the source are incorrect and/or missing	Reference made to events in the source are limited	Reference made to events in drama or story source	Thoughtful reflection on events in the drama from the character's point of view
Statements are inconsistent with the role	Few, if any references to past influences on the role	Some reference to past influences on the role	Very detailed reactions to specific events, statements or attitudes
No clear emotional state or sense of purpose in the writing	Average emotional state or sense of purpose in the writing	Clear emotional state or sense of purpose in the writing	Clear emotional state or sense of purpose in the writing
Thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the role are not developed	Thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the role are satisfactory	Thoughts, feeling and attitudes of the role are clear	Thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the roles are clear and consistent