Middle Primary Book 1

Written by
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Introduction

Story-writing Scaffolds Middle Primary Book 1 is intended for use in schools to help teach students how to write effective short stories in a variety of different formats or genres. It improves students’ ability to organise their writing so that it has purpose by familiarising them with a system of planning stories which they can apply to any title. As they work through the units, the students assemble a portfolio of stories containing genre-specific vocabulary and writing features.

Each unit also includes information and activities on at least one sentence-level feature. Thus the book also enhances the students’ knowledge of grammar, punctuation and text style.

How to Use the Program

1. After examining examples of stories in the target genre by established writers, read and discuss the model story with the students, using the notes in the margin to highlight the examples of the unit’s grammatical teaching point and specific writing features.

2. Next, read through and explain the ‘Understanding the grammar and punctuation’ section of the unit. The students can complete the activities orally together or independently on paper.

3. Then explain the ‘Helpful hints’ and ‘Writing features’ sections of the unit to the students.

4. Read through the story scaffolds with the students. Then give them the differentiated word banks and ask them to record their own vocabulary suggestions in the space provided.

The Program Contains:

- notes for teachers on the genres and text formats
- illustrated copies of model stories together with teaching notes
- guidance on how to develop specific grammar skills in students’ writing
- photocopiable activity sheets to reinforce the grammar
- guidance on how to help students write in the particular genre
- notes and tips for the students on writing stories
- differentiated story scaffolds which enable students to choose the course of the story they are about to write
- vocabulary banks for students to use and add to.

The six stages of story scaffolding correspond to the four stages of a narrative as:

Stage 1 – Development of characters and Stage 4 – Development of a problem or a complication
Stage 2 – time and place setting in the Orientation
Stage 3 – Resolution: the problem is solved
Stage 6 – Coda or conclusion
For the Teacher

The activities in each unit, from reading the model story to composing a story using the scaffolds, can be used in shared or guided time, with the students working collaboratively or individually.

Linking Student Achievement to Quality Teaching

Student achievement in schools is assessed by teachers in terms of outcomes. These outcomes are broad statements which encompass a wide range of learning experiences and content knowledge.

The outcomes expressed in this book aim to enhance overall student outcomes in the area of writing by providing: high levels of knowledge and understanding of the topics and genres; explicit criteria and directions for students and teachers; and an underpinning significance of the units to students by involving cultural and personal background knowledge as well as connections to the real world.

When using these units, it is anticipated that teachers will involve students in high levels of metalanguage use: exploring the connection between words and sentences, comparing text samples, and examining how specific vocabulary and language features were used to construct a particular text.

The outcomes of these units will also be improved when students are provided with various opportunities to express and communicate their understanding of the topic. This communication may be presented in oral or written form, where students will be required to elaborate, clarify, explain, respond, sustain an argument or opinion or draw conclusions in regard to the model text, their own or their peers’.

The outcomes expressed in this book can be categorised into two broad bands of learning:

1. The Process of Writing:
   - Plans, writes and edits texts about familiar topics using a range of text types and genres.
   - Experiments with strategies for reviewing and revising their own writing.
   - Discuss how texts are adjusted to make allowances for intended audience and purpose.

2. The Structures and Features of Writing:
   - Experiments with the organisational and structural features of a narrative.
   - Produces texts with effective sentence structures (mixture of simple, compound and complex).
   - Uses effective and appropriate punctuation (including direct speech) and paragraphs.
   - Effectively controls grammatical features of narratives such as pronouns, time connectives and conjunctions, verb groups, collective nouns and noun groups and past tense.
The Mainstream ESL Student

By mainstream, this book is referring to students from a Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) who have been identified as being either a Phase 2 or a Phase 3 learner. This corresponds to Writing Level 4 / 5 in the ESL Scales. It should be noted that some ESL students may require additional time and a higher level of direct and focused teaching to achieve mainstream syllabus outcomes.

The units of work in this book aim to develop ESL students’ pragmatic competence (appropriately use language for different purposes and audiences); organisational competence (control the structural and grammatical features of oral and written language); and strategic competence (responding to and negotiating the meanings of spoken and written texts).

It is important to remember to recognise and value ESL students’ own cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Harness their experiences and use these to both contrast and complement the experiences of other members of your class. Use the genres of school life, family life and cultural stories to bridge the gaps between their first language background and English, as well as to highlight the cultural diversity of the wider Australian community. Continue to draw on their knowledge of their first language and use it to help ESL learners access the meanings, patterns and sounds of language in English.

The scaffolds, teaching tips and grammar notes as presented in this book are ideal for providing explicit and structured learning activities which are essential tools for meeting and supporting the needs of ESL learners.

When using these units of work with ESL students, here are some helpful hints.

- A lot of discussion is required before embarking upon the writing (even before the planning stage). Do not assume that the students have the background knowledge or experiences that you may expect.
- Joint construct word banks of topic words, synonyms, verbs (action, thinking, saying), time connectives and conjunction words. Limit the amount of new vocabulary introduced in each session and allow time to review new vocabulary in different contexts.
- Highlight past tense used in narratives: -ed endings and irregular verb forms.
- Examine and discuss pronoun referencing through a text as ESL students often need assistance tracking the subject.
## Middle primary book 1 unit overview

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<th>UNIT / GENRE</th>
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In a mystery story, the author arouses the curiosity of the reader by withholding a piece of key information until the denouement (the unravelling).

