

# “Start A Conversation” Cards

## Lesson Plan

### Characterization

#### Overview:

- ❖ “Start a Conversation” Cards are a collection of professional photographs on durable, matte finish card stock of a wide variety of scenes and subjects.  
“Start a Conversation” Cards are available at [start-a-conversation.com](http://start-a-conversation.com)  
There are two collections of cards: “Clarity” and “Focus”. When both sets of cards are purchased, there is a discount price and a solid carrying case is included.
- ❖ They can be used in a myriad educational settings in endless engaging, effective lessons.
- ❖ They can be used in formally planned curriculum based lessons, and they are also a teacher’s go-to resource for ice breakers, spontaneous games and lessons, end of class closure activities, one-on-one coaching, etc.
- ❖ Teachers are advised to consider the nature of the lesson to be used with the cards and then decide if the cards can be distributed to students randomly or if some pre-selection would be wise

#### Topic/Type of Lesson:

This is a multi-faceted lesson focusing on various aspects of **characterization** in fiction. It incorporates viewing, speaking, listening and writing and is applicable to all genres of fiction, including film.

#### Goal of Lesson/Outcomes/Curricular Links:

- ❖ Discover possibilities
- ❖ Form tentative understandings, interpretations and positions
- ❖ Extend awareness
- ❖ Consider new perspectives
- ❖ Construct meaning from text and context
- ❖ Discern and analyze context
- ❖ Understand and interpret content

- ❖ Engage prior knowledge
- ❖ Understand and appreciate textual forms, elements and techniques
- ❖ Relate elements, devices and techniques to created effects
- ❖ Develop and present a variety of print and nonprint texts
- ❖ Develop content
- ❖ Use production, publication and presentation strategies and technologies consistent with context
- ❖ \*Improve thoughtfulness, effectiveness and correctness of communication
- ❖ Work within a group
- ❖ Cooperate with others, and contribute to group processes
- ❖ Understand and evaluate group processes
  - \* at discretion of teacher
  - (Note: For Alberta HS ELA curriculum, these are Outcomes 1.1; 1.1.1; 1.1.2; 1.2; 1.2.1; 2.1; 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.3; 2.2; 2.2.2; 4.1; 4.1.3; 4.1.4; 4.2; 5.2; 5.2.1; 5.2.2)

### Materials/Set-up:

- groups of 2 or 3 students
- for each group, 12-15 Start A Conversation cards spread out on a table or block of desks
- copies of the fiction text you are studying
- paper and pen for students when it's time for them to brainstorm/write/create

### Instructional Procedure:

1. **Teacher Preparation.** Before doing this activity, it would serve students well to have a working understanding of terms related to characterization in fiction. These terms may include the following:

- motivation
- static vs dynamic
- round vs flat
- stock
- foils
- conflict

It would also be wise to choose a few cards yourself and set up a few modeling examples to share with students before they launch into the activity. You may want to reference a text you covered recently, and make modeling examples about characters in that text.

2. **Group activities.** Ask students to look carefully at the cards in front of them and then lead them through the following card selection activities, adding your own as needed. Remind students of the rules for group interaction that support the norms in your classroom.
- Find a card that you feel represents the state of mind of \_\_\_\_\_ at the beginning of the text. Discuss the different ways the card reveals this state of mind. For example, in the film we watched last week about Robin, the teenage tennis star, I would choose this photo of gauges and valves (Clarity card # 46) because this captures the enormous pressure Robin was feeling to win at the start of the film before going on the court for the semi-final match.
  - Now, think about the time in our current text where \_\_\_\_\_ first faces a problem or conflict. Select a card that in some way captures the way \_\_\_\_\_ feels at this time. Discuss this thoroughly.
  - Choose and discuss a card that in some way reveals your character's state of mind at the end of the text. Discuss in your groups the reasons for this and be sure everyone in your group can verbalize the way the character has changed through the text.
  - Form new groups now so that all members of your new group are from different home groups.
  - In this new group, find a card that somehow represents the force that works against \_\_\_\_\_. Discuss how \_\_\_\_\_ handles this opposing force.
  - Find a card that fits this criteria: If \_\_\_\_\_ had to choose a card to have with him on a deserted island which would it be and why?

3. **Individual Activities.** These activities can be used as projects, assignments or assessments, according to your needs and preferences. These activities can be completed individually, in pairs or in groups.

*-Application skills.* From a group of cards, find one that represents a job or career or skill that \_\_\_\_\_ would be good at if he/she were a real person. Explain your choice using examples and quotes from the text.

*-Synthesis skills:* From a group of cards, find one that, metaphorically, represents \_\_\_\_\_ accurately; also, find one that represents a great contrast to \_\_\_\_\_. For example, for Robin, the tennis star, you may choose Clarity card #12 with a theatre mask because Robin hides behind a mask of athletic

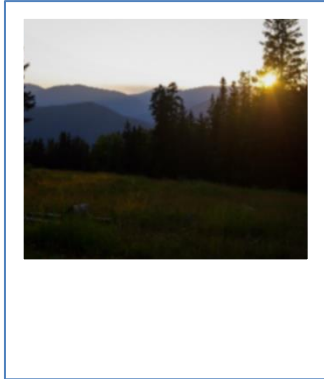
confidence; and you may choose a card with a picture of a valleys, such as Focus card #20 indicating that Robin contrasts with deep places, since she is emotionally shallow and socially superficial.

*-Creative thinking/writing:* Choose a card randomly. Write a brief extension of the text, placing a character of your choice in the setting provided by the card (or by using some aspect of the card to inspire your writing.) Show that you understand the character through actions, thoughts, conversations, etc that your character would demonstrate in this new context.

*-Evaluation/Synthesis:* Students have access to a collection of 15-20 cards. They are to choose two or three cards that could be screened onto a t-shirt to represent a character. Students explain (in writing and/or oral presentation) why each card would be a suitable t-shirt design. Then they justify which one would be the best design for that character.

SAMPLE

## Teaching Examples:



## Sample Digital Images included for Student Activities: (Note: Physical cards may be used for lessons)

