

Be a story maker:



KS1



creative
writing
toolkit



Key Stage 1 creative writing explained for parents

'Pupils should develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. They should be taught the correct use of grammar. They should build on what they have been taught to expand the range of their writing and the variety of the grammar they use. The writing they do should include narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read.'

Primary National Curriculum, 2013

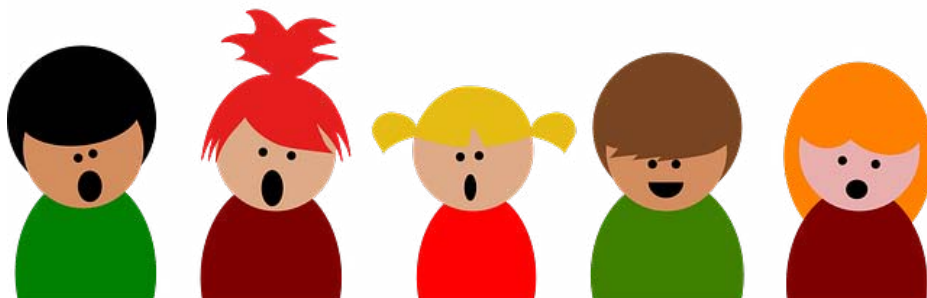
It doesn't sound very exciting does it? Certainly for some children this focus on technical skills is the very thing that puts them off writing. Yet writing can and should be tremendously exciting! If you can unlock that excitement, who knows where it will take you?

Sadly, exciting creative writing is scarcely mentioned in the curriculum at all except in passing. The National Curriculum is very focused on the technical aspects of writing – the grammar, the handwriting, the spelling and the vocabulary used. All of these things do improve writing, but a piece of text might be technically perfect and at the same time very dull to read. That said, good schools are using this as an opportunity to be creative with how the skills are taught and develop children's writing in a really imaginative way.

This learning gives you tools to use with your child to spark their creativity and develop their writing skills. All you need is a pencil and your imagination – so enjoy!

Creative writing: how to get started

In order to be a good writer you need to do two things before you even put pen to paper. You need to **talk** and you need to **read** (or be read to).



Talking to write

Talking about what you are going to write, or acting out the story of what you are going to write, does several things to help with the writing process. Firstly it gives you something to write about; for many children there is nothing worse than being faced with a blank sheet of paper. If you have played the game, experienced the event, talked about it and rehearsed some of the things you are going to write about the writing process is so much easier.

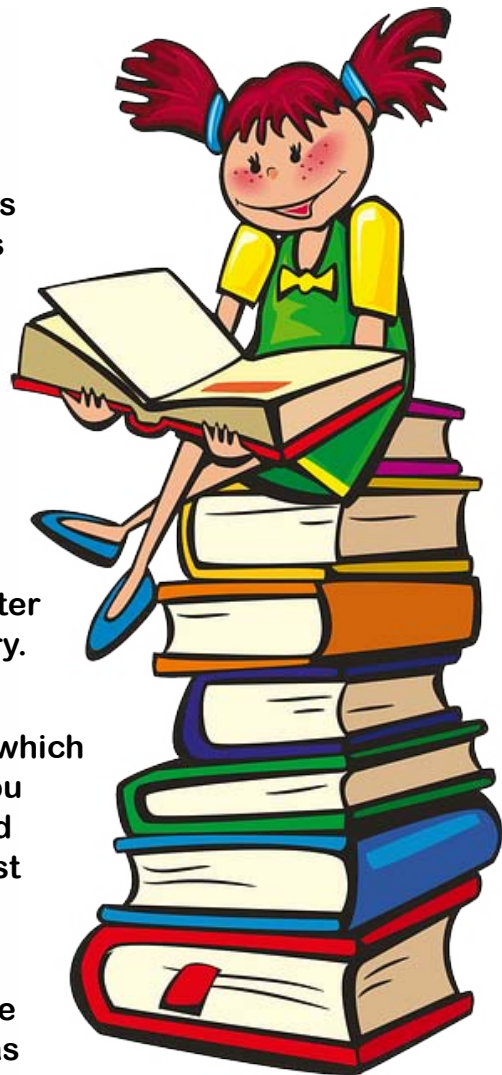
In addition, talking can increase vocabulary. As children generally write in the same way as they speak, the more words they use, the better. If they stay 'safe' they might just write: "I went to the park and I played on the swings." But if they have talked about it and discussed what they are going to write their sentence could become, "Yesterday, an amazing thing happened when I went to the park. I was only planning on having a walk and a quick swing, but you will never guess what took place when I was there!"

Reading to write

Reading or being read to also increases vocabulary. Books contain many words that are not commonly used in everyday speech. Just think about the title of one of Lauren Child's wonderful picture books: *Beware of storybook wolves*. Beware – what a brilliant word, much better than 'look out'. Wouldn't it be a great word to use in writing? Just think about how much more powerful it would be for a character to say 'beware' in your child's own story.