The author ‘hooks’ the reader by raising questions as to why or how a particular event has occurred. The author may create uncertainty about the motives, identity or actions of a particular character. The tension mounts as the plot moves towards an exciting climax. This could be a moment when the main character gains a sudden insight and understanding of the mystery, or ‘twist’ – something unexpected and surprising.

Mystery stories may be set in unfamiliar, isolated locations, so that the characters seem to be in close confinement with their problems. Alternatively, the setting may be very unremarkable, providing a contrast which highlights the bizarre nature of the events. The reader is often left unsure as to whether the strange events are due to supernatural forces or the vivid imagination of the characters.

The characters in mystery stories need to be intriguing and a little mystifying themselves. Making them unconventional helps to create a surprise for the reader at the unravelling of the mystery – who would suspect a dear old lady to be the murderer, for example?

Mystery stories contain certain elements that help build up the tension in the story. Hints are dropped to the reader that something is not quite right, expressive adjectives are used to create a mysterious atmosphere and the use of short phrases and sentences can create a sense of urgency that encourages the reader to move swiftly on to the next development in the plot.

Mysteries are created to spook us a little and to set us thinking about the world around us – is it really as it seems?

Examples of mystery stories

*Mystery guest at the house of fun* by Job Blake (Hodder Children’s Books, 2006)

*The Secret Seven Series* by Enid Blyton (Galaxy, 1997)

*Pearlie and the lost handbag* by Wendy Harmer (Random House, 2005)

*Ghost Dog* by Macia Thornton Jones & Debbie Dadey (Scholastic, 2001)

*Faster than Lightning* by Michael Panckridge & Pam Harvey (Angus & Robertson, 2006)

*Lizzie McGuire Mysteries series* (Egmont, 2004)

*Fire Lion* by Margaret McAllister (Oxford University Press, 2002)

*The Young Oxford Book of Mystery Stories* by Dennis Hamley (Oxford University Press, 2003)

Jamie peered through the curtains at the house next door.

“Come away from there, Jamie. What on earth are you doing?”

“It’s that new bloke next door; he’s really weird,” replied Jamie, screwing up his face.

“What do you mean weird? He’s only just moved in! There hasn’t been time to discover whether he’s weird or not,” laughed Jamie’s Mum.

“I just know he’s up to no good. Every time I see him outside he quickly runs inside and he never speaks to anyone.”

“Maybe he’s just shy. It takes a while to settle into a new neighbourhood, you know.”

“Mmm,” said Jamie. “I still think he’s weird!”

Jamie raced outside and grabbed his bike. He was keen to get out into the fresh air and burn up some of his energy. He loved riding his bike. He liked the feel of the wind on his face and the freedom it gave him to go wherever he wanted. He’d had the bike for over a year now. It had been handed down to him from his older brother who now lived with his Dad in the next suburb. He had wanted a new one, but his Mum had said that now that she and Dad had split up that she couldn’t afford anything new — so he’d had to make do. He didn’t really mind the bike being secondhand; he just wished it had a better paint job and new handlebars. But he wasn’t worrying about this now as he sped off down the street to see his friend, Max.

Later that afternoon, as he was riding home, he saw his new neighbour again. He was dragging a huge box up the driveway into his front door. Jamie stopped and offered to help but the man looked very alarmed and quickly stammered that he could manage on his own and then raced inside and slammed the front door.

“I knew he was weird,” thought Jamie as he leaned his bike inside the garage door and ran inside his house.

The next day, Saturday, Jamie awoke bright and early. He raced downstairs and quickly gulped down his breakfast before heading out the door. He had planned a long bike ride down to the river with Max and he was keen to get started. Suddenly he came to an abrupt halt. He stood staring at the place where he had left his bike the night before. It had gone! Jamie’s heart began
to race. He was confused.

"Where’s the bike? I always leave it there! Did Mum put it away for some reason?"

Jamie opened the garage door and looked inside. No bike. He ran around to the garden shed. No bike. He even went back inside to look in the hallway. No bike. He started to panic. His Mum had always told him that someone would take it one day if he left it outside. Perhaps she was right. Perhaps it had been stolen!

Jamie raced upstairs to wake his Mum.

"Mum, Mum, my bike’s been stolen! Quick, come and look!"

Jamie’s Mum slowly sat up in bed and tried to listen to what he was saying. She eventually seemed to understand what the problem was but she didn’t seem overly concerned.

“It’ll turn up somewhere. Perhaps someone has borrowed it.”

Jamie turned away feeling even more confused.

“Who would borrow it?” he thought as he ran downstairs to phone Max.

Jamie had a thoroughly miserable day. He rang Max and all his other friends but no-one knew a thing. Max came over in the afternoon and helped him scour the neighbourhood but they found nothing. Jamie’s Mum told him not to worry. She felt absolutely sure that it would turn up somewhere. Meanwhile all Jamie and Max could do was flop in front of the TV.

