



Chicago Children's Theatre & Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana

Time Capsule 1 Hour Lesson Plan: Tell your Story

The project: The Girl Scouts in Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana have an important story to tell about the years 2020 and 2021. Through Once Upon Our Time Capsule, we are listening to what they found cool and special, what they found weird and difficult, and most importantly, how they were brave. Chicago Children's Theatre is working hard to bring programming to every child, ages 5-12, across all 77+ neighborhoods in Chicago. Learn more at www.ourtimecapsule.org.



Grade Levels: K-5, adaptable for older learners

Time: 60-90 minutes

Objectives:

- Girl Scouts will write and illustrate their own Once Upon a Time story about their journey through the past year, highlighting a moment of fear, a moment of joy, and their own bravery.
- Students will create and seal their own Time Capsules.

Arts Standards Alignment:

Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art
Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Materials Needed: Students will need materials to both design their story (pencils, coloring materials, paper) and their time capsule container (shoebox, water bottle, paper towel roll, envelope). Time Capsules can be physical or digital.



Patches: Once you're done with your time capsules, your patches can be purchased on our [retail site](#). We also have a fun [time capsule kit](#) you could use!

Important Note for the Parent/Leader/Guardian:

- The curriculum below offers an hour-long journey to a narrative time capsule. During the "MAKING" section, kids will find a creative way to tell their time capsule story. In this lesson, we cue them through creating a 4-panel comic book strip, but the storytelling can be done through writing, video, an illustrated story, a series of collages, etc. More options for this section can be found in our Exercise Bank.
- Time capsules can be collected in several ways:
 - Attend our [S'Mores Day event](#) on August 7 at Camp Greene Wood where we'll be collecting time capsules to be opened in 5 years!
 - Live in the city of Chicago and want to donate your Time Capsule? Learn more [here!](#)
 - Want to keep your time capsule? Take a photo and share online at www.ourtimecapsule.org or hello@ourtimecapsule.org so we can make sure their work is included in the citywide time capsule exhibition.

INTRO- 2 minutes

Do you know how every fairy tale begins? With what magic words?

(waits)

You got it! Once Upon a Time...

In these stories, there is a character who starts one way and changes by going through hard things and good things.

We have all gone through changes this year. We all had to wear masks, stay 6 feet away from other people, see our friends less, and go to online school. Each of us also had our own journey, a specific journey happening inside of us and in our families and lives during this time.

I'm going to read a fairy tale about a really brave person living through a crazy time, kind of like COVID. I wonder if you can hear anything in the story that you relate to. I want you to especially focus on what kind of person this character is.

Get relaxed and comfy. Here we go.

STORY & REFLECTION- 10 minutes

FAIRY TALE

Once upon a time, there was a very brave person. Their life had lots of things in it: friends, school, playing outside, playing inside. Then one day, really strong winds started outside. The winds changed everything.

It wasn't safe to do a lot of the things this brave person used to do. The wind made the person stay inside and see less of their friends. There was lots on the news. One thing is for sure: while the wind was there, the brave person had a lot of time to think about who they were. A lot of time to think about the world: the parts they missed and the parts they didn't.

Sometimes, the person thought they wouldn't be able to take another day! They felt fear. They knew people who were getting blown around by the wind. Maybe they even lost someone they loved. But always, even when things looked so dark around them, they made it.

Sometimes, they felt joy. There were new traditions, yummy foods, new games, and time with family.

All the while, this brave person was becoming braver every day. Through the fear and the joy, the person found a new way to look at the world. This person became someone different: a hero. This brave person was so proud of who they became.

One day it seemed like things were going to change again! The winds were getting less intense. The hero started thinking about what they wanted the world to look like once the winds were safe again.

They decided to make time capsules so they would never forget their strength and courage and their vision for the future that came from living with the crazy winds. They kept those special memories sealed up for five years while the world changed. At the end of the five years, other kids opened the time capsules up and learned all about the brave person and how the world used to be. The whole city was amazed at how much the world had changed. They knew they were living in a world full of heroes

Adult will say:

Let's reflect on this story together.

What do you think the winds were? *(some additional prompting may be necessary here. Ex: Do you think Corona was kind of like the winds? Is there anything similar? I see that the winds made the character stay inside, kind of like the pandemic, etc. For some kids, the winds may represent a loss of someone, or the movements for justice and Black Lives Matter. There isn't a "right answer," we just want to start building connections here.)*

The story we read had three parts: a beginning, middle, and end.

At the beginning, the character was already brave, and things were mostly normal.

In the middle, the character had to go through some real changes. Maybe they lost someone they loved. Maybe they did new things with their families, maybe they played new games or made special food or talked to people online.

In the end, the character had gone through hard things and good things. Going through so much change made them into a hero. They started to imagine a different world and they started to tell their story.

EXPLORING- 15 minutes

Adult will say: Now you are going to write our own fairy tale story about a very brave person who lived through the past year. Someone really brave and incredible. Someone who lived through a whole year in Corona.

Do you know anyone like that?

Do you know who I'm thinking is the main character of your Time Capsule Fairy Tale?

YOU!

Since you are the main character, let's get some inspiration about you.

Game: Snapshots

1. Let's take a snapshot of your life before COVID. I'm going to ask a bunch of questions and you can choose one thing to make into your snapshot at the end!
 - Who did you used to have dinner with?
 - Did you go to school in person? What was that like?
 - Where did you and your friends play?
 - What did you do when you came home from school?
 - Did you take the train and bus to get places?
 - What places did you go on the train or bus or plane?

- Did you go to birthday parties and fun gatherings?
- Did you play sports on a team?

Choose the most fun image that popped into your head as you were remembering. Ready? 6-5-4-3-2-1- Freeze!