Young children learn huge numbers of new words just through being read to, which is a pretty exciting idea for a parent. You do not need to do anything complicated to improve your child's vocabulary – just read to your children and visit a library regularly!

Books also give children story language and plot ideas. There is no such thing as



'cheating' when writing as a child. It is actually a really good thing to borrow ideas and plot devices as it teaches you how to construct a story. Some schools may use the term 'magpie-ing' for this borrowing of ideas and it is actively encouraged. You can help your child with their stories just by suggesting that something might happen in the plot in the same way as in another story they know.

Reading relevant extracts from harder books to your child, as well as reading a whole story, can also be very helpful as it gives them access to books that are beyond their reading level but still can be enjoyed.

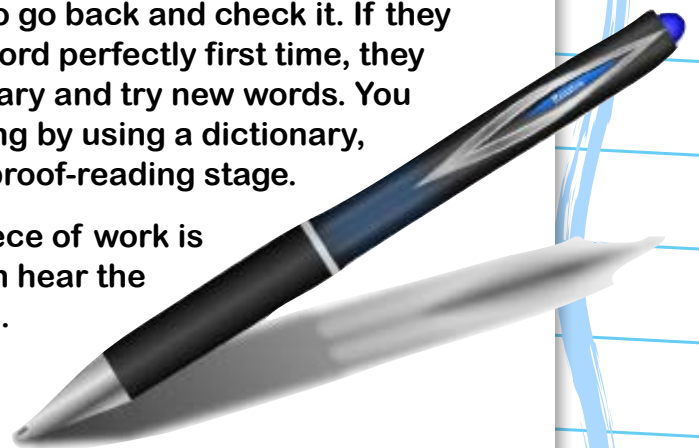
Time to pick up your pencil!

So there you are – you have done all the ground work and now it is time to actually start writing. If you have very young children you can do the writing for them ('scribing') so they can get the ideas down and get a real sense of achievement too. We'd also recommend scribing for any child who might have difficulty with handwriting or be excessively anxious about the physical aspects of writing. If writing is a laborious task they are less likely to want to write and will also write far less. If you write it for them they can get all their ideas down on the page and have a great story to be proud of. You can then work on the proof-reading and editing together. This is all about being creative; the story being written is much more important than who is doing the actual scribing.

It's also important to remind your child that the words on the page are not set in stone. Everyone, even top authors, writes and then redrafts and this is an essential skill. So the initial piece of writing might be littered with errors and things (neatly) crossed out; it can all be changed and improved when you proof-read it.

Encourage your child to just pick up a pencil and start writing. If they come across a tricky spelling, tell them to have a go and put a line underneath the word to remind them to go back and check it. If they are not anxious about spelling every word perfectly first time, they are more likely to use exciting vocabulary and try new words. You can then help them with correct spelling by using a dictionary, once they have got to the editing and proof-reading stage.

A very good way of proof-reading a piece of work is to read it out loud. As you read you can hear the errors or where punctuation is needed.





First steps in writing: story structure

Help your child take their first steps in creative writing by explaining that all stories need a structure: a beginning, a middle and an end. They need something to happen and characters, real or imaginary, to star in them.

At the beginning the author sets the scene, maybe describing where the story is taking place or the characters that are important.

Gradually the writing builds up to the middle of the story: the conflict or problem. Most stories have some sort of problem that has to be resolved; for example, in *The Three Little Pigs*, it is the wolf trying to eat the pigs. It is the problem that makes the story move towards the climax and makes it exciting to read. The end of the story is usually a resolution of the problem in which everything is explained. Story structure can be hard to get right, so it usually helps to make a few notes or a simple plan to show roughly what is going to happen when.

Are you and your child ready to get started with our creative writing activities? Have fun telling stories!



On the next page you'll find the National Curriculum writing expectations for KS1. They offer a good guide to the process of writing and explain what your child will be learning and practising in the classroom in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Year group	Writing expectations in the National Curriculum
Reception	<p>Children use their phonics knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelled correctly and others are phonetically plausible.</p>
Y1	<p>Composition. Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write sentences by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • saying out loud what they are going to write about • composing a sentence orally before writing it • sequencing sentences to form short narratives • re-reading what they have written to check that it makes sense. • Discuss what they have written with the teacher or other pupils • Read their writing out loud clearly enough to be heard by their peers and the teacher.
Y2	<p>Composition. Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional) • writing about real events • writing poetry • writing for different purposes. • Consider what they are going to write before beginning by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning or saying out loud what they are going to write • writing down ideas and/or key words, including new vocabulary • encapsulating what they want to say, sentence by sentence. • Make simple additions, revisions and corrections to their own writing by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluating their writing with the teacher / other pupils • re-reading to check that their writing makes sense and that verbs to indicate time are used correctly and consistently, including verbs in the continuous form • proof-reading to check for errors in spelling, grammar.

Specific spelling, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and handwriting skills are also taught in each year group.

Story idea 1: The small person

Dear Big Person,

My name is Teg and I am writing to you because you seem like a kind Big Person and I really need some help.