Suddenly Jamie jumped up and shouted, “Look! Come and take a look Max!”

Max quickly jumped up and ran to the window where Jamie was now standing. Together they watched as the new neighbour carried a bike-shaped object covered in a blanket from his car into his garage. He looked around very carefully before he did so as if he was making sure no-one could see him.

“I bet that’s my bike!” yelled Jamie furiously. “I told you this guy was up to no good didn’t I? I just knew it was him!”

And before Max could stop him, he had raced out the front and was knocking on the door of his neighbour. It took ages for the man to answer so Jamie’s temper was really up by the time he opened the door.

“Have you stolen my bike?” he accused as soon as the man appeared.
“I beg your pardon, young man! What on earth are you talking about?”

“We saw you carrying a bike into your garage just now and mine’s been stolen so I’m wondering if it’s my bike you’ve got in there,” stammered Jamie.

“I don’t know what on earth you’re talking about. Now go away before I call the police — accusing me of things I haven’t done — what a nerve!” he stated and then slammed the door.

Jamie was upset and very confused again. Perhaps it wasn’t a bike under the blanket after all. Perhaps he shouldn’t have gone racing over next door accusing the man when he had no evidence.

“That’s it!” thought Jamie. “Max and I will have to get some evidence!”

So over the next few days the two boys spent every available hour watching the new neighbour’s house. On Tuesday evening they heard banging coming from the neighbour’s garage. Jamie grabbed his camera and they slowly crept up to the garage window and peered inside. There, half covered by the blanket, they could see the back wheel of a bike.

“I knew it was a bike!” whispered Jamie. “I’ll just take a photo and then we can take it to the police.”

As the camera flash went off, the neighbour looked up and saw the boys at the window. He was very angry and started yelling at them so Jamie and Max quickly ran back home.

An hour later there was a knock at the door. Jamie’s Mum opened it and stood talking to someone for a long time.

“It’ll be him next door,” whispered Max. “We shouldn’t have taken that photo.”

Suddenly Jamie’s mother came into the room. “Jamie, can you come here for a moment please?”

“Uh! Oh! You’re in big trouble now,” said Max as he slid further into the sofa.

“SURPRISE!” said lots of voices as Jamie entered the kitchen.

There in front of him was his bike, surrounded by his Dad, his older brother, his Mum AND the man from next door! What on earth was going on?

“My bike! At least I think it’s my bike.”
Jamie's Mum stepped forward.

"Your Dad wanted to surprise you. He took your bike and had it resprayed and fixed up. He asked Mr Mason, here, to do it for him — he repairs bikes, you know. Mr Mason tried to hide your bike — that's why he seemed to be acting so strange towards you! It all seemed such a great idea at the time but I'm afraid it's caused more trouble than we thought. I wanted to tell you that it hadn't been stolen but that would have spoiled the surprise. I didn't know you'd been spying on Mr Mason!"

Jamie was amazed, ashamed and surprised all at the same time. He absolutely loved his new-look bike. He was really pleased that his Dad and brother had done this for him but he was ashamed at the way he had acted towards Mr Mason. He resolved there and then to not jump to conclusions so quickly any more!
The New Neighbour

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Understanding the grammar and punctuation

**Commas**

Commas are used to make a pause in a sentence. They help us better understand the meaning of a sentence.

*There, half covered by the blanket, they could see the back wheel of a bike.*

**Pronouns**

Pronouns act in place of nouns in a sentence.

*Jamie peered through the curtains at the house next door.*

can become:

*He peered through the curtains at the house next door.*

**Pronouns**

Pronouns indicate the speaker (first person), the person spoken to (second person) and the person, place or thing spoken about (third person).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First person</th>
<th>Second person</th>
<th>Third person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
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<td>Feminine</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Commas**

Commas are used to separate items in a list and to separate speech from narrative.

*There in front of him was his bike, surrounded by his dad, his older brother, his mum AND the man from next door!*

*“It’ll be him next door,” whispered Max.*
Pronouns

Rewrite each sentence below, replacing the underlined noun(s) with a pronoun. Choose from words in the box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>it</th>
<th>she</th>
<th>his</th>
<th>they</th>
<th>he</th>
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</table>

1. Jamie peered through the curtain.

   ____________________________________________

2. The two boys went for a ride on their bikes.

   ____________________________________________

3. Jamie’s Mum did not look very worried.

   ____________________________________________

4. Jamie did not know who had taken the bike.

   ____________________________________________

5. The neighbour had repaired Jamie’s bike.

   ____________________________________________

Circle all the nouns in the passage below that could be replaced by the pronoun ‘it’.

Jamie leaned the bike up against the garage wall. He always kept the bike there. In the morning, Jamie discovered that the bike had been taken. He looked everywhere for the bike. He did not understand what had happened to the bike. He asked his mother if she knew where the bike had gone but she did not know. Max helped Jamie look for the bike. Jamie finally found out that his Dad had taken the bike to repair the bike.
Commas

The commas in the sentences below are incorrect. Rewrite each sentence, putting the commas in the correct places.