2. Okay, now imagine the time during COVID. We're going to do two snapshots for this one. One is going to be the difficult stuff we went through and one is going to be a moment of joy.

Before we make our COVID snapshots, let's jog our memories. I'm going to ask you a bunch of questions and you can reflect and remember:

This year:

- Did you go to online school?
- Do you remember the big protests against police brutality?
- Did you take any other special classes online?
- Did you zoom with your grandparents?
- Did you make any yummy meals with someone?
- Did you make any art?
- Did you know someone who had COVID? Maybe it was you!
- Did you lose anyone to COVID?
- Did anything else change? What was different from the memories you had before the virus?

Okay, beautiful reflecting. Now we are going to make our first COVID statue.

- Imagine a really tough day you had during COVID.
- What happened? Maybe you were stressed out or sad or heard something scary on the news or wanted to play with your friends.
- How did it feel?
- Let's make a statue of that difficult moment. 6-5-4-3-2-1- Freeze.

You were so brave even when you felt those tough things. When I clap, we are going to make a statue of a really brave hero. 3-2-1- CLAP.

3. Now I want you to think of a moment of joy during COVID.
 - Did you get to talk to your Grandma online?
 - Did you get to take a fun class?
 - Did you make really yummy food with your family or take a cool trip?
 - What was the most fun you had during quarantine?
 - Let's make that statue. 6-5-4-3-2-1- Freeze.

Through the fear and the joy, you were so brave this year.

Now is a really fun part. You can imagine what you hope the future is like.

To get ready for this we are going to play a game called Keep/Leave

Let's reflect on what we want to take with us into the future and what we want to leave behind.

Game: Keep/Leave (Other Exercises in the Exercise Bank)

1. When I say keep, you'll hug your arms into your body and think of something you want to hold on to from the past year, maybe your own compassion or maybe a new tradition, maybe more quiet time or something that makes you feel good:

- Let's practice.
 - "KEEP"
 - Students will hug their arms to their bodies and think of/say something that made them feel good this year that they want to bring into the future.
2. When I say leave, you'll push your hands out in front of you away from your body and think or say something you want to leave behind and never see again from this past year.
 - Let's practice.
 - "LEAVE"
 - Students put their arms out straight in front of them like they are throwing/pushing away and name or think about/say something they want to leave behind.
 3. Repeat.

Thanks for playing those games with us and reflecting on your bravery this year.

NOW, OUR FINAL SNAPSHOT.

Think about how you want to feel and what you want to do and what you hope future kids get to do and feel. When those kids open your time capsule in 5 years, I hope there's no more pandemic! I hope that there is so much more justice in the world and that all those kids know that Black Lives Matter. I hope it is a more peaceful, more beautiful, more fun world.

Let's make a future snapshot.
6-5-4-3-2-1- Freeze.
Amazing.

Now we are going to use this inspiration to make our own fairy tales.

MAKING- 15 minutes

Adult will say: Now we are going to tell our fairy tales of the past year, all through the perspective of a real hero: you. You were so brave this year. Your story will have a beginning, before COVID, a middle, in COVID, and an ending, the future you imagine.

You can make your own comic book, writing, and drawing for each panel the story of your hero.

1. The first box will have a picture and words about your hero's life before COVID. Remember your statue and think about what you want to show and tell about that time.
2. Your middle two boxes will have the time during COVID. What did the hero have to face that was scary? What was a moment of joy? Write and draw all about it.
3. Your last box will have your special idea about how you hope the future looks. You can write and draw all about your hero in this time.

** If you don't want to make a comic strip, you can write your own picture book about your hero's journey. You can make up a play about it with a beginning, middle, and end and send it in. It is up to you!

SPECIAL OBJECTS & SEALING- 10 minutes

Adult will say: We are going to put these stories into time capsules so we can tell them to kids in the future. We are going to put our comic strips in. Let's see what else we can add!

Let's find or make a special object that reminds you of the past year

- a. It could be...
 - i. a special pencil you used for online school
 - ii. a picture you took while you were doing something fun
 - iii. a little puppet or drawing of your pet
 - iv. a paper cut out of your favorite food
 - v. a note to the future kid
 - vi. Something else!
- Kids can use paper, markers, tape/glue, scissors to create additional little objects that they want to put into their tubes. They can make origami pets, color and cut out an image of their favorite food or their computer or a person they spent a lot of time with this year. They can write a little description on the back.

Let's decorate the outside of your Time Capsule!

Whatever your special time capsule container is, put your name and age on the outside. Use fun craft supplies to make it beautiful and fun; what do you want a future kid to see when they find your time capsule? You can...

- i. Collage- cut out and glue pictures you like
- ii. Make it unique- just like you
- iii. Make it look like a spaceship or like a creature
- iv. Draw on the outside how you hope the future looks when the kid opens your time capsule in 2026.

If you made a video, you can write the link down and put it inside of your special time capsule.

CLOSE OUT- 3 minutes

Incredible work reflecting and starting your story telling today.

These stories will help kids who open your time capsule know how brave you were this year.

I am proud of you and you should be proud of yourselves. Let's end again by putting our hands on our hearts and everybody gets to say, "I am soooo proud of me."

1-2-3 Let's all say it together.

Okay, now make big muscles like a superhero and say, "I am a hero!"

3-2-1 Let's all say it together.

Beautiful work.

Note on Scaffolding and Accessibility: This lesson is designed to be accessible in a classroom or on Zoom. The variety of drawing, writing, and embodied activities are included to engage all learners. If anything is not appropriate for your setting, feel free to adapt or pull exercises from our exercise bank. Resources in Spanish and for older learners are available at www.ourtimecapsule.org.