Little People do not normally contact Big People but I am so far from home I did not know what else to do.

I live very far away from here in the Wild Wood. I have family and friends in the Wood and we all live there very far from the Big People and it is safe because no-one ever really comes there.

Last week I did something very silly. I wandered away from home and ended up here where you live. I won't bore you with my adventures getting here (though they were quite exciting!). I never meant to leave Wild Wood, I only stepped out to see what it was like outside!

Now I need to get home but I am very lost and really do not want to go through all that dangerous journey again. Please can you meet me outside and take me home? I am only three of your centimetres tall so be careful not to step on me!

From Teg



1 Talk about Teg's adventures. How did she end up so far from home?

Are you going to reply to Teg's letter?

What adventures do you think Teg had on the way to your house and how did she end up so far from home?

2 What would everything look like if you were that small?

What would be dangerous?



3

Make a map of Teg's journey from the Wild Wood to your house.

4

BRILLIANT STORY WORDS

Can you think of five words that mean small and five words that mean big to use in your story? It is always better to use a variety of words in your writing as it makes it much more interesting to read.

SMALL

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

BIG

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Dear Teg,

from



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *The Elves and the Shoemaker* (traditional tale); *The Tale of Two Bad Mice* by Beatrix Potter; *Brambly Hedge* by Jill Barklem; *The Little Gardener* by Emily Hughes.

Books for older readers *Stuart Little* by E. B. White; *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton; *Tom Thumb* (traditional tale); *The Indian in the Cupboard* by Lynne Reid Banks; *Mrs Pepperpot* by Alf Proysen; *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift.



Story idea 2: The disastrous haircut

1 Most children have had their hair cut at some point, either by their parents or at the hairdressers'. What would a disastrous haircut look like and what might be the consequences of having one?



2

Who had the haircut?



Who did the haircut?

3 Ask an adult to take you to visit your local barber or hairdresser; watch what they are doing and take notes. What could go wrong when they are cutting hair?



Will your story start before or after the haircut?

Will it be the colour or style that is the problem?

Is your hair or someone else's 'disastrous'?

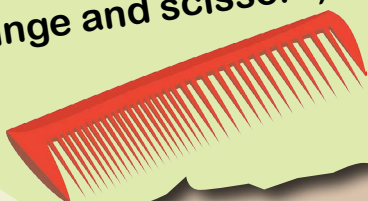
Will the problem be remedied or will it take time to grow out?

Will the disaster be real or magical?



5 WORDS TO USE:

Find some technical words that will be useful (like trim, fringe and scissors).



1)

2)

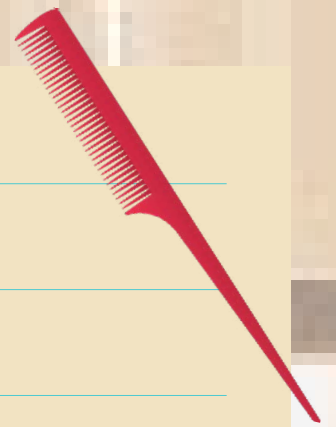
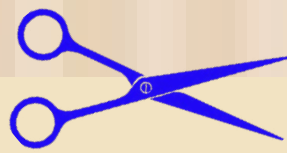
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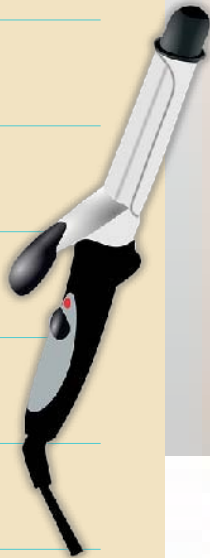
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COMB