1. *The boy bought a, book a bag of lollies and a drink.*
   
   **The boy bought a book, a bag of lollies and a drink.**

2. “*We are going to the movies next week*” said, Rita.
   
   _____________________________________________________________

3. *The lion who, was big and strong, chased after the young deer.*
   
   _____________________________________________________________

4. *My sister has a guinea-pig, a budgie four, rabbits and some goldfish.*
   
   _____________________________________________________________

5. *Last Friday we, went to town to see my auntie.*
   
   _____________________________________________________________

Put commas into the sentences below so they make better sense.

1. *Imran who was a very fast runner chased after the thief.*

2. *The baker baked some buns bread rolls muffins and sponge cakes for his new customer.*

3. *Maria who was only six years old won the painting competition.*

4. “*I know what we can do*” said Mike. “*We’ll go to Tom’s house.*”

5. *Before she knew what had happened the driver had driven off.*
Helpful hints
for writing a mystery story

✦ Drop hints to the reader that something strange or unusual might happen. For example:

“I just know he’s up to no good…”

John just knew that today was not going to be an ordinary day.

Terri couldn’t explain why she felt so strange.

✦ Include questions in the story that will make the reader start to wonder why certain things are happening.

“Where’s the bike...Did Mum put it away for some reason?”

“Who would borrow it?”

✦ Use some short sentences. This gives the reader a sense of panic.

Jamie opened the garage door and looked inside. No bike. He ran around to the garden shed. No bike. He even went back inside to look in the hallway. No bike. He started to panic.

✦ Use words in your story that help to create mystery, such as:

weird, strange, up to no good, couldn’t work out why, making sure no-one could see him

✦ Try not to let the reader know what is happening straight away. Write sentences that make the reader wonder what is going to happen next.

An hour later there was a knock at the door. Jamie’s Mum opened it and stood talking to someone for a long time.

“It’ll be him next door,” whispered Max.

Suddenly Jamie’s mother came into the room. “Jamie, can you come here for a moment please?”

“Uh! Oh! You’re in big trouble now,” said Max as he slid further into the sofa.

✦ Don’t let the reader know the answer to the mystery up until the very end of the story – keep them guessing!
Mystery story
Scaffold 1

You are going to write a mystery story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

**Stage One**

Choose the characters for your story.

a) Two children who went to stay with their aunt and uncle who owned a very old house.

b) Two children and their parents who moved into an old house that used to be owned by an old friend.

**Stage Two**

Start your story with a good beginning.

a) They drove for what seemed like hours before they finally arrived at the house. It looked very dark and gloomy from the outside but they could see a bright light shining from a window upstairs.

b) The children were really excited about seeing the house. They had heard so much about it that they just couldn’t wait to explore inside it at last.

**Stage Three**

Set the scene for the story.

The children decide to explore the house.

a) They find an old suitcase in the attic that looks like it hasn’t been opened for years and years. They spend ages trying to open it and finally succeed.

b) They find a huge old box hidden in the shed. It is covered with cobwebs and looks like it hasn’t been opened for years. They decide to open the box.
Give the characters a problem.

Inside they find:

a) An old letter that says that whoever reads the letter will be haunted by a ghost forever! That night the children are kept awake by strange sounds all through the night.

b) Some old-fashioned children’s clothing. When they dress up in them and show the adults, the adults behave very strangely and tell them to quickly return the clothes.

Say how the problem is solved.

a) The children discover the next night that the sounds are just noises made by the old house creaking and by the two cats who love to play in the house at night. They show the letter to the adults who laugh and say it was from their grandfather who loved to play tricks on people.

b) The children discover a photograph of two children dressed in the old clothes. When they show it to the adults they tell them the sad story of how the children in the photo both drowned many years ago. They explain that they found it very upsetting to see them dressed up in the children’s clothes.

Say what happens in the end.

a) The children decide they love living in an old house, creaks and all! So they plan to explore more of the house to see what other strange things they can find.

b) The characters decide to give the clothes and photo to a local museum who are really pleased to have them. This helps everyone not to feel so sad any more.
Mystery story
Vocabulary bank 1

adults
attic
aunt

children
clothes
cobwebs
creaking
decide
discover
drowned

explore
friend

• ghost
• gloomy
• grandfather
• haunted
• hidden
• house
• laugh
• letter
• night
• noises
• museum
• old-fashioned
• open
• parents
• photograph
• strange
• strangely
• succeed
• suitcase
• tricks
• uncle
• upstairs

My own words
Mystery story
Scaffold 2

You are going to write a mystery story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage, or use your own ideas.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your story.

a) Characters:
   Three girls who are best friends at school
   Mrs King, their class teacher
   Mrs Featherington, the Principal

b) Characters:
   Three boys who are best friends and who play
   in the same soccer team
   Mr Giles, their coach
   Mr Jamieson, the soccer club manager

Stage Two

Begin with a good opening sentence and set the scene.

a) The girls raced into the classroom, eager to begin
   their art lesson.

b) Mr Giles, the soccer coach, entered the change room
   looking very grim.

