

# How to Use a Roll-a-Story in Your Classroom



A  
Quick  
and  
Easy  
Guide  
for  
Elementary  
Teachers

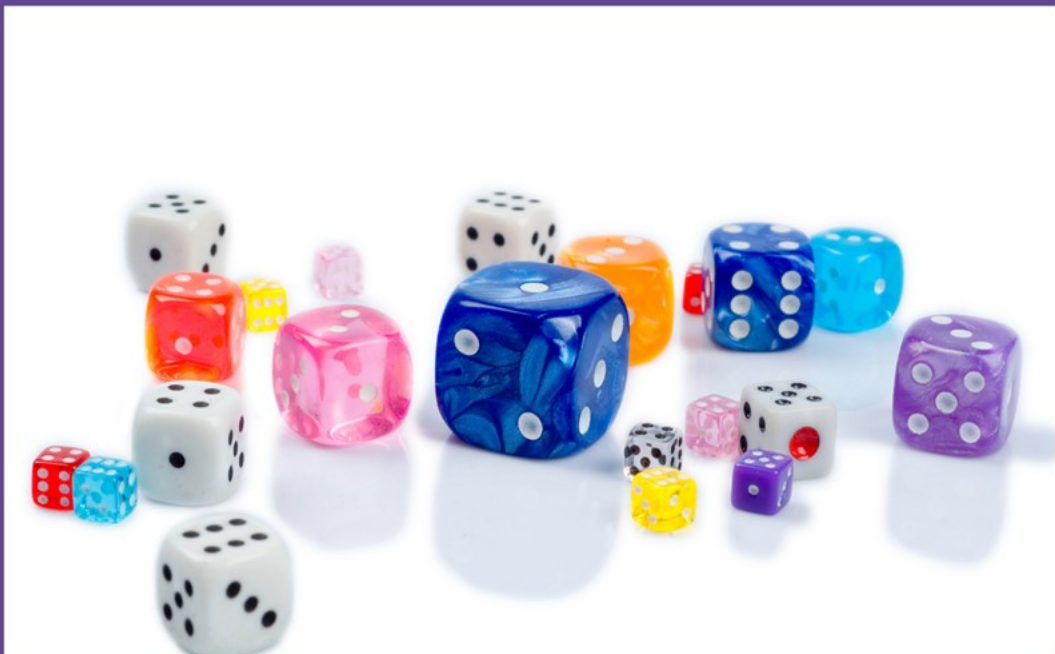


# What is a Roll-a-Story?

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Ready to roll the dice on creativity? Roll-a-story turns storytelling into a fun-filled adventure! With just a roll, you'll discover your characters, settings, and plot twists, crafting a one-of-a-kind tale every time. It's a fantastic way to spark imagination, level up storytelling skills, and even build teamwork and problem-solving along the way. Perfect for kids and grown-ups alike, Roll-a-story is your ticket to dreaming up stories as unique as the roll itself!



# What You Need

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## MATERIALS LIST:

- Dice (physical or digital)
- Roll-a-Story chart
- Writing paper or notebooks
- Pencils/markers
- *Optional materials:* story templates, graphic organizers, writing folders
- Printable/digital dice alternatives



## Free Online Dice Rollers

1. Toy Theater Dice
  - <https://toytheater.com/dice/>
  - Colorful and simple
  - Choose 1–6 dice
  - Works great on interactive boards
2. Dice Roller by Classroom Screen
  - <https://classroomscreen.com/>
  - Choose dice size, quantity, and even customize faces
  - Bonus: You can use this alongside timers, stoplights, and more tools
3. Google Dice Roller
  - Just type “roll a dice” in Google search
  - You can roll one or multiple dice with a click
  - Quick and convenient for any device
4. Roll a Die (TeacherLed)
  - <https://www.teacherled.com/resources/diceroll/>
  - Very basic but reliable
  - Option to roll multiple dice



# How to Set It Up

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## STEP-BY-STEP SETUP INSTRUCTIONS

- Print or display the chart
- Distribute writing materials
- Model how to roll and choose elements



## TIPS FOR MANAGING MATERIALS AND TRANSITIONS

- *Prep Ahead:* Have all materials (Roll-a-Story chart, writing paper, pencils, dice) ready in bins or folders before the activity starts.
- *Model First:* Do a quick demo roll and brainstorm session as a class so students know what to expect.
- *Use Story Folders:* Give each student a “story folder” with writing paper, planning sheets, and their past stories.
- *Dice Buckets or Dice Mats:* Keep dice in small containers or trays to prevent them from flying across the room. Dice mats or lids work great!
- *Digital Dice Display:* Project a digital dice roller on the board so the whole class can roll together if needed.
- *Partner Support:* Pair students to help each other roll and brainstorm before writing independently.
- *Early Finishers:* Provide extension options like adding illustrations, editing with a partner, or writing an alternate ending.
- *Display Directions:* Post step-by-step instructions or anchor charts where students can refer back to them without asking.



# How It Works – Step-by-Step



Using a Roll-a-Story is simple, flexible, and fun! Here's a step-by-step breakdown to help you guide your students through the process:

## **Step 1: Roll the Dice**

- Each student (or group) rolls one die for each story element: character, setting, and problem (or other categories, depending on your chart).
- Record the number they roll and match it to the option on the Roll-a-Story chart.
- (Example: A roll of 3 for “character” might be “a talking cat.”)

## **Step 2: Record & Brainstorm**

- Students write down their three rolled story elements on a planning sheet or in their notebook.
- Encourage them to sketch ideas or brainstorm a few sentences about what could happen in their story using these elements.