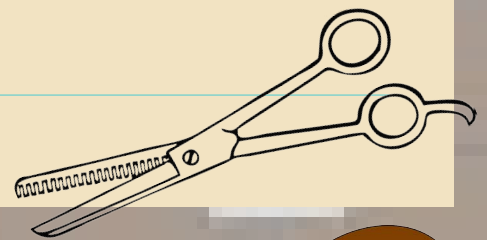
HAIRDRYER

FRINGE



TRIM

SCISSORS



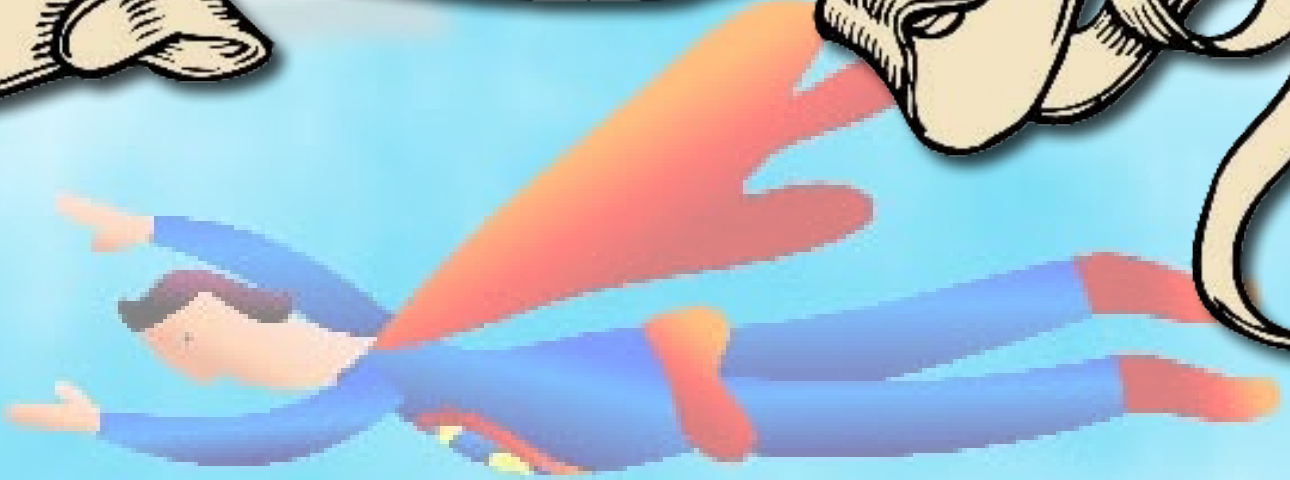
BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *Rapunzel* (traditional tale); *The Fairy Tale Hairdresser* by Abie Longstaff; *Ellie's Bad Hair Day* by Jerome Keane; *Shampoozel* by Lawrence Anholt.

Books for older readers *Anne of Green Gables* by L M Montgomery; *Medusa* (Greek mythology); *Melisande* by E. Nesbit.



Story idea 3: My teacher is a superhero



1

Think about your teacher,
What do they look like?



Can you describe them
to someone else?



What clothes do
they wear?



What are their
'catchphrases'?





2

Now imagine your teacher is really a superhero in their spare time. What sort of superhero would they be?

A large, central starburst shape with a jagged, multi-colored border in shades of yellow, green, and pink. The center of the starburst is a light beige color and contains five horizontal lines for writing.

3

WORDS TO USE:

Can you think of five really good adjectives to describe your teacher?

A white rectangular box with a black border, positioned above a stylized orange and yellow flame graphic.A white rectangular box with a black border, positioned above a stylized orange and yellow flame graphic.A white rectangular box with a black border, positioned above a stylized orange and yellow flame graphic.A white rectangular box with a black border, positioned above a stylized orange and yellow flame graphic.A white rectangular box with a black border, positioned above a stylized orange and yellow flame graphic.

4 Your story could be about something that happens to your teacher when they are being a superhero or about what might happen if you and your friends ever found out the truth.

BANG!



SPLAT



POW!

BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *Supermoo* by Babette Cole; *Charlie's Superhero Underpants* by Paul Bright; *My Mum Has X-Ray Vision* by Angela McCallister; *Traction Man Is Here* by Mini Grey; *Superworm* by Julia Donaldson.