The scene:

a) The school art club was entering an important
   art competition against another school in their area.

b) The soccer team was preparing for a match against
   their strongest rivals.
Stage Three

Give the characters a problem.

Someone discovers that the class’s art materials/the team’s soccer uniforms have gone missing.

a) The three friends end up having an argument because one of them was responsible for locking up the cupboard where the equipment was kept and the others blame him/her for not being careful enough. The person being blamed decides to solve the mystery of the missing things.

b) The three friends decide to become detectives to find out what happened to the missing things.

Stage Four

Say how the problem is solved.

a) The friend(s) set(s) a trap by leaving some more things in the cupboard. They discover that the things have been taken by a boy who has run away from home and has been selling the things at a market to make some money.

b) The friend(s) spies/spy on their local school/soccer club and discover that one child had taken the items and hidden them in the bush nearby. He/she did this so the other school/team would win.

Stage Five

Say how the story ends.

The Principal/club manager rewards the friends for solving the mystery.

a) The boy who has run away apologises for taking the things. He is reunited with his family and joins the art club/soccer team to make new friends.

b) The person who took the items is punished by having to clean the art room/change rooms from floor to ceiling! He/she vows never to do something like this again. The friends’ club/team win the competition.
Mystery story
Vocabulary bank 2

apologise  •  friends  •  player
argument  •  girls  •  preparing
art  •  happened  •  reunited
bush  •  hidden  •  reward
classroom  •  important  •  rivals
classroom  •  important  • 强
coach  •  lesson  •  school
competition  •  manager  •  soccer
cupboard  •  market  •  solve
decides  •  match  •  strongest
detectives  •  materials  •  teacher
eager  •  missing  •  team
equipment  •  money  •  uniforms
family  •  mystery  •  school

My own words
School life stories

Stories about school life often deal with issues such as bullying, friendship, growing up, peer pressure and relationships between staff and students. All this is set against the background of the everyday school routine.

Most stories about school life provide students with settings and scenarios that are immediately recognisable and familiar to the reader (for example, the new student being bullied in *Blabber Mouth*).

Such stories enable the reader to empathise with the characters and appreciate the things the characters are experiencing.

Other school stories, however, use the familiar school setting but introduce characters and situations that are clearly based on fantasy (for example, J K Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*).

These stories enable the reader to let their imagination go wild and to fantasise about what school COULD be like!

Many school stories have the ‘good’ teacher who is understanding and kind as well as the ‘bad’ teacher who takes little interest in the children and is stern and foreboding. The stories usually also contain a character who is a ‘model’ student as well as a character who is always in trouble. Little is known about any of the characters’ lives outside the school environment.

Examples of school life stories

- *Harry Potter series* by J K Rowling (Bloomsbury books 1997-2007)
- *Blabber Mouth* by Morris Gleitzman (Currency Press, 1996)
- *The Demon Headmaster* by Gillian Cross (Oxford University Press, 2001)
- *Little Lunch series* by Danny Katz (Black Dog Books, 2001)
- *Matilda* by Roald Dahl (Puffin Books, 2001)
- *Fourth Grade Rats* by Paul Casale (Scholastic, 1991)

(For advanced readers)

- *Hating Alison Ashley* by Robin Klein (Penguin, 1984)
The New Kid

As Josh walked up to the school gates with his mother, his stomach began to churn.

"What if they don't like me?" he asked. "What if I can't do the work? What if the teacher is really horrible?"

"You'll be fine," replied his mother. "You got on well with everyone at your last school, so why should this be any different?"

"I don't know, I just don't feel very happy about coming here. Do I have to change schools?"

His mother let out a big sigh, but she replied gently, "You know why. We've been through all this, Josh, a hundred times at least. Why are you so upset about it all now?"

"It's scary going to a new school. I just wish I didn't have to keep changing all the time. I wish Dad didn't have to move all over the country all the time."

"I know," agreed Josh's Mum, "it's hard for me too. But let's try and make the most of it, eh? This school looks great. Look at all the playground equipment they've got."

Josh looked towards the playground and saw large groups of children happily playing together. They all seemed friendly enough but for some reason he felt that he just wouldn't fit in this time. He didn't want his mother to leave him here all on his own, even though they had both visited the school last week. What he really wanted to do was turn around and run back home as fast as he could! But of course, he didn't do that. Instead he managed to look as brave as he could when he waved goodbye to his Mum and then he sauntered over to the seating by the door to wait for the bell to ring.

"Hello. What's your name?" asked a tall girl with long, red hair who suddenly seemed to appear from nowhere.

"Josh. What's yours?"

"Well, my Dad calls me Bernadette, but everyone else calls me Bernie. Whose class are you in?"

"Mrs Banks."

"Great, me too!" she enthused.

Then the bell went and there was an almighty scramble for the doors. Bernie raced off ahead of Josh, greeting people as she went, and soon disappeared inside. Josh was left standing all alone trying to remember how to get to Mrs Banks' class.

"You must be Josh Winter. Welcome to St. Joseph's," said a teacher who was standing near the outside doors. "Would you like me to show you the way?"

