

“Telling Our Tales” Writing Competition 2017

Ideas for Student Consideration

Read the prompts below and choose one or more of them to assist the writing of your story.

- Polyphemus the Spaniard having only one eye is an important theme in Wolfe’s story, as it is both a literal and figurative symbol of his focus on finding gold resulting in his blindness towards the immense wealth of natural resources all around him. Have you or anyone else in your experience sneered at something in your own life that you realized the value of later?
- What is something you were curious about that ended up being dangerous?
- What was a time you went looking for one thing but found another?
- Write about a time you explored a place you had never been to before.
- Have you ever taken a trip that didn’t go like you planned? What happened?
- Polyphemus commits numerous atrocities against the Native Americans and bullies them into submission. Describe a time when you were bullied or you bullied someone else.
- Have you ever encountered something like a place or culture that was hard for you to understand? Were you ever able to understand it?
- Thomas Wolfe combined the accounts of several real-life explorers and historical figures to create the character of Polyphemus. Mix several people you know together to create a character that helps tell the story of your group of friends, your school, your community, or your family.
- Describe a time you were tricked or tricked someone else.