



## MCIEA Task: Born to Be a Star

**Course/subject/grade level:** 6<sup>th</sup> grade, ELA

**Context/prerequisite skills:** Learners should have completed a memoir-writing unit prior to completing this task. They should also have some understanding of the relationship between music and film/storytelling.

### Performance Assessment Quality Criteria

High-quality performance tasks should:

- Align to high-leverage learning goals (competencies, learning targets, standards, transferable skills, etc)
- Be open ended and relevant to the real world
- Require application and transfer using higher-order thinking
- Be fair and culturally responsive
- Outline clear criteria for success in a rubric
- Result in original products, performances, or solutions

### Learning Goals

*What is being assessed in this task? This includes competencies, standards, learning targets, transferable skills, etc. Remember - application and transfer of high-leverage skills are a hallmark of performance assessments.*

#### Writing Standards

3.a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an appropriate narrative sequence.

3.c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another

3. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, figurative and sensory language, and techniques such as personification (e.g., “the fog crept in”) to convey experiences or events.

3.e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.



To adapt this task for your classroom, click [here for an editable version](#).

Original task created by Katie Urbine & Sara Barney.

[www.mciea.org](http://www.mciea.org) | @MassCIEA



## Task Summary

*Describe the essence of the task. What authentic role is the student taking? Who is the audience? What is the problem they are trying to solve?*

Students will be asked to submit a pitch to a film production company in which they share why their memoir should be turned into a film. Students will take the memoirs they have written during a larger unit and develop a summary that emphasizes the plot, the major arc of their story, along with the major characters in their memoir. Additionally, students will be asked to do an analysis of the tone and mood of their own text to create a soundtrack.

## Essential Questions

*What challenging and open-ended questions are students exploring in this task? How does this assessment engage students in tackling the essential question?*

How does the development of literary elements convey meaning?

How is theme connected to character and self?

How is theme connected to the outside world?

### Quality Output

*What original product or solution will students produce as a result of this task? Describe what a quality output looks like, sounds like, feels like.*

1. Memoir summary (with major plot points, and initial character development. Summary should have a clear introduction, problem, and sense of the resolution).
2. Soundtrack with a description of how the songs connect to plot points in their memoir as well as the overall mood/tone of their memoir.

### Quality Process

*Without being overly prescriptive, what will students actually do as they complete this task? Describe the flexible quality process learners will engage in to produce the output.*

- Step 1:** Introduction and tools for analyzing their memoirs
- Step 2:** Turn memoir into summary/pitch
- Step 3:** Soundtrack
- Step 4:** Final work day for all parts of application/pitch



## Resources/Materials

*What do all students need to have access to in order to complete the task?*

Mentor Texts:

This I Believe essays- <https://thisibelieve.org/>

“The Moth” <https://themoth.org/education/resources>

“Everything Will Be Okay” by James Howe

Soundtracks from Memoir Films

- Persepolis soundtrack
- Eat Pray Love Soundtrack
- The Glass Castle Soundtrack
- The Motorcycle Diaries Soundtrack
- 127 Hours Soundtrack
- Wild Soundtrack

## Possible Accommodations

*Understanding that accommodations will always need to be adapted for student’s individual needs, what are some accommodations that may be provided for this task?*

- Guided brainstorm sheet
- Scaffolded/guided questions sheet (one for people, one for events, one for lesson...)
- Listen to mentor texts on NPR

## **Born to Be a Star**

### **Teacher Prompt for Student Instructions**

We have just finished writing our memoirs, and are ready to share our stories with the world! In order to share our stories with the world, you are going to enter the *Born to Be a Star* contest to turn your memoir into a film.

As part of this process, we are going to take our memoirs and make them pop. *Born to Be a Star Productions* is asking for the following materials for entry to their contest:

1. An application with basic information about yourself.
2. A summary of your memoir in which you emphasize the most important parts of your story's arc. What makes your story special? Who are the characters that are going to draw us into your story.
3. And finally, you are going to build a preliminary soundtrack to your amazing stories. What are the songs that have the ability to pull you into the emotions and experiences of your story?
4. While you will include a final draft of the memoir, for this contest, the most important component are the supplementary materials that really capture the attention of the production company.

You will be assessed using our class rubric, so make sure that you emphasize the elements of your story, and think of your own memoir as a text.

# Born to Be a Star Productions

**Do you have a story to tell?  
Of course you do!**

**Attn: Calling all Middle School Students!**

---



## Compelling Stories Wanted!

*Born to Be a Star Productions*, the premier production company for adapting middle school literature to film, is looking for submissions from talented authors just like you!

*Born to Be a Star Productions* is well known as a company that takes stories written by students and adapts them to the Big Screen! And your story could be our next blockbuster! Just think of *The Blind Side*, *Rudy*, and *Radio*! Your story could go down in the books with these big names!

We are looking to create a movie based on a true story from a middle school student's life. The story should be a memoir of a time that the author learned a lesson that changed them in some way.