## **Step 3: Plan the Story**

- Use a graphic organizer, story map, or simple beginning–middle–end format to help students outline their ideas.
- Prompt students to think about:
  1. How will the story begin?
  2. What problem will the character face?
  3. How will the story end or be resolved?

## **Step 4: Write the Story**

- Students begin drafting their stories, using their plan to guide them.
- Remind them to include key story elements like a strong beginning, interesting details, and a clear ending.

## **Step 5: Revise, Illustrate, or Share**

- Once stories are written, invite students to:
  - Revise for clarity and creativity
  - Illustrate a cover or a key scene
  - Share with a partner, small group, or the whole class during “Author’s Chair” time

# Ways to Use in the Classroom

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Independent writing time

Writing centers

Small group work

Early finisher activity

Whole-class warm-ups

Substitute lesson plans

Homework or take-home  
project



# Differentiation Tips

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With Roll-a-Story, you can tailor storytelling to fit every student's needs—whether they're seeking a little extra guidance or itching for a creative challenge. By tweaking the level of scaffolding, choice, and complexity, you'll make storytelling an engaging and exciting experience for everyone. It's a versatile tool that transforms one simple activity into a powerful and meaningful adventure for learners of all levels!



- Adapting for younger writers (sentence starters, drawing, scribing)
- Challenges for advanced writers (add a twist, use all options)
- ESL/ELL modifications (picture support, vocabulary lists)
- Pairing students strategically

## MORE DIFFERENTIATION TIPS

### *Pre-Writing Graphic Organizers*

- Offer planning sheets with sentence starters, picture boxes, or guided story maps to help students organize their thoughts before writing. This is especially helpful for younger writers or students who struggle with generating ideas.

### *Choice Boards or Extra Prompts*

- Give students the option to re-roll one element, choose between two prompts, or add their own idea to one category. This adds a layer of ownership and flexibility while still providing structure.

## Classroom Management Tips

### THE BASICS:

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- **Keeping students focused and on-task**
- **Helping students stuck on ideas**
- **Setting time limits and pacing**
- **Displaying and celebrating finished stories**
- **Encouraging peer sharing and feedback**



### PRACTICAL TIPS:

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#### 1. Set Clear Expectations Before You Begin

- Go over the steps before passing out materials or dice.
- Use a visual anchor chart or slide that outlines the process:
- Roll → Plan → Write → Share

#### 2. Use “Quiet Rolling” Strategies

- Dice trays, small containers, or felt-lined boxes keep things calm and contained.
- Or roll as a whole class using a digital dice roller to avoid distractions.

#### 3. Use Timers to Keep Students on Track

- Set visible timers for each stage: brainstorming, writing, revising.
- This keeps pacing clear and helps prevent “I’m done!” after 3 sentences.

#### 4. Assign Flexible Seating or Writing Spots

- Let students write at their desks or choose a quiet corner or floor spot.
- Movement during transitions can help with focus—just keep it structured.

#### 5. Use Writing Buddies or Helpers

- Pair students who may need help reading the chart or getting started.
- Buddies can quietly help with brainstorming, not writing for each other.

#### 6. Prepare Early Finisher Options

- Let fast finishers add an illustration, write a second version, or help a peer.
- You can also create a “story challenge bin” with bonus prompts or twists.

#### 7. Celebrate and Share Stories

- Build in time for students to read their stories aloud, even if just to a partner.
- Consider a class “story wall” or “author spotlight” to keep students motivated.



# Assessment & Writing Goals



## Informal Assessment Ideas

- Use checklists or rubrics that focus on key writing elements:
  - Did the story include a beginning, middle, and end?
  - Is there a clear character, setting, and problem?
  - Did the student use complete sentences and basic punctuation?
- Observe students during the planning and writing process—note who needs more support with brainstorming, sentence formation, or staying focused.

## Simple Rubric Categories to Consider

- Story Structure (beginning, middle, end)
- Creativity & Use of Prompts
- Spelling and Mechanics (as appropriate for grade level)
- Effort & Completion

*Tip: Keep rubrics simple and age-appropriate—3-point scales or emoji faces work well with younger students!*

## Setting Writing Goals

- Help students set individual writing goals based on their needs:
  - “I will use capital letters at the beginning of every sentence.”
  - “I will include at least one describing word in each paragraph.”
  - “I will write three complete paragraphs for my story.”
- Keep goal cards in student folders, writing notebooks, or post them on a class chart.

## Track Growth Over Time

- Collect a few Roll-a-Story samples throughout the year and use them as a fun, low-pressure way to track writing progress.
- Consider doing a “before and after” sample (e.g., beginning of year vs. spring) to celebrate student growth!

## Extensions and Add-Ons



Turn stories into comic strips, plays, or digital slides

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Create story collections or class books

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Have students make their own Roll-a-Story charts

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Add illustration, dialogue practice, or public speaking

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Turn students' stories into mini skits or puppet shows!

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Set aside time for students to read their stories aloud to the class or in small groups.

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# Your Next Steps in Storytelling

Bringing roll-a-story activities into your classroom is like tossing a little magic into the mix! These activities are pure creativity fuel, sparking your students' imaginations and challenging them to think outside the box. With just a roll of the dice, your students will dive into one-of-a-kind writing adventures that make learning exciting and full of surprises. Lean into the fun and watch their confidence soar as they craft stories they never imagined. You're not just helping them write—you're shaping the next generation of storytellers. Keep up the amazing work!

Happy Teaching!

*Ally*

Ready to roll out the fun? Grab your free Roll-a-Story activity from my Teachers Pay Teachers store and bring storytelling to life in your classroom today!



Looking for even more storytelling magic? Check out these premium Roll-a-Story resources in my Teachers Pay Teachers store and take your classroom adventures to the next level!



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