Josh uttered his thanks and followed the teacher to his new classroom. Everyone turned and stared as he entered the room but Mrs Banks beamed at him with delight.

"Hello, Josh, I'm Mrs Banks. Welcome to class 3B. Paolo will show you where everything is and if you have any questions, just ask. OK?"
Josh sat down with Paolo at his table. Bernie gave him a little wave from across the room.

"Perhaps it won’t be so bad here after all,” he thought.

The morning went smoothly enough and Josh began to feel more relaxed. But at lunch time something happened that made Josh wish that he had never set foot inside the place! He was returning his lunch box to the classroom when he was confronted by Mrs Banks and a sobbing Bernie.

"Josh, can you come here for a minute?” asked Mrs Banks. "Bernie here thinks you may be able to throw some light on her missing watch. She said she showed it to you this morning before school and now she can’t find it. She’s really upset because it was a special gift given to her by her mother before her parents were divorced. Have you seen Bernie’s watch?"

Josh was dumbfounded. Bernie hadn’t shown him a watch. She’d hardly had time to say anything to him before the bell had gone. What was going on here?

"Bernie didn’t show me a watch, Mrs Banks. I think she may have got things mixed up," stammered Josh.

"Liar!” shrieked Bernie. "You said that you didn’t have a watch yourself and that you’d love to have one like mine. I bet you’ve stolen it!"

"Now, now, Bernie, let’s not make any false allegations. There’s obviously been a misunderstanding. Do you mind if we check your bag, Josh, just to make sure?” asked Mrs Banks.

"No, of course not. I haven’t got anything to hide."

Together the three of them went to Josh’s bag and Mrs Banks emptied the contents onto a table and there, underneath his sports gear, was a watch!

"See, I told you he’d taken it!” hissed Bernie. "I knew he’d be trouble as soon as I saw him!"

Mrs Banks picked up the watch. "Do you know how this watch got to be in your bag, Josh?"

Josh felt his face go red. He knew this would make him look guilty but it always happened when he was worried or upset.

"You’ve got to believe me, Mrs Banks, I’ve never seen that watch before. I don’t know how it came to be in my bag."

"Huh, I bet," snapped Bernie. "Fancy stealing someone’s watch on your first day at a new school. Is that why you left the last one?"

"That will be enough, Bernie,” ordered Mrs Banks, taking control. "Leave this to me, we’ll soon have it sorted out."

Mrs Banks told Bernie and Josh to both go outside while she went to speak to the Principal, Mr Morris. Outside, Bernie really got stuck into Josh. She gathered all her friends around her and they began singing loudly, "Josh is a thieeef! Josh is a thieeef!"

Josh was really upset. He certainly wasn’t a thief. He wouldn’t even consider touching anything that wasn’t his. He felt confused but also really angry at Bernie. She had seemed so kind and friendly at first. Why was she doing this to him?

After lunch, Josh was called to Mr Morris’ office.

"Well, young man, you’ve only been here a day and already you’re in trouble. What have you got to say for yourself?"
Josh told Mr Morris about meeting Bernie before school. He explained that he hadn’t taken the watch, indeed he hadn’t even seen it until Mrs Banks had found it in his bag.

Mr Morris looked thoughtfully at Josh. He was a very experienced Principal. He’d had to deal with umpteen cases of children accusing others of things over the years and he had learnt how to tell if someone wasn’t telling the truth. He somehow felt that, although he had only just met Josh, he was telling the truth. Yet again he’d known Bernie since she arrived in the school and she’d never been in any trouble before. What was going on here?

Mr Morris asked Josh to return to class. As he entered the room there was a ripple of whispers and several hostile faces openly stared at him as he walked by. Mrs Banks sent Bernie to Mr Morris’ office and firmly told everyone to get back to their work.

The afternoon seemed to drag on for ages. Bernie returned to class looking very red-eyed and said nothing all afternoon.

At home time, Mr Morris asked both Josh and Bernie to come to his office. Josh was petrified. His stomach felt like it had a huge lump of rock inside it. What was his mother going to say after just one day at his new school?

Mr Morris closed the office door and asked Josh and Bernie to sit down.

“Well, Bernie, I think you agreed earlier that you had something you’d like to say to Josh.”

Bernie looked very sheepish. Her eyes were still red and swollen and she was very pale.

“I’m sorry I lied about you taking my watch,” she stammered. “I planted it in your bag after you went out to lunch. I don’t know really what made me do it. It’s just that I’d seen you move in last week. You had a really nice car and lots of lovely furniture. You seemed really happy with your family. Your Dad and Mum were laughing and joking with you as you helped carry things into the house and I felt really jealous. My Mum and Dad split up ages ago. They were always fighting and arguing. My Dad hasn’t much money and the only thing I ever had that was any good was the watch my Mum gave me before she left. I wanted to hurt you for being so happy. I felt really angry and jealous and when I saw you with your Mum at the beginning of school, I wanted to hurt you in some way. I wanted you to feel as miserable as I was feeling. I’m sorry, I really am. I didn’t plan to get you into so much trouble.”