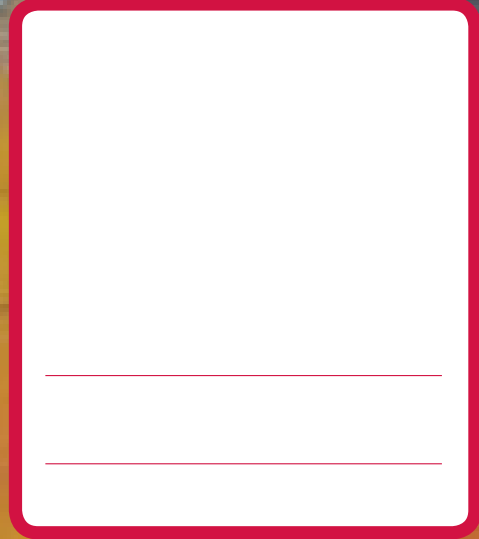
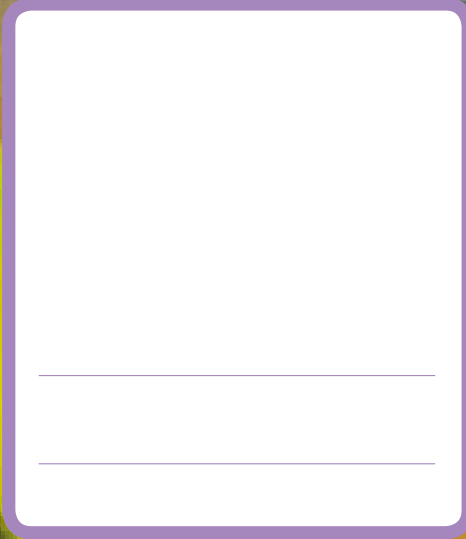
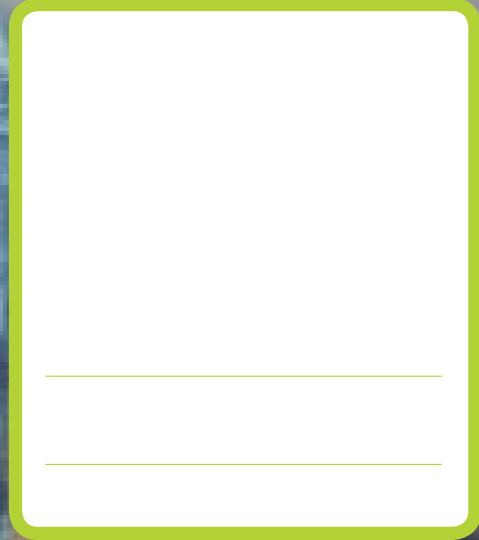
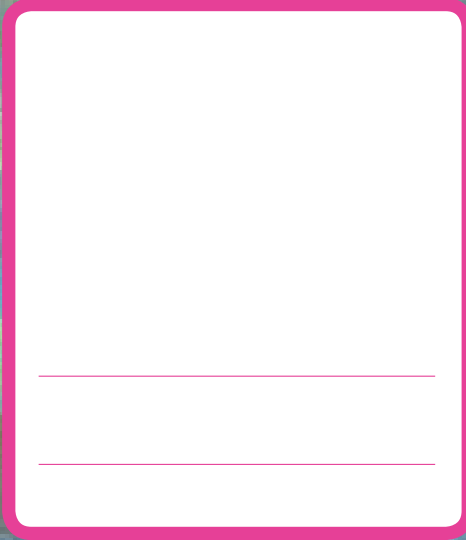
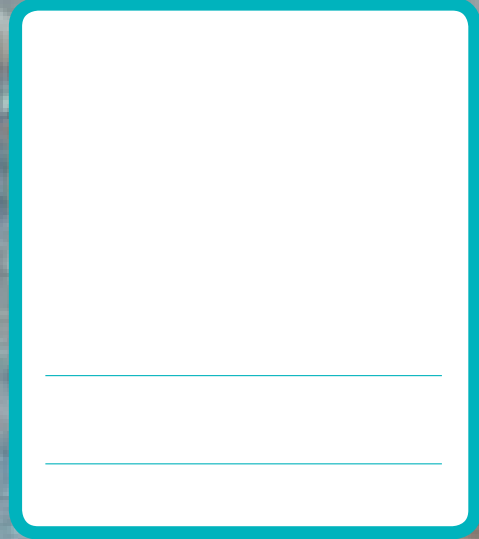
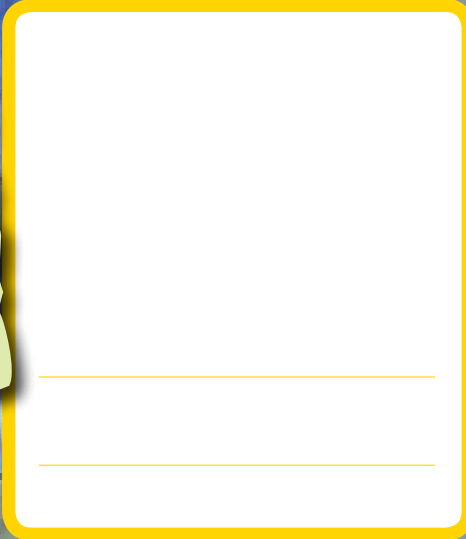
Books for older readers *My Brother is a Superhero* by David Solomons; *Captain Awesome* by Stan Kirby; *Supercat* by Jeanne Willis; *The Adventures of Jo Schmo* by Greg Trine; *The Adventures of Captain Underpants* by Dave Pilkey.





Story idea 4: A dragon for a pet

1 What do pets need? Think of the things an ordinary pet would need. What would a dragon need? What food might a dragon eat? How might a dragon exercise? What toys might they play with?



2

How did you come to own the dragon (the dragon's origin story)?

Was it from an egg you found?