Memoirs submitted for this competition should:

- Tell the **true** story of a time that you learned an important lesson, or of an event or person who changed you in some way.
- Follow an appropriate story structure.
- Include sensory details and figurative language to help our filmmakers accurately adapt from page to screen.
- Include purposeful dialogue that moves the plot, reveals something about the characters, reveals the theme, or creates a mood. Remember, movies do not have time for "filler" dialogue.

Follow the *Submission Requirements* on the next page for your trip to stardom!

## Submission Requirements:

***\*\*\*Please note that all applications MUST be complete in order to be considered for the contest.\*\*\****

### A Completed Application will contain:

- Personal information: Let us know about you.
- Memoir Introduction: A 1-3 Paragraph Introduction to your memoir.
- Soundtrack Selection Sheet: A selection of one (or more!) songs for a soundtrack to create a mood for your audience and illustrate the theme of your memoir.
- Memoir: A copy of your well-written memoir.





Attach additional paper as needed.

**Soundtrack Selection:**

<p><b><u>Track(s):</u></b> Be sure to include title and artist.  Do you wish to use the entire song or part of it? (If part, then be specific.)</p>	<p><b><u>Scene:</u></b> Explain which part(s) of the story each track will accompany, or whether it accompanies the whole story.</p>	<p><b><u>Explanation:</u></b> Explain how each song (or part of the song) you select will create a mood for your audience and/or illustrate the theme of your story.</p>

**Your Memoir**

Include or attach as a separate document.





## Born to be a Star Rubric

	Exceeds	Meets	Not Yet
<b>Supporting Claim</b> W.6.1.a Write arguments: Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly in paragraphs and sections.	I can make a claim, acknowledge opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.	I can make a claim and organize the reasons and evidence in paragraphs and sections.	I still need to work on:
<b>Style</b> W.6.1.d Write arguments: Establish and maintain a style appropriate to audience and purpose (e.g., formal for academic writing).	I can use a style appropriate to my audience and purpose to make a stronger argument.	I can write in a consistent style appropriate to my audience and purpose.	I still need to work on:
<b>Song Selection</b> ARTS.C.10.02 Integrate knowledge of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts and apply the arts to learning other disciplines apply knowledge of other disciplines in learning in and about the arts	I can analyze English by integrating and applying my understanding of music.	I can better understand English by integrating and applying my understanding of music.	I still need to work on:



## MCIEA Rubric Guiding Principles

The following outlines the MCIEA way of thinking about rubric design. While MCIEA shared rubrics will generally be designed with the following principles in mind, you may decide to design your locally developed rubrics in a different way. We share the following details to both guide you in understanding the format and coherence behind MCIEA shared rubrics as well as to share our current understanding of best practices for the design of high-quality rubrics.

- **Task Neutral** - MCIEA rubrics will be aligned to learning goals (competencies, standards, high-leverage skills, learning targets), rather than aligned to the task. This means that the items that go into the leftmost column are a description of what you want students to understand and be able to do, rather than a description of different elements of the task. Rubrics designed in alignment to tasks tend to read like student directions, rather than a tool for assessment and feedback. Anything you want students to do can be added to student directions as a checklist. Further, task neutral rubrics can be used across multiple tasks, meaning that teachers are not designing rubrics every time they create a new task and, more importantly, students develop metacognition around the idea that they are building a consistent set of high-leverage skills and understandings across multiple learning experiences.
- **Selection of Learning Goals** - These are important considerations when selecting items for the leftmost column. The principles below may lead teachers to combine groups of smaller standards (sometimes called power standards).
  - **Appropriate Type** - Rubrics are the opportunity to highlight the most high-leverage learning goals. The goals should be important enough to be built over time and applied/transferred to new contexts.
  - **Appropriate Number** - Brain science tells us that students can reasonably focus on between 2-5 high-leverage learning targets at a time. Said another way, just because an assessment can assess something, doesn't mean it has to.
  - **Grain Size** - Also known as the "Goldilocks Principle", learning goals should not be so broad that students have little information on what they are trying to do, but should not be so narrow that they form a checklist. Additionally, items should all be of a similar grain size, so that you avoid having something as important as critical thinking take up as much space (in student's minds) as something like neatness.
- **Performance Levels** - Our rubrics are designed with 3 performance levels (Exceeds, Meets, Not Yet). We place them in that order from left-to-right to put the highest performance level in student's view first. The following list is in the order which we suggest you develop rubrics. We find that many bad practices develop when performance levels are designed to produce scores consistent with traditional grading systems.
  - **Meets** - The student has satisfactorily demonstrated that they are on level in this learning goal.
  - **Exceeds** - There are many ways to approach the development of this category, the important consideration is that you decide on a coherent system for developing your exceeds category and apply it consistently. For MCIEA, we tend to look at the deepening of the skill or understanding in the following grade level and design our exceeds category from there.
  - **Not Yet** - We do not include an approaching category as teachers tend to spend undue time agonizing over what this level means, often only to find that it wasn't very meaningful when they get student work back. Rather we invite teachers to leave space in the Not Yet category for written feedback. As a rule, when the performance level increases, the skill or understanding gets more nuanced, rather than there just being more of the previous level. We avoid entirely the language of *never*, *sometimes*, *all the time*.