



# HE SAID SHE SAID

HACK OUR SHORT STORY AND MAKE IT YOURS (OR RATHER, HARI'S)

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Think about themes and perspectives in fiction
- Use your imagination
- Tell a story from a different point of view

🕒 1 HOUR +

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

DIFFICULTY: ★★★★★

## YOUR MISSION

In our latest two-part story, *The Very Serious Incident* by Ruth Clarke-Irons, Holly is horrified to discover that Hari Loke has been falsely accused of a crime she committed. The whole thing is told from Holly's perspective. We know exactly what she is thinking at all times, but we barely get to hear from anyone else. Poor Hari never gets to tell us his side of the story. So this is where you come in. We want you to tell the same story but from another character's point of view. Will you pick Hari, Mr Evans or Mrs McBride? Will we discover something totally new that changes everything? It's completely up to you, just be as imaginative as you can.

## GET STARTED

### PHASE 1:

Re-read both parts of the story. Write down what happens when.

### PHASE 2:

Pick a character that is not Holly. The two we know most about are Hari Loke and Mrs McBride, but you can choose anyone you like. Write down what you know about your chosen character.

### PHASE 3:

When you have chosen your main character, consider the themes of the original story. *The Very Serious Incident* is all about justice. There are two main messages:

- 1 Own up to your mistakes
- 2 Jumping to conclusions can cause a lot of unnecessary heartache

Using your chosen character, can you come up with an alternative narrative that also addresses the theme? Maybe Mrs McBride has a secret reason for wanting revenge on Hari? Maybe Hari is a private detective, who has come to Holly's school on the trail of a criminal mastermind. Maybe Holly isn't quite the innocent child she makes herself out to be. What exactly is it that Ms Okoro whispers to Mr Evans just before the special assembly?

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#### PHASE 4:

Looking at your list of what happens when, expand on your idea to create an alternative timeline for your character.

#### PHASE 5:

When you're ready, write a new version of the story from your chosen character's point of view. Try out these little tricks to make it as exciting as possible.

- 1 Decide on your beginning, middle and ending
- 2 Surprise the reader in the first three lines
- 3 Choose your adjectives carefully
- 4 Never use three words where one is better
- 5 When lots of action is happening, use shorter sentences
- 6 Include plenty of dialogue
- 7 Don't aim for length. Keep it short, exciting and beautifully structured.

**We want to read your alternative story. Don't forget to send them to the address on the readers' page of the AQUILA website, and we'll share as many as we can.**

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- \* Research well-known origin stories – Batman's is a great example. Voldemort also has a very good origin story, and so does Maleficent. What do they tend to have in common? Which are your favourites?
- \* Does your favourite fictional character have an origin story? If not, perhaps you can invent one?