**Here are some engaging games that can easily be activated in your classroom to stir up conversation and stories! Even the youngest can partake by retelling their part in the story – fun, fun, fun!**

**Cross the River (Julia Perlowski)**

Use this activity in a variety of ways: prereading activity, icebreaker, story brainstorming, or culmination of a story told/read:

Directions: Form two lines of participants (don’t need to be equal sides) face each other about 6 – 10 feet apart. Participants are asked to cross the river if what is said pertains to them.

Example: “Cross the river if…”

…you have been lost

…you are allergic to cats

…you live in an apartment

…you’ve had someone who believes in you

…you’re scared of spiders

…you have even been misunderstood

…you have had an “aha” moment that you have experienced in your staff development with other teachers

…you have had to make quick changes when presenting a workshop

Others?

For a story, let’s say you’re going to share Charlotte’s Webb: Cross the river if…”

…you have been to a country fair

…you ever felt lonely

…you visited a farm

…you think pigs and spiders can talk

Using the above questions, you could extend this by asking the participants to turn and talk to their neighbor about why they crossed the river.

**Body Stories (Nonverbal Expression with a storytelling partner**) This takes two volunteers. One will be the nonverbal teller and the other will be the storyteller.

My students LOVE this activity! Ask for a volunteer or you be the actual storyteller. Your job will be to tell an exciting story (personal or a retelling) You won’t be seen because you’ll be sitting down behind the nonverbal volunteer who is standing in front of you, facing the audience. This nonverbal volunteer has no idea what story will come out of your mouth but must be listening well because his/her hand motions, facial expressions, and movement of the mouth and eyes are all that will tell the story.