Everyone has read some good books in their life, even if they were picture books or comics. Every book that you like has something that clicks. Every book is different, but we all remember at least one that really stood out to us. What made those books so engaging? Did they have cool characters or a lot of action? Maybe there was a sweet love story that you liked? Did something or someone in the story remind you of your own life? Here is your chance to write a story that you want to tell, based on something that you found inspiring in another book or from an author that you like. In this assignment, you will get to create a story in any genre and setting that you like. The finished story will be no more than 3 pages long (double spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman font), and you will have until the end of the semester to finish it. Have fun getting creative with this project!

### Tasks

Each student gets to create his or her own story of their choosing. My only rules about content are that the story has to be school-friendly and that the story is your own work, not taken from somebody else or using another author’s creations. If you have any questions about what is okay to use and what is not, please ask me first and I will help you. Before you begin your story, you will want to think about what sort of story you would like to tell. Think about the stories or TV shows you like to watch. What genre are they? Once you have come up with an idea of where you want your story to take place, start thinking about what is going to happen in your story. Brainstorm and contact me when you know what you want or need help figuring it out. You will also find a favorite author of yours that you will use as your inspiration for this story. This does not mean that you will use the same characters or storyline that the author used. Before you begin writing your own work, find your author’s official website and read about them and what influenced their writing. Think about what influences you. You will also use these tools in helping you write an interesting story: The Freytag Plot Pyramid.

### Process

**Step 1:** Find your inspiration! Find an author that you really like. Go to their website (in class, we will have computer lab session) and read their bio. Look at their influences. What sort of genre of literature do they write in? Ask yourself 3 Questions and write down your answers: 1. Why do I like this author? 2. What sort of influences does the author have that I can relate to? 3. How will my story relate to their stories? **Step 2:** Create some conflict. Decide what sort of problem is going to be the focus of your story. You have several types of conflict to choose from: Man vs. Nature, Man vs. Self, Man vs. Society, Man vs. Man. After you've picked out what sort of conflict you’ll follow, come up with the details. What is the specific problem and how will your character deal with it? **Step 3:** Map your story out. A good way to start a story is to diagram it out. We will use the Freytag Plot Pyramid for this task; it is a simple graph that shows where important parts of the story go. Explain in a few sentences what important parts of your plot will be using this format:

- **Beginning/Exposition:** (How does your story start? This is the opening scene where you introduce the characters and conflict.)
- **Rising Action:** (What happens that builds your conflict up. What events happen that make your character act?)
- **Climax:** (What is the big event or turning point of the story? How does it affect your character?)
- **Falling Action:** (What events follow the climatic event that wrap up the story? This is the "clean-up" portion of the story.)
- **Ending/Conclusion:** (Is the conflict resolved at the end? How does the story end?)

**Step 4:** Flesh your character out. Create your main character. They’ll need a name and an identity. What makes them special? Come up with a profile about them that includes basic things, such as a name, hobbies, a basic personality, what sort of foods they like, what sort of family they have, what they look like. You can draw them if that helps you come up with a better idea of what they might be like. **Step 5:** Write! Now that you have your plot, conflict, and character mapped out, write your first draft. It doesn't have to be very long or detailed, just connect the action from beginning to end. Once you're done with your first draft, email it to me and we will begin to review and revise it until we get to a final product. Good luck and have fun!
You've finished your stories! There are many exciting new adventures that have just been created through this project, and I hope all of you enjoyed the process of creating your own unique tale. I'm excited to read them all and look forward to seeing what sorts of interesting things you've all had to say. This was a big project that allowed you to see how the creative process of writing a short story goes, and the results are worth it. This project allowed you to research an author that you like and take inspiration from their works, but it also made you come up with something on your own. You learned how to follow the Freytag Plot Pyramid and incorporated the different types of conflict, as well as created dynamic characters of your own! It's a lot of work, but the result is worth it and we've learned a lot about the editing process as well. My students were able to combine the different elements of story-telling with aspects of literature that they will now be able to identify in the books and movies they read and see, and learned that hard work can pay off with a unique story that they've gotten to tell. Some research was incorporated into this project as my students researched their authors and got an idea for what inspirations and references they used, and were able to do the same in their own stories. I am so excited to have had such a hard-working and creative group of students, I trust that they will take these learning tools and continue to use them well!