

It's Her Story: Dolly Parton - A Graphic Novel

EDUCATOR GUIDE



Dolly Parton is an award-winning songwriter and entertainer who performed in the Grand Ole Opry when she was just thirteen years old. She has written thousands of songs, starred in TV shows and movies, and headed up her own businesses and philanthropy. With her talent, grit, and generosity, she connects people through music and changes lives.

It's Her Story: Dolly Parton
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Ages 7 to 10
48 pages
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Hardcover, 6.2 x 8.6 inches



DISCUSSION

Ask these questions to the class as a whole or have students discuss in small groups.

1. What are some examples of times when Dolly took a big chance? (Sample answers: when she moved to Nashville, or when she left Porter Wagoner's show.) Why do you think she felt ready to take those chances?
2. Dolly is true to herself, even when others are unkind or unsupportive of her dreams. What does it mean to be true to yourself? How does being true to herself help Dolly persevere?
3. When Dolly says, "Find out who you are, and do it on purpose" (p. 41), what do you think she means?

GOAL-SETTING CONNECTION

Dolly Parton sets big goals—and meets them. Once she reaches a goal, she makes a new one, just as big. Have students do their own dreaming with the following steps. Prepare by gathering magazines, scissors, and glue.

1. Write, as Dolly would say, "I think I might could _____!" at the top of a piece of blank paper and fill in the blank. Dream big! Don't let any doubts stop you.
2. Write down steps you need to take to reach that goal. Then include some details for each step, such as who could help you, what you could do to prepare, and when the step might be completed.
3. Using magazines, scissors, and glue, cut out pictures and words related to your goal and decorate the front or back of your paper. Place your completed vision board somewhere you can see it daily.



WRITING CONNECTION

- Listen with students to Dolly Parton's song "Coat of Many Colors," and then display the song lyrics. Depending on the age of your students and their prior knowledge, have them work in groups or as a class to identify:
 - Rhyme scheme (ABCB)
 - Repetition ("My coat of many colors/My mamma made for me," as well as various individual words such as "sewed," "momma," and "rags")
 - Tone (love and gratitude)
 - Other literary devices (older/more advanced students might note allusion, metaphor, voice, and use of a frame narrative)
- Have students write their own poems, or songs, using these steps:
 - Think of something you were given by someone important to you. This can be an object like a toy, book, or necklace, or it can be something like a hug or special words.
 - Write about how you came to have the thing and what it means to you, using the organizer below.
 - Write a poem based on your reflections. Try using Dolly's rhyme scheme, repetition, or other literary devices.

Me and My _____

Who gave it to me?	
When did I get it?	
Why did they give it to me?	
How does it make me feel? (For example: it comforts me when I am sad, reminds me of someone special, or helps me feel proud of myself)	
Optional: Here is more information or a story about the thing, such as where it came from.	

- Follow up with one or both of these activities. (Note that some students may wish to keep their personal work confidential.)
 - Poetry reading. Adjust your classroom seating and lighting to represent a performance space and have students sign up to read their poems aloud.
 - Gallery walk. Have students illustrate their poems with a drawing or photo and display their work in the classroom or hallway.

