



The Wild Escape

A Storytelling Resource

Created by

THE STORY MUSEUM

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The Wild Escape – A Story Telling Resource

Context

The Wild Escape is a UK wide project that asks children to explore the creatures in your museum and create an artwork imagining one creature's journey to a natural habitat rich in life. The stories and pictures children make will be brought together in a collective work of art, unveiled during a weekend of activities for all ages on Earth Day 2023.

<https://thewildescape.org.uk>



Introduction

Museums, galleries and historic houses across the UK will choose an element of their collections or spaces that features any form of creature found in the UK. Organisations will support the students to look at it carefully, learn about its habitat, imagine it breaking from the frame, springing to life and then embarking on a journey to a natural habitat rich with life.

This resource is for museum, gallery and historic sites professionals and volunteers to facilitate groups of students aged 7-11 to create a story around their chosen creature. Students leave the session with a structure for the story which they can then develop over a longer period in class, including descriptive details and embellishments, underpinned by scientific research into habitats.

[Print resources are available at the end of this document.](#)

The proposed story structure uses classic storytelling devices including the Rule of Three, and the structure of the Quest story inspired by the Quest story from Joseph Campbell's theory of the Monomyth¹.

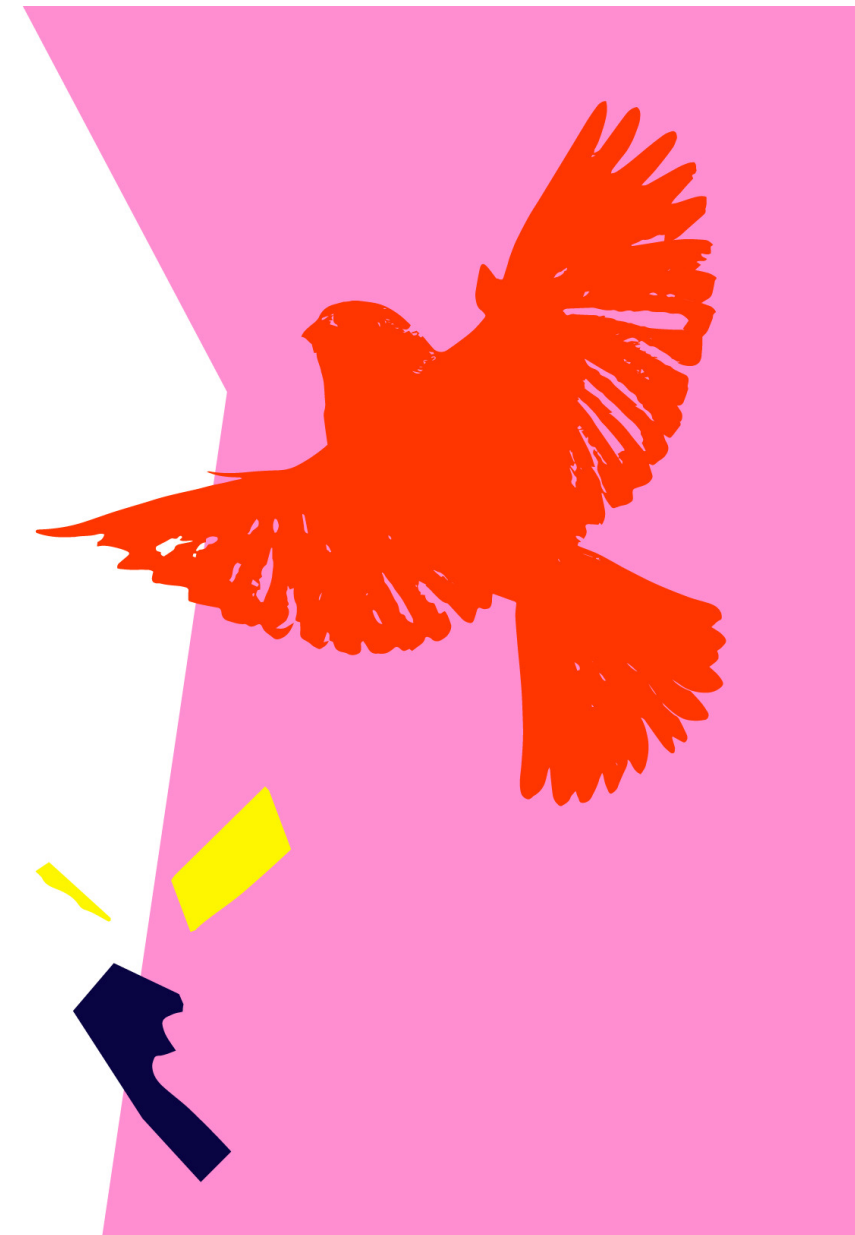
Before the session, you need to choose a creature from your collection, or within your building. This will be the central protagonist of a story to use as a modelled example. All students work together to build ideas for a story about the pre-chosen creature. The session will result in a range of different stories, such as different methods to escape, but all will have the same premise. The students will be given a Story Frame to help structure their narrative, which they can then develop into a longer piece after the session.