Josh was astounded. He’d never thought that others would be jealous of him. He was always jealous of other children who didn’t have to move every few years. He thought he was the one who had a miserable life!

Bernie did indeed look really sorry and Josh realised that perhaps they could be friends after all.

Josh’s Mum was at the school gates to meet him.

“Well, how did it go then? Did you make any new friends? I bet it wasn’t as bad as you thought this morning. Am I right?”

“Yes, Mum, it was great. I think I’m really going to enjoy this school. I’ve made a really good friend already!”

In this paragraph the reader learns about Mr Morris’ character and his thoughts on the matter.

Word in italics for emphasis.

The reader learns what the other children think of the new boy.

A new paragraph to the next event in the plot.

A new paragraph to introduce the passing of time.

Dialogue word.

Speech marks only at the beginning and ending — not for each sentence of the long speech.

Italics for emphasis.

Josh protects his new friend by not letting on how the day really went.
The New Kid

As Josh walked up to the school gates with his mother, his stomach began to churn.

“What if they don’t like me?” he asked. "What if I can’t do the work? What if the teacher is really horrible?"

“You’ll be fine,” replied his mother. “You got on well with everyone at your last school, so why should this be any different?”

“I don’t know, I just don’t feel very happy about coming here. Do I have to change schools?”

His mother let out a big sigh, but she replied gently, “You know why. We’ve been through all this, Josh, a hundred times at least. Why are you so upset about it all now?”

“It’s scary going to a new school. I just wish I didn’t have to keep changing all the time. I wish Dad didn’t have to move all over the country all the time.”

“I know,” agreed Josh’s Mum, “it’s hard for me too. But let’s try and make the most of it, eh? This school looks great. Look at all the playground equipment they’ve got.”

Josh looked towards the playground and saw large groups of children happily playing together. They all seemed friendly enough but for some reason he felt that he just wouldn’t fit in this time. He didn’t know why. He didn’t usually feel this way when he came to a new school. So why should he feel different this time? He didn’t want his mother to leave him here all on his own, even though they had both visited the school last week. What he really wanted to do was turn around and run back home as fast as he could! But of course, he didn’t do that. Instead he managed to look as brave as he could when he waved goodbye to his Mum and then he sauntered over to the seating by the door to wait for the bell to ring.
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“Well, my Dad calls me Bernadette, but everyone else calls me Bernie. Whose class are you in?”

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“Yes, Mum, it was great. I think I’m really going to enjoy this school. I’ve made a really good friend already!”
Understanding the grammar and punctuation

Paragraphs

A paragraph is usually a group of sentences about a particular idea. An extended piece of writing is divided up into paragraphs to make it easy for the reader to follow the story. Paragraphs are indicated by either indenting the first line, or by leaving a blank line between each paragraph.

You begin a new paragraph to:
1. write about a new part of the story or indicate the passing of time.
2. write about a new character.
3. show when a different character is speaking.

Question marks

Question marks (?) are used at the end of a sentence that asks a question. Questions usually begin with a question word such as ‘who’, ‘what’, ‘when’, ‘where’, ‘how’ or ‘why’.

“What if they don’t like me?” he asked. “What if I can’t do the work? What if the teacher is really horrible?”

The question mark goes inside the speech marks.

Exclamation marks

Exclamation marks (!) are used at the end of a sentence, phrase or clause to show excitement, surprise, anger, fear or shock. Remember not to overuse them when writing.

“Liar!” shrieked Bernie.

The exclamation mark always goes inside the speech marks.

Inverted commas (speech marks)

Inverted commas (“ ”) are used to show words spoken by a character in direct speech.

“Great, me too!” she enthused.

His mother let out a big sigh, but she replied gently, “You know why. We’ve been through all this, Josh, a hundred times at least.”
Paragraphs

Read these paragraphs. **Match** each paragraph to the correct reason for beginning that paragraph.

*The bell rang for lunch time and everyone made their way towards the hall. Michael and Ranjit were standing outside the classroom door. Suddenly someone banged into Michael and knocked him flying.*

“Hey, what do you think you’re doing?” he asked.

“Oh, sorry, Michael. I didn’t see you there. Paul’s after me,” said a very worried Peter.

Paul then appeared around the corner, running very fast.

“Look out!” he shouted. “I’ve got to catch Peter.”

“Oh no you don’t,” said Mrs Brown as she walked out of her office and stood in front of Paul.

Now write your own paragraph to say what happened next in the story.
Question marks (?) and exclamation marks (!)

Add a question mark or an exclamation mark to complete these sentences.

1. Do you know what we are doing for science this week?
2. Where are we going for our school trip this year?
3. “Who are you” asked the new girl.
4. “Look out” screamed the man.
5. Bang Bang went the drum.
6. “How did you know I was here” asked the boy.

Write a sentence using a question mark and a sentence using an exclamation mark.

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Speech marks

Put in the speech marks and capital letters in these sentences.

