

Story of Self

Gain a deeper understanding of your educator team members.

Time required: 1 hour for a team of four educators; add 5 minutes for each additional educator.

Space and material requirements:

- A quiet space
- A timer
- Computers or pencil and paper

This activity, adapted from [Marshall Ganz's Public Narrative framework](#), is an opportunity for educator team members to gain a deeper understanding of one another, their backgrounds and their context for teamwork. Use the framework below to reflect on and share how your life story relates to your teamwork.

▶ Getting organized (5 minutes)

1. Identify a facilitator who will move the team through the activity.
2. Preview the activity as a team.

▶ Creating your story (25 minutes)

3. Create a personalized presentation in response to the prompts below. Feel free to get creative in how you respond. While you don't need to leverage technology (e.g., slides) or share pictures, you are welcome to. You may opt to respond to all prompts or only to those prompts that move you.

Background:

- Where are you from?
- Where have you lived?
- Where is your family from?

Important people:

- Who are the most important people in your life?
- Why are they important?

Education: How would you describe your personal experience as a learner in school (Pre–K through present)?

Interests and passions:

- What do you do for fun?
- What are your interests?

Team working styles and expertise:

- What should team members know about working successfully with you?
- What can team members leverage you for? ("Ask me for help with _____. I am an expert and love _____.")
- Where will you need team members to lift you? ("I'm going to need your help with _____ this year.")

Teaching experiences:

- What are you most proud of in your teaching career? Why?
- What are some teaching experiences that you found challenging? Why?
- What were some moments in your teaching career when certain social identities (e.g., race, class, gender) have been an asset for you?
- What are some moments in your teaching career when you felt that one of your social identities presented a challenge?
- When, if ever, have you wanted to leave teaching? Why?
- What keeps you coming back to teaching?

Looking ahead: What are your goals for this year?

Sharing (20 minutes)

4. Share projects, round-robin. Each member has 5 minutes to share.

Reflecting (10 minutes)

5. Discuss:

- What experiences do we have in common? What experiences are different?
- What might be some shared motivations that drive us in our work?
- What other themes emerged?
- How might we draw on our team members' experiences, expertise and passions throughout the year?