The session is designed as a standalone session so that it can be delivered either before or after a visit to the exhibition spaces.

¹ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 1949.

You will need to:

- Choose the creature that can be found in your collection. An example from The Story Museum is modelled in the lesson pack – a ceramic fox that is kept behind glass.
- Write a Story Walk prompt sheet which models an example of a story in which the creature breaks out of the exhibition space. Ensure that your modelled example contains both a Helper character and an Obstacle character. A modelled example of the Story Museum's fox is included in the lesson pack.
- Optionally, write a second Story Walk prompt sheet for a closing activity.
- If necessary, adapt the Story Frame to make it applicable to your modelled example.



Time	Resources Needed	Activity	Modelled Example from The Story Museum
Part 1: Literacy Session			
5 Minutes	Picture of the pre-chosen creature from your collection.	<p>Introduce an image of the chosen creature in its Museum environment, such as a picture on screen or printed copies. The students will hunt for the real exhibit in their Museum visit later, or may have already seen the real exhibit on an earlier visit.</p> <p>As a class, discuss what it might be like to be this creature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What could you see? - What could you hear? - What could you smell? - What is the feel of the terrain at your paws/talons/etc? - What is the temperature – how hot or cold do you feel on your skin/fur/feathers/wings? 	<p>Show an image of the Fox behind glass on the powerpoint or on printed pictures to share.</p>  <p>As a class, discuss what it might be like to be this creature. What could you see? What could you hear? What could you smell? What is the feel of the terrain at your paws/talons/etc? What is the temperature – how hot or cold do you feel on your skin/fur/feathers/wings?</p>

Time	Resources Needed	Activity	Modelled Example from The Story Museum
Part 1: Literacy Session			
10 minutes	<p>Speech, heart and thought bubbles, (enough for one per student)</p> <p>(RESOURCE A) Available to print at the end of this document</p> <p>Pens</p>	<p>Organise the students in groups of 4 or 5 students. One student is chosen to be the exhibit. Give out the thought, heart and speech bubble cards, (RESOURCE A) Available to print at the end of this document</p> <p>and pens. Each group should be given enough resources for one card and one pen per student. There should be at least one thought card, one heart card and one speech bubble card per group.</p> <p>On the cards, students write ideas to represent the creature's thoughts and dreams (thought card), emotions (heart card) and spoken words (speech bubbles). They should write in first person, using 'I'. Some stimulus questions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does it feel to be unable to move your head? • What can you see? • What can you hear? • What can you smell? • What do you witness when the Museum is closed at night? • How does it feel when a visitor walks past and ignores you? • How does it feel when a visitor says how wonderful you look? • How does it feel when a visitor says how old and boring you look? • What do you think about all day? • What would you like to say to the visitors? • What would you like to say to the people who work at the Museum? • What is your dream? <p>Groups take it in turns to present their ideas back to the whole group. When presenting, the student chosen to be the creature adopts the stance of the creature as per the way the exhibit is displayed.</p> <p>The other students in the group stand around the creature, holding up the thought, heart and speech bubbles and reading them aloud to the whole group.</p> <p>The teacher may choose to take a picture of this.</p>	<p>Organise the students in groups of 4 or 5 students. One student is chosen to be the exhibit. Give out the thought, heart and speech bubble cards, (RESOURCE A) Available to print at the end of this document and pens. Each group should have enough resource for one card and one pen per student. There should be at least one thought card, one heart card and one speech bubble card per group.</p> <p>On the cards, students write ideas to represent the Fox's thoughts (thought card), emotions (heart card) and spoken words (speech bubbles). They should write in first person, using 'I'. Some stimulus questions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does it feel to be unable to move your head? • What can you see? • What can you hear? • What can you smell? • What do you witness when the Museum is closed at night? • How does it feel when a visitor walks past and ignores you? • How does it feel when a visitor says how wonderful you look? • How does it feel when a visitor says how old and boring you look? • What do you think about all day? • What would you like to say to the visitors? • What would you like to say to the people who work at the Museum? • What is your dream? <p>Groups take it in turns to present their ideas back to the whole group. When presenting, the student chosen to be the creature adopts the stance of the creature as per the way the exhibit is displayed.</p> <p>The other students in the group stand around the creature, holding up the thought, heart and speech bubbles and reading them aloud to the whole group.</p> <p>The teacher may choose to take a picture of this.</p>

Time	Resources Needed	Activity	Modelled Example from The Story Museum
Part 1: Literacy Session			
5 minutes		<p>Explain to the students that the creature is going to plan their Wild Escape to leave the Museum and get to a more natural habitat. We are going to mime an example. Tell the students to stand in their own space in the room. They have each become the chosen creature in their own story world.</p> <p>Ask the students to walk around the space as the chosen creature, while you read out your prepared Story Walk script line by line. They respond to what you are saying, miming with actions that interpret your script.</p> <p>NB ensure that your modelled example contains both a Helper character and an Obstacle character, and that you are modelling an example of an Escape plan which ultimately fails.</p>	<p>Explain to the students that the Fox is going to plan their Wild Escape to leave the Museum and get to a more natural habitat. We are going to mime an example.</p> <p>Students stand in their own space in the room. They have each become the chosen creature in their own story world.</p> <p>Ask the students to walk around the space as the chosen creature, while you read out your prepared Story Walk script line by line. They respond to what you are saying, miming with actions that interpret your script.</p> <p>Story Walk script for the Fox:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are a fox, standing to attention behind glass. Sit on your haunches and look up at the leaves. • Your neck is aching from this awkward position you are in. Ouch! Give it a rub! • Oh, how you wish you could be running through a sunny forest glade! Show us your best wishing face! • Wait - what's this crawling up your leg? Try and brush it away! • Oh, wait! It's your friend, Spider. Give them a high-five. • No, wait, give a high-eight! • He's climbing up your legs. It's really tickly! It makes you wriggle! • Now spider is moving up your furry body. Ooh – squirmy squirms! • Wait, spider has an idea. Make a lightbulb shape above your head and say, 'BING!' • Spider is whispering to you. Can you hear them? Listen carefully. • Ah! Spider can help you escape. They are going to spin a web on the top of the cabinet in order try and pull the roof down! What a clever idea! Give a nod and a smile and a thumbs-up to encourage Spider. • Spider needs to reach the top of the cabinet.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oh, they can't reach. Can you balance Spider on your nose to help them reach? • Wait – what's that? Tramp tramp tramp – it's the security guard! Freeze back in position - quick! • A few more seconds.....Now get back to helping Spider – • No, Security is back! Freeze again! • Ah, they are gone. Phew! • Now balance Spider back on your nose and – yes, he's crawled to the top of the cabinet! • Now Spider is spinning a web to pull the roof down. Look at Spider go – so fast! Follow his crazy loopy movement with your eyes! • Now it's time to pull the roof down. Take the web between your teeth... • And PULL! • Oh no....the cabinet is shaking. • And shaking!!! • Shake shake shake! • It looks like the roof is going to collapse onto you! • Cower down and get ready for the crash... • One, two, three.... • CRASH! • You are covered in rubble. • Dig your way out, dig dig dig! • Now – shake off all the last bits of dust! • Look up. Oh no! Unfortunately, it hasn't worked! Big sigh! • Spider only broke away a tiny bit of the roof! • Ah well, thank the Spider anyway. Give them a high-five. • No! A high-eight!
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Time	Resources Needed	Activity	Modelled Example from The Story Museum
Part 1: Literacy Session			
10 minutes	Per group: one large piece of paper and felt tip pens	<p>Explain to the students that in classic Quest stories, the main character always has a Helper character, who helps them escape. They also always have an Obstacle, who prevents escape from being possible. This could be a living being such as a person or animal, but could also be a non-living being, such as a difficult maze to get out of, a surveillance camera, etc.</p> <p>Ask the students to identify the Helper character and the Obstacle character in the modelled Story Walk example.</p> <p>Students may like to come up with examples from classic stories, books or films in which this happens.</p> <p>In the same groups as before, students discuss, from the point of view of the creature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who could be your Friend, who helps you with your escape? - Who, or what, is your Obstacle? <p>Try to dissuade the groups from using ideas from your modelled example.</p> <p>Groups feed back their ideas to the rest of the group.</p>	<p>Explain to the students that in classic Quest stories, the main character always has a Helper character, who helps them escape. They also always have an Obstacle, who prevents escape from being possible. This could be a living being such as a person or animal, but could also be a non-living being, such as a difficult maze to get out of, a surveillance camera, etc.</p> <p>Ask the students to identify the Helper character (the Spider) and the Obstacle character (the Security Guard, or the Roof) in the modelled Story Walk example.</p> <p>Students may like to come up with examples from classic stories, books or films in which this happens.</p> <p>In the same groups as before, discuss, from the point of view of the Fox:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who could be your Friend, who helps you with your escape? - Who, or what, is your Obstacle? <p>Try to dissuade the groups from using ideas from your modelled example.</p> <p>Groups feed back their ideas to the rest of the group.</p>
10 minutes	Large pieces of paper such as sugar paper, and pens.	<p>Explain to the groups that the Number 3 is a magic number in stories. This is called the Rule of Three. In order to make our story, we are going to come up with 3 ideas.</p> <p>Groups should devise 3 ways in which their creature could perform their Wild Escape. This should include overcoming the Obstacle, with the help of the Friend.</p> <p>On a large piece of paper or sugar paper, each group should draw or write down the 3 ideas in order. In the story, the first two attempts at a Wild Escape will fail, but the third will succeed.</p>	<p>Explain to the groups that the Number 3 is a magic number in stories. This is called the Rule of Three. In order to make our story, we are going to come up with 3 ideas.</p> <p>Groups should devise 3 ways in which their creature could perform their Wild Escape. This should include overcoming the Obstacle, with the help of the Friend.</p> <p>On a large piece of paper or sugar paper, each group should draw or write down the 3 ideas in order. In the story, the first two attempts at a Wild Escape will fail, but the third will succeed.</p>

Time	Resources Needed	Activity	Modelled Example from The Story Museum
Part 1: Literacy Session			
10 minutes		Students present the bare-bone narrative of their Escapee story to the rest of the class, by talking through the pictures on their piece of sugar paper. They can choose to explain their escape plans or they may have developed their ideas further and can act it out as a role play.	Students present the bare-bone narrative of their Fox story to the rest of the class, by talking through the pictures on their piece of sugar paper. They can choose to explain their escape plans or they may have developed their ideas further and can act it out as a role play.
5 minutes	Story plans (RESOURCE B) Available to print at the end of this document	Give out the Story Plans (RESOURCE B) Available to print at the end of this document. Students write notes or draw sketches to help them remember the skeletal ideas for their story. Explain to the students that these Story Plans are their plan for a longer story. They should take these away in order to work on at school, embellish with greater sensory description and underpin with scientific research on habitats.	Give out the Story Plans. Students write notes or draw sketches to help them remember the skeletal ideas for their story. Explain to the students that these Story Plans are their plan for a longer story. They should take these home with them in order to work on at school, embellish with greater sensory description and underpin scientific research on habitats.

Time	Resources Needed	Activity	Modelled Example from The Story Museum
Part 1: Literacy Session			
5 minutes		<p>As an optional final exercise, tell the students to imagine the point at which the creature has arrived in their natural habitat rich in life.</p> <p>Divide the students into groups of 4s or 5s and instruct each group to make the following shapes, collaboratively, with their bodies. Give them 10 seconds to prepare, then count down from 3 and the students must freeze in these positions. You may need to show images of some of the shapes such as the spiral.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle or oval • Spiral • Figure of 8 • Sphere • Waves (of the sea) • Wind rippling across the field • Tunnel <p>Repeat this activity, but this time, once they are in position, they should try to move as a group— e.g. the circle to spin, the spiral to unwind, the waves to roll. Do so for 5 seconds for each shape.</p> <p>Now that the students have experimented with natural forms, they can now act out a second Story Walk as per an earlier activity, in which they mime along as you read instructions aloud. In this second Story Walk, the students explore the creature's journey to a natural habitat.</p>	<p>As an optional final exercise, , tell the students to imagine the point at which the creature has arrived in their natural habitat rich in life.</p> <p>Divide the students into groups of 4s or 5s and instruct each group to make the following shapes, collaboratively, with their bodies. Give them 10 seconds to prepare, then count down from 3 and the students must freeze in these positions. You may need to show images of some of the shapes such as the spiral.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle or oval • Spiral • Figure of 8 • Sphere • Waves (of the sea) • Wind rippling across the field • Tunnel <p>Repeat this activity, but this time, once they are in position, they should try to move as a group— e.g. the circle to spin, the spiral to unwind, the waves to roll. Do so for 5 seconds for each shape.</p> <p>Students find a space in the room and adopt the stance of the creature in the exhibition space. Then read out these instructions for a second Story Walk and the students must mime along as you read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have escaped the exhibition. • Breathe in the air. • Now, you can feel life slowly entering your body. It starts at the tips of your paws or wings or antennae...give them a shake. • Now you can start to move your head. • Ah! Now you can move more freely —move your legs and shake out your paws. Ah, it feels so good! • Bits of your original ceramic skin are coming off – Ping ping ping through the air! You are growing soft, luxurious fur – so comfortable!

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now look down. Your fox friend is on the ground. Pad down the tree to meet them. • Move forwards to give your fox friend a high-five. Your fox friend is playing chase! • Run towards a tree, wind around it. • Now the next tree- wind around that tree. • You've found your friend! Cuff him round the head – now run away because he's after you. • It's okay, he's forgotten about it. • All this running around is tiring. Fall on your haunches and take some deep breaths. • Find a pool and take a sip of water. • Wait – raise your head! You can hear some rustling ahead! • In the distance, you can see a rabbit. • Dip your head down low. • Move stealthily, close to the ground. • Hide behind a tree – take a peek. And hide again. • Very – very slowly – waaaitttt. • Pounce! • Ah, the rabbit ran away. Never mind. Shake yourself off.
		Wrap up the session with final reminders to develop their stories. We can't wait to see what is produced!	Wrap up the session with final reminders to develop their stories. We can't wait to see what is produced!



Resources Overview

Resource A

Pg 14-16



Story Plan Resource B

Pg 17





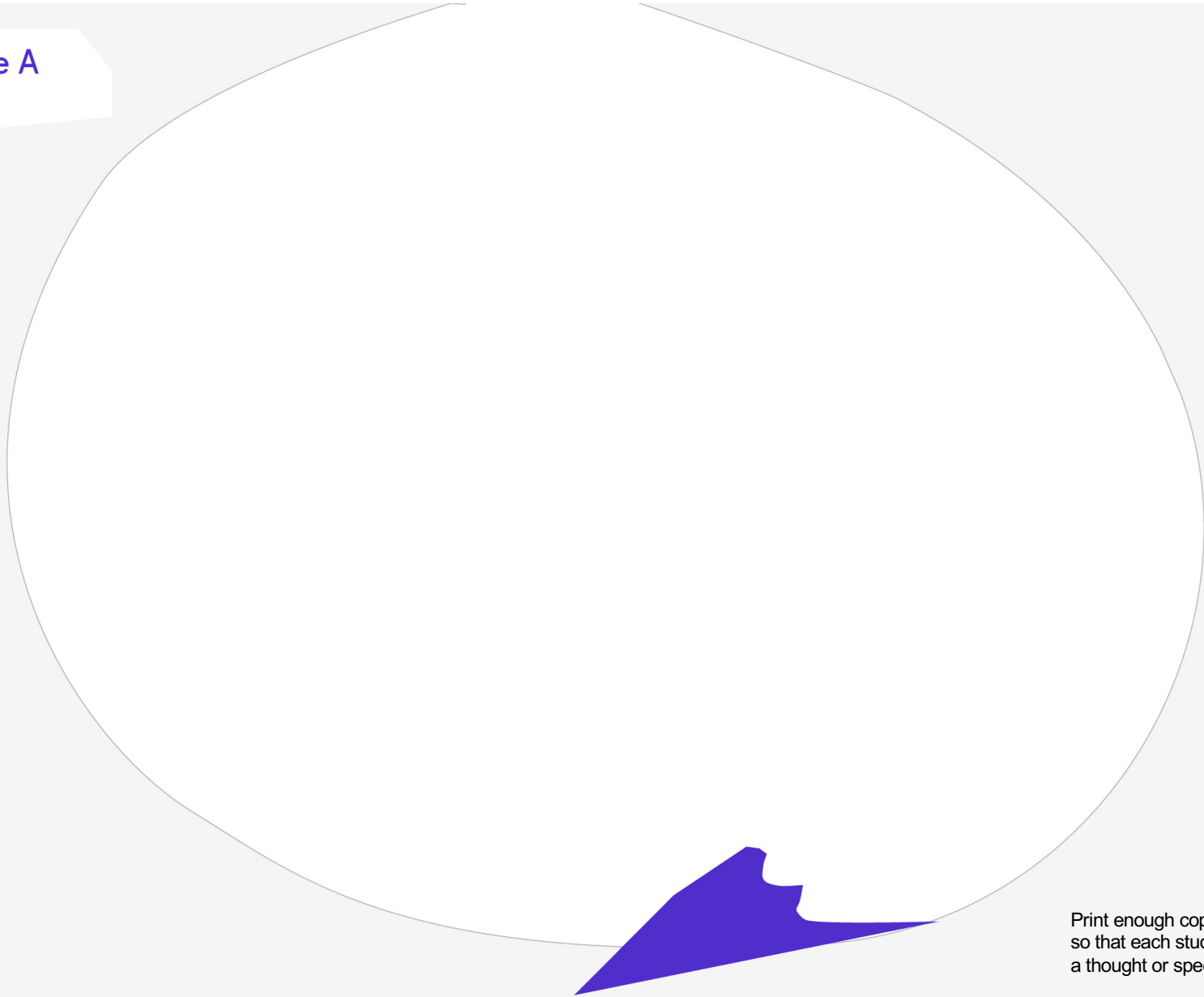
Resource A



Print enough copies of the following so that each student can have either a thought or speech bubble.



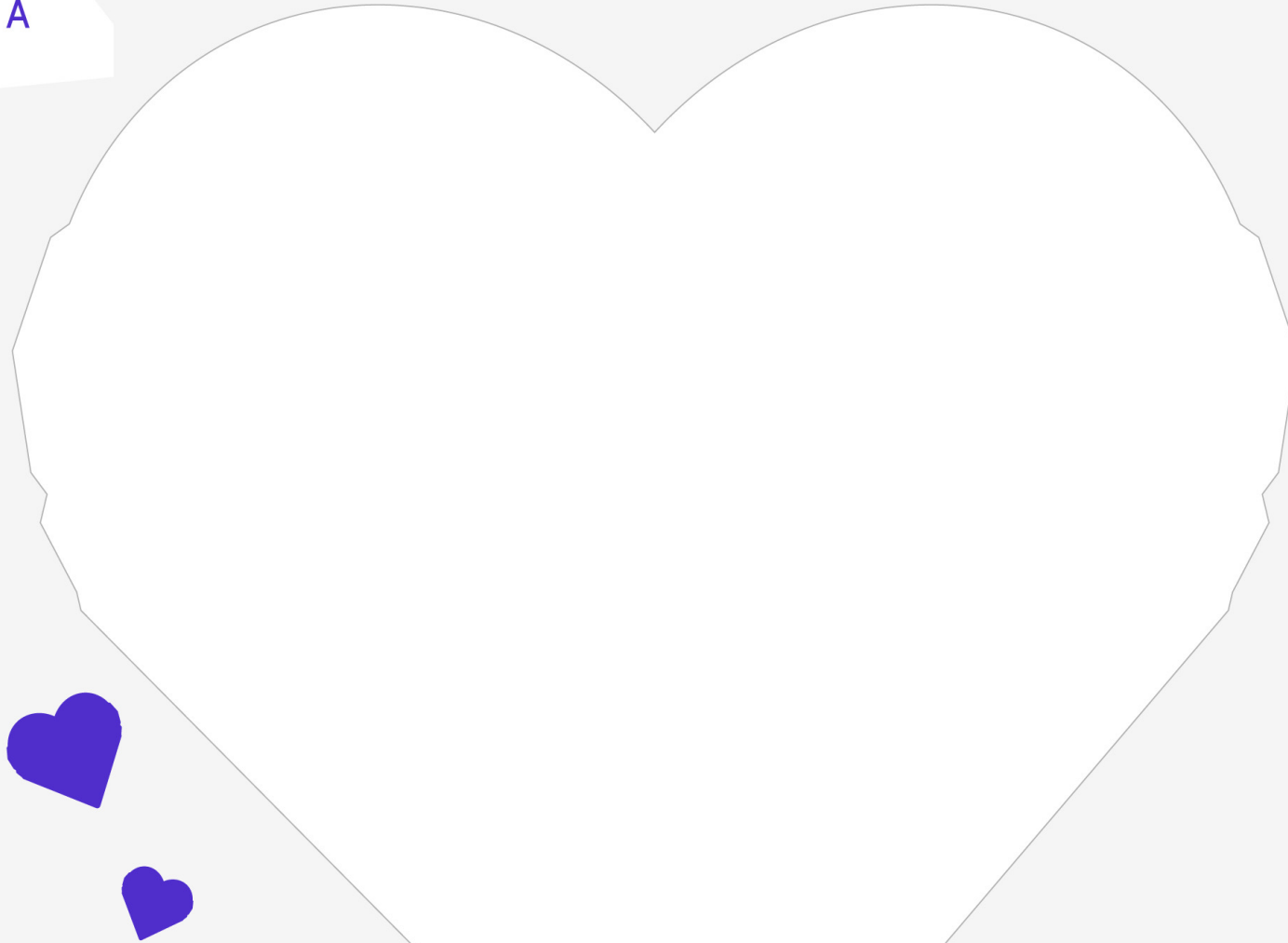
Resource A



Print enough copies of the following so that each student can have either a thought or speech bubble.



Resource A



Print enough copies of the following so that each student can have either a thought or speech bubble.



Story Plan Resource B

Show your creature in the
exhibition space

Attempt 1! How will your
creature try to escape?

Attempt 2! How will your
creature try to escape?

Attempt 3! How will your
creature try to escape?

Show your creature in a
natural habitat rich in life



Why does Attempt 1 fail?

Why does Attempt 2 fail?

Why does Attempt 3
succeed?



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