1. what if they don’t like me? he asked.
2. come here now! screamed my Dad.
3. i think I’m going to like it here, said Jason.
4. why did you do that? enquired the man.
5. just you wait! yelled Michael.
6. why did you run away? what’s wrong? asked the policeman.
7. i know, agreed Josh’s Mum, it’s hard for me too.
Writing features

Vocabulary for introducing and concluding dialogue

Introduce the students to the wide variety of words that can be used to introduce and conclude dialogue in order to prevent the overuse of the word ‘said’. Build up a class resource of these words by asking the students to look out for them in their reading. Examples of words that can be used include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>added</th>
<th>enquired</th>
<th>nagged</th>
<th>tormented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>affirmed</td>
<td>entreated</td>
<td>noticed</td>
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<td>alleged</td>
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<td>assured</td>
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Point out that sometimes these words can be qualified to add extra meaning to the dialogue. For example:

*His mother let out a big sigh, but she replied gently...*
Helpful hints for writing a school life story

✦ Write about ordinary things that might happen at any school.

✦ Use direct speech in your story to make the characters come alive.

"See, I told you he'd taken it!" hissed Bernie. "I knew he'd be trouble as soon as I saw him!"

✦ When describing the school, use your own school for ideas.

✦ Invent a problem that the 'good' character has to face, such as:
  a) being bullied
  b) losing something valuable
  c) not wanting to do something at school (such as being in the school play)
  d) getting into trouble for something she/he didn't do
  e) having a fight with her/his best friend
  f) not being picked for the school sports team.

✦ School stories sometimes have a kind, helpful teacher as well as a very strict, frightening teacher.

✦ Work out a way to solve the problem.

✦ School stories usually have a 'good' character and a 'bad' character in the story.

✦ Think of a suitable ending – what happens in the end?
School life story
Scaffold 1

You are going to write a school life story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your story.
The story is about a student being bullied at school.

The main character:
a) Michelle — a girl who comes from a very wealthy family.
b) Tom — a boy who is very quiet.

The bully:
a) Sabrina — a girl who is jealous of all the things Michelle has.
b) Tim — a boy who is bigger than others in his class and likes to pick on children who are smaller than he is.

The main character doesn’t want to go to school today but can’t get out of it.

Stage Two

Begin your story with a good opening sentence.
a) Michelle was terrified. She just didn’t know what to do.

b) “What will he do next?” thought Tom as he trudged to school.
Give the characters a problem.

a) Sabrina has told Michelle that if she doesn’t give her twenty dollars today she will get her older brother to hurt Michelle’s lovely new pet kitten.

b) Tom is worried about the awful things that Tim might do to him today. Yesterday he had torn up his science report and Tom had to do it all over again. The day before Tim had hidden his sports gear and Tom’s teacher had stopped him from joining in the games afternoon.

Say how the problem is solved.

a) Michelle finally tells her mother who decides to go and speak to Sabrina’s mother.

b) Tom decides to get even with Tim. He writes a love note to a girl in his class and signs it with Tim’s name. He makes sure the teacher sees him passing the note.

Say how the story ends.

a) Michelle’s and Sabrina’s mothers get on really well. They help the girls to become good friends.

b) Tim gets into trouble for writing the note. Tom gives him a wave from across the room. Tim realises that Tom has stopped being afraid of him so he never bothers him again.
School life story
Vocabulary bank 1

afraid  afternoon  awful
brave  brother  bully
class  corridor
ever
father  friend
hate

• horrible  • jealous  • report
• kitten  • lesson  • lunch time
• money  • morning  • mother
• new  • quiet
• scared  • school  • science
• teacher  • terrified  • trouble
• trudged
• unhappy
• worried

My own words
School life story
Scaffold 2

You are going to write a school life story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below. It contains ideas for 2 different stories. Choose one option from each stage or use your own ideas.

Stage One
Choose the characters for your story.

a) Characters:
   Amanda — a girl who is always in trouble
   Mrs Johnson — the school secretary
   A snake

b) Characters:
   Mr Hepplewaite — a very strange Principal
   Jordan — a boy who is always making up new inventions

Stage Two
Begin with a good opening sentence and set the scene.

a) The school day started just like any other but for Amanda it was to be the worst day of her life.
   The scene:
   Amanda finds a box outside the school.
   She thinks it is for the school fete later that day.
   She takes it into the staffroom.

b) St Peter’s school was unlike any other school in the world.
   The scene:
   Mr Hepplewaite’s office is like a wizard’s den, full of strange potions, books, cages and boxes. He emerges from it with a very determined look on his face.
Give the characters a problem.

a) Mrs Johnson is boiling some milk when Amanda brings the box into the staffroom. In a little while, Mrs Johnson feels something crawling around her ankles. A snake has slithered out of the box! She runs off screaming. The milk boils dry. Smoke fills the room. The fire sprinklers come on. All the things for the school fete are ruined. Amanda gets the blame. No-one can find the snake.

b) Mr Hepplewaite announces at assembly that no child will be given a good report this term unless they can work out a way to stop the floors from getting dirty because he can’t afford a cleaner any more.

Say how the problem is solved.

a) Amanda is told to wait outside the Principal’s office. She is very worried — she has never caused this much trouble before. A man comes to the office to say he has lost his pet snake. He left it outside while he was loading up his car. Amanda sneaