



“The Invention Convention” Teacher Guide



SEASON 4 EPISODE 10

The Invention Convention

by a 9 year-old from Montana named Owen

Overview

This week’s podcast episode features the story “The Invention Convention” by a 9 year-old from Montana named Owen. In the story, a kid whose name is *also* Owen invents a time machine and travels back four years in time where he talks to his own mother. Though in reality we can’t go back in time to see our grownups when they were younger, we *can* learn more about them by asking them questions about their lives. In this activity, students will learn about the purpose of interviews, practice interviewing their teacher, and prepare to interview a grownup in their lives to learn more about what life was like back when they were a kid.

Age Group

Best for 2nd through 5th grade readers and writers.

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Common Core Standards

For simplicity, here are relevant 4th grade standards; similar ones for 2nd, 3rd, and 5th apply.

1. [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1](#) Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
2. [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1.b](#) Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles
3. [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1.c](#) Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
4. [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1](#) Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Speak and Listen as appropriate in the interview
- Ask questions to grownups about their own lives
- Record information about themselves and their grownups

Materials

1. Story Pirates Podcast: Season 4 Episode 10 (story at approximately 19:10)
2. Interview Planner
3. Writer's Notebook or other place to write down ideas

Activity Steps

1. Intro:

Introduce the lesson to your students with a short discussion.

- **Do Now/Writer's Notebook:** Ask students to think about and respond to the following question:
 - *What's your favorite thing to do for fun?*
- **Share:** Have students share some of their responses.
- Then ask student to respond to a second question:
 - *Now, think about a grownup in your life. What do you think they liked to do for fun when they were your age? How do you know?*
- **Share:** Have students share some of their responses or ideas

- **Connect:** What you do for fun now might be a bit different than what some grownups in your lives liked to do when they were younger. You might know about your grownups' childhood, or you might not! Beyond taking a time machine, there's only one way to find out: ask!

2. Play the Story:

"The Invention Convention" by a 9 year-old from Montana named Owen. The story is at approximately 19:10 on the podcast episode.

- **Introduce the story to students:** Let's listen to a story from the Story Pirates Podcast called "The Invention Convention" by a 9 year-old from Montana named Owen.
- **Play the story:** Play the story for students
- **Discuss:** When Owen the kid went back in time, who did he meet? Was there anything surprising?
 - He ran into his mom!
 - Owen's mom said her phrase "It doesn't matter who wins, it matters who tries."
 - Owen's mom was more concerned about her bangs than the time machine!

3. Play the Interview:

After listening to the story, play the interview that Lee did with the author of the story, Owen from Montana. The interview is right after the story at around at around 26:30.

- **Introduce the Author Interview:** Every time the Story Pirates do a story, they also interview the author of the story. An interview is when someone asks someone else questions about who they are, and what they think.
- **Play the Author Interview:** (around 26:30 on the episode) Lee interviews the author of the story, Owen from Montana.
- **Discuss:**
 - What kinds of questions did Lee ask Owen? How did Owen respond?
 - Lee wanted to know how Owen got the idea for the story. Owen got the idea because he really likes engineering, and wants to control the 4th dimension--TIME!
 - Lee wanted to know about engineering, and Owen explained different kinds of engineers.
 - Lee wanted to know how Owen would design a time machine. Owen said he would use a distance sensor.
 - Lee wanted to know how to get into engineering, and Owen told him about maker fairs!
 - Lee asked him what he was working on right now, and Owen mentioned a dog harness with treats!
- Why do you think Lee asked those questions?
 - To find out more about the author of the story, and what inspired him to write it.
 - To get to know Owen better and see how he thinks!

4. MiniLesson: Interview

- **Explain:** That brings us to our project today: interviews! An interview is when someone, called the interviewer, asks someone else, who is the interviewee, questions about who they are, just like we heard Lee do with Owen.
- Today's project is about setting up an interview with a grownup in your life so that you can find out what their life was like when they were young. You might know some things about their life when they were younger, but you might also be surprised by what you learn.
- **Questions:** Good interview questions ask more than just basic things like "What is your name?" or "What is your favorite color?". They ask things about what people liked to do, where they went, and what they experienced.
 - Follow-up questions: Good interviewers can also ask follow-up questions, which are questions they think of after they have heard the answer to their first question. For example, once Lee heard that Owen was into engineering, he asked Owen a bunch of questions about engineering! Interviewers don't always plan their follow-up questions. They decide what to ask because they are listening closely.
- **Interview Planner:** Pass out or display copies of the Interview planner. You can also have students make their own in their notebooks. Read the interview questions with students, noting that they are questions that basically everyone can answer about their own lives.

5. Group Practice: "We Do": Interviewing the teacher!

- **Interview the teacher!** To practice interviewing, let the students interview YOU, the teacher! This is a great way to have them get to know you better, as well as having them practice their interviewing skills.
- **Interview Setup:** You may wish to set up two chairs at the front of the classroom or space: one for you, and one for the students as they come up to ask questions. For a virtual setup, you can have your camera and mic on, and then turn on the camera and mic of each student as they "come up" for the interview.
- **Interviewer Prep:** A good interviewer has a few good habits:
 - They thank their interview subject for their time
 - They have their questions prepared ahead of time
 - They are prepared to write down or otherwise record the answers to their questions
 - They speak clearly and then listen to their interviewee's answers
 - If they have more questions after hearing the answers, they ask follow-up questions
- **Practice Interviews:** Ask for student volunteers to come up to ask you questions! Before each interviewer comes up, remind them to:
 - Say "Thank You" either before or after the interview
 - Pick out a question
 - Speak clearly and listen for answers
 - Record the answers by writing them down
 - Ask follow-up questions if they want to know more

- Have students come up one at a time, sit in the chair opposite you, and ask you a question. They can also ask you a follow-up question if they want to know more about something you said! For a virtual setup, you can have your camera and mic on, and then turn on the camera and mic of each student as they “come up” for the interview.
- Your students will get valuable practice speaking and listening, and will also get to know more about you! If you’d like, you can have students pick out questions from the Interview Planner or have them write their own.

6. Independent Practice: “You Do”

- Instruct students to pick a grownup in their lives to interview. Have them use an Interview Planner to prepare questions.
- You can also have the students answer the left hand column about themselves. They may be surprised how much or how little their answers differ from the grownup in their lives.

7. Sharing: Reading question answers

- You can have students share some of their own answers to the questions as well as share what grownup they are planning to interview.
- You can also assign the interview as homework to be shared later!

Extension Activity: Interviewing each other!

You can ask students in the class to use the Interview Planner to interview each other as well, then share their findings back out with the class.

Social Emotional Learning Connection:

This lesson capitalizes on two major core competencies of SEL.

- **Social Awareness:** This lesson helps strengthen Social Emotional Learning through the core competency of Social Awareness. By interviewing important grownups in their lives, students practice the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others.
- **Relationship Skills:** This activity also strengthens students’ Relationship Skills by practicing listening, questioning, and communicating clearly. Students may find out things they never knew about the grownups in their lives, leading to fuller conversations and deeper bonds.

Interview Planner

Use this chart to help you ask questions to your grownup and record their responses. You can also come up with your own questions!

What do you/did you...	Me right now	My grownup when they were younger
...do for fun on the weekend?		
...want to become as an adult?		
...eat for your favorite meal?		
...wear to school?		
...want as a present for your birthday?		
...listen to when listening to music?		
...do during the summer?		
...argue with siblings or friends about?		
...do over breaks with your family?		