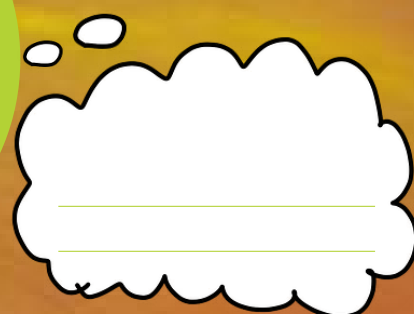
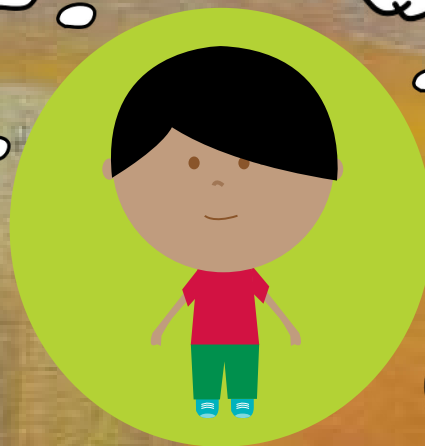
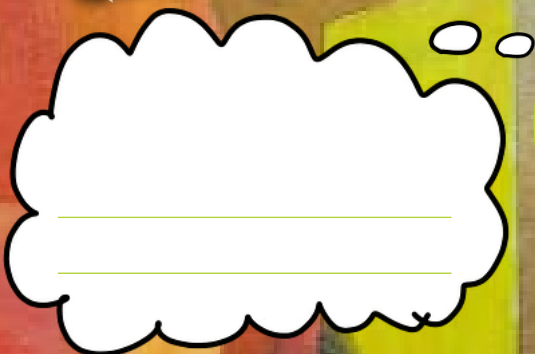
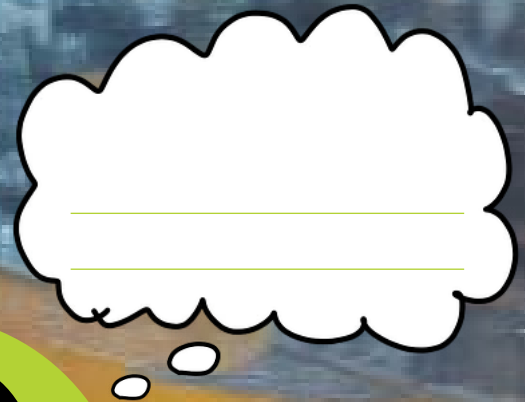
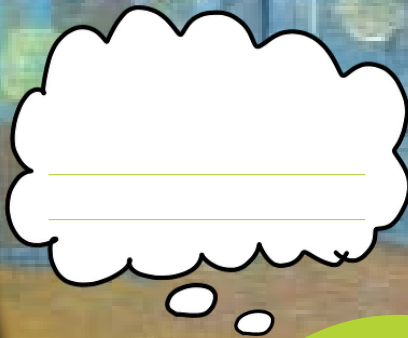
Did you buy it from a pet shop?

Did you find an abandoned baby?



3

What would living in a house with a dragon be like?



Blank yellow rounded rectangle for writing.

Blank pink rounded rectangle with three horizontal lines for writing.

Blank orange rounded rectangle for writing.

Blank teal rounded rectangle for writing.



4

WORDS TO USE:

You need to bring your dragon to life on the page. Your reader needs to be able to see the dragon in their minds. Think of some words to describe your dragon and make sure they are great words, not just everyday ones – after all, this is an extraordinary pet so it needs extraordinary words!

Blank red rounded rectangle with two horizontal lines for writing.

Blank yellow rounded rectangle with two horizontal lines for writing.

5

Your story:
My Pet Dragon



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *The Something* by Rebecca Cobb; *Loveykins* by Quentin Blake; *How to catch a dragon* by Caryl Hart; *The dragon of an ordinary family* by Margaret Mahy; *Puff the Magic Dragon* by Peter Yarrow; *Zog* by Julia Donaldson.

Books for older readers *How to Train Your Dragon* by Cressida Cowell; *The reluctant dragon* by Kenneth Grahame; *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini; *The Brothers Lionheart* by Astrid Lindgren; *The Book of Dragons* by E. Nesbit; *Albert the Dragon and the Centaur* by Rosemary Weir.



Story idea 5: Meeting an alien

1

Can you draw your alien? What does it look like and where has it come from?



Name: _____

Planet of origin: _____

Q

2

The alien has landed in your back garden. Find a friend or an adult to pretend to be the alien and think of questions to ask them.

Q

Q

Q

3 WORDS TO USE:

Can you choose five words or phrases to describe how the alien moves or talks ('like a wobbly jelly')?

1) _____

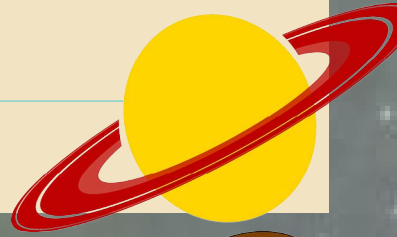
2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

4 The alien is in your garden and you have spoken to it... but what is going to happen next?



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *But Martin!* by June Counsel; *Why?* by Lindsay Camp; *Here Come the Aliens!* by Colin McNaughton; *Aliens Love Underpants* by Claire Freedman; *The Way Back Home* by Oliver Jeffers; *Man on the moon* by Simon Bartram; *Dr Xargle's book of Earthlets* by Jeanne Willis

Books for older readers *Astrosaurs* by Steve Cole; *The Adventures of Captain Underpants* by Dave Pilkey; *The Little Prince* by Antoine De Saint-Exupery.

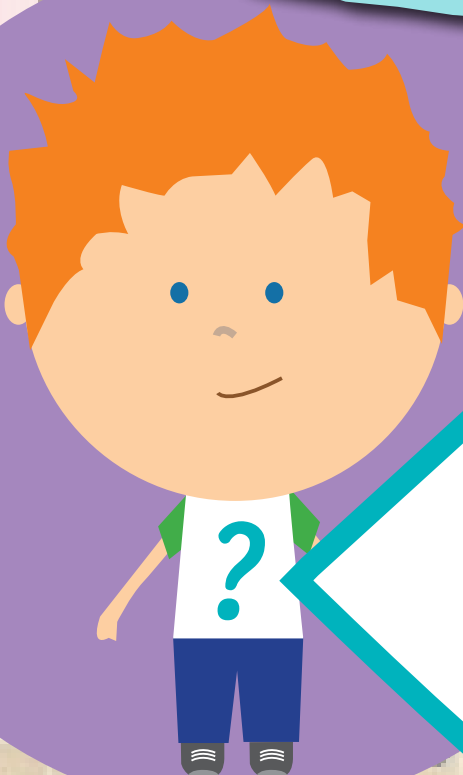


Story idea 6: The magic food

1
What
is your
favourite
food?

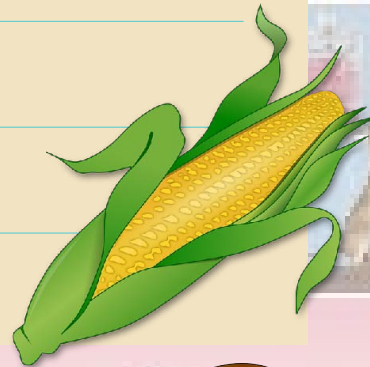
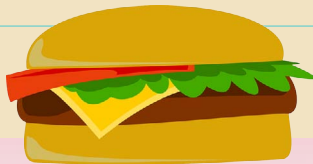
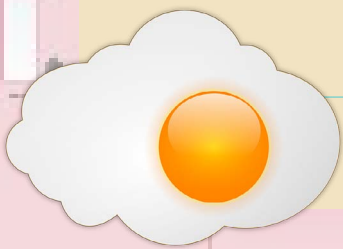
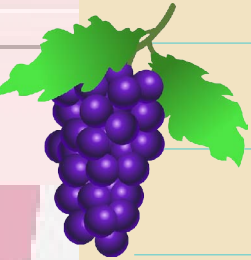
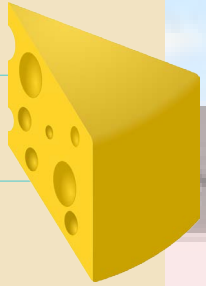
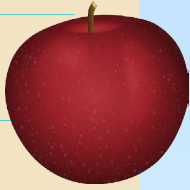
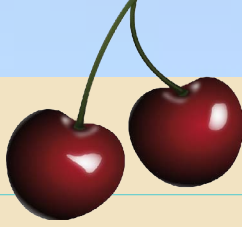
2
What is it
like to eat
that food?

3
One day your favourite food
does something very strange
and magical when you eat it...



4

Write the story of the day you eat the magic food.



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *Cloudy with a chance of meatballs* by Judi Barrett; *Strega Nona* by Tomie de Paulo; *The Magic Porridge Pot* (traditional tale); *In the Night Kitchen* by Maurice Sendak.

Books for older readers *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl; *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl.



Story idea 7: Into the fairy tale

1
Think of a fairy tale you know very well, such as Goldilocks, Sleeping Beauty or The Three Billy Goats Gruff.

2 What are the main events in the story you have chosen?

Beginning

Middle

End

Blank writing area for the beginning of the story.

Blank writing area for the middle of the story.

Blank writing area for the end of the story.

3

Imagine walking into that story. At which point in the story will you appear and what is going to happen?

Lined writing area for student response.

4 WORDS TO USE:

Think of some useful connectives, (more exciting than just 'and then'). For example...

1)

next

2)

finally

3)

4)

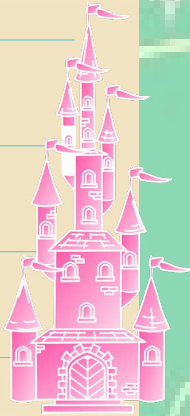
5)

6)

7)

8)

5 Write the story from the point at which you turn up. What do you see? What will happen next? How might you being there change events? (For example, would you warn the three little pigs about the wolf?)



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Visit the library and borrow lots of different versions of the story you have chosen. How do they differ?

Story idea 8: Humpty in the house

1 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall,
All the King's horses and all the
King's men,
Couldn't put Humpty together again.'

Did you know that Humpty Dumpty
was supposed to be an egg?
Draw a picture of what you
think he looked like.

2 One day Humpty Dumpty
comes to your house to play
with you. Think of all the
problems there might be with
a large, accident-prone egg
in your house. What are the
dangers for Humpty?

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

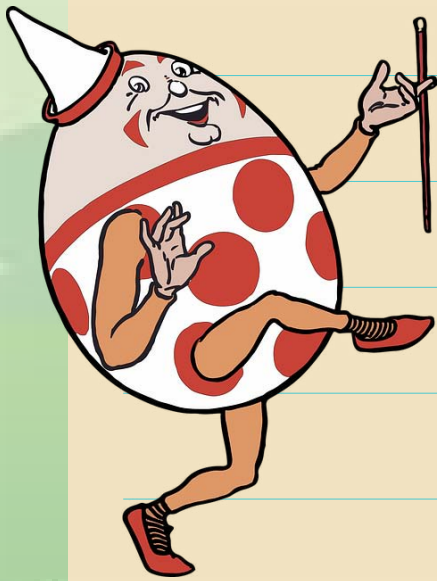
6)

**3 WORDS
TO USE:**

Think of some words to
describe how dangerous
life is for poor old
Humpty Dumpty. You
could get a real egg and
use that to help you
think of good words.

4

Write the story of the day Humpty Dumpty came to play at your house. Will he be okay by the end of your story?



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Most nursery rhyme books include Humpty Dumpty in them and have some amazing illustrations. Also read the sequel to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll, which features Humpty Dumpty.

Story idea 9: It was a dark and stormy night...

1 Imagine a thunderstorm on a very dark night. Tell someone what it is like! How do you feel when the lightning flashes and the thunder crashes? Ask an adult to watch some videos of thunderstorms online with you to remind you of what they are like.

Blank writing area with horizontal lines.

2 Something is going to happen on that dark and stormy night. It might be good or it might be a bit scary! What is going to happen?

Blank writing area with horizontal lines.

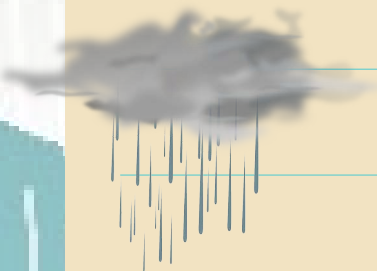
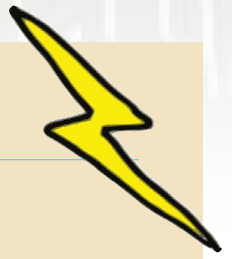
3 WORDS TO USE:

Could you use onomatopoeic words to describe storm sounds? Onomatopoeia is a word that names a sound and sounds like that sound (boom, pop, crack, rip).

Four blank boxes for writing words.

4

Write about what happens on the dark and stormy night. The important bit of this story is the build-up to the main event. Start by describing the night and how you are feeling and then explain what happens...



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *A Dark, Dark Tale* by Ruth Brown; *It was a dark and stormy night* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg.

Books for older readers *Clockwork* by Philip Pullman (warning: very scary book!).

Story idea 10: Matilda the duck

1

Matilda is a duck.
She is a rather
exceptional duck.

Where does
she live?

On a pond
in a park?

And what makes
her exceptional?

On a lake?

In a farm?

2

What does
Matilda look
like?

3

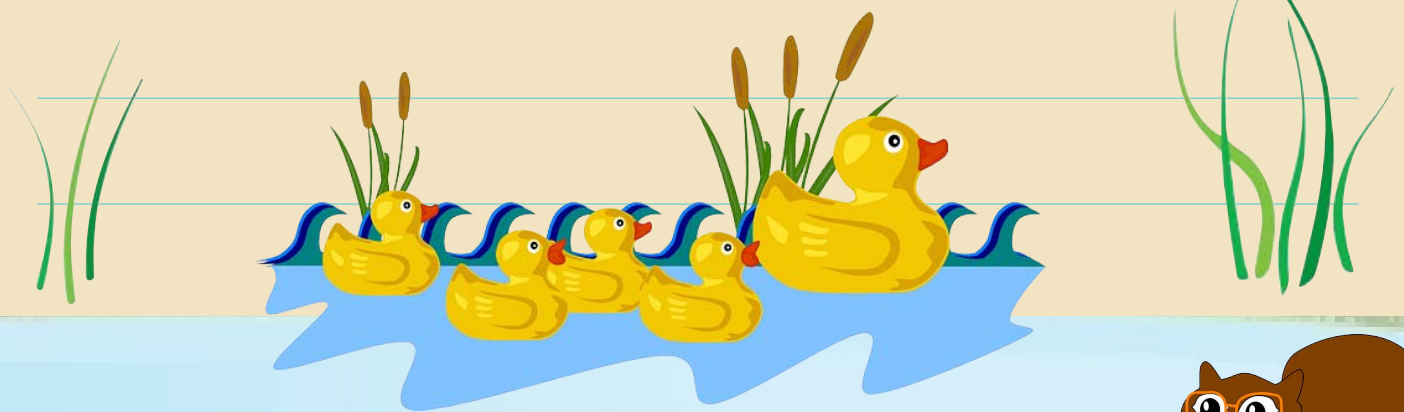
Plotting the story: tell someone your
story plan before you write it down.

Beginning

Middle

End

4 The
Amazing
Story of
Matilda
the Duck.



BOOKS TO BORROW IDEAS FROM:

Picture books *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck* by Beatrix Potter; *Come on, Daisy!* by Jane Simmons; *10 Little Rubber Ducks* by Eric Carle; *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen; *Farmer Duck* by Martin Waddell; *Fix-It Duck* by Jez Alborough.

Books for older readers *The Magic Finger* by Roald Dahl.

