The Old Man’s Gift

Setting the scene

“Thank you for helping an old man across the street,” said the mysterious stranger all dressed in black. Sally was already running late for school, but the old man insisted she wait a little while longer.

“How I must do something for you in return,” he continued. “Take this Magic Fish and these Golden Crystals with you to school, and I guarantee that something magical will happen; everything will be different.” The old man laughed and then disappeared in a puff of smoke.

What do you think will happen when Sally arrives at school with her gifts?

Building the story

Ask the students to build their very own scene depicting what happens at the school when Sally arrives with the Magic Fish and the Golden Crystals.

• Who will be involved, and in what way?
• What will Sally’s school friends think? How will they react?
• How might they be involved in the ensuing course of events?
• Use a variety of characters.

Reflecting

Have the students reflect and talk about each of their characters as they build.

• What are they doing? What are they saying?
• What magical things can happen?
• How do the other characters react? How do they feel?
Sharing and documenting
Ask the students to use the StoryVisualizer software to write a piece about the magic that took place at the school. Have them tell their stories to an audience and add drama, sounds, and elements of the unexpected.

Suggestions for scripts:

“When the rays of the Sun fell upon the Golden Crystals, they magically…”

“At first the fish seemed quite dead, then suddenly, it started to move. A strange light shone from behind its lower fin, then its belly slowly opened and out came a…”

“As I swung my magic Golden Crystals, everyone became quiet. They could hear a clickety-clacking sound coming from outside the door. What was it? Was my wish really going to come true?”

“My teacher looked at me with eyes as warm and as friendly as crystals, as she told me that—as the only student in the school—I had been selected to participate in the great…”

Extending
• Do you know any other stories that involve characters like fortune-tellers and sorcerers?

• Write a list of well-known literature, then read one of the books on the list and write a book review. Share your review with the rest of the class.

• Select two fantasy books from different cultures. Research the history, legends, and science behind the popularity of magic and sorcery in literature.

• Pretend that you are a reporter uncovering the hidden truth of magic. Create a cover story for the local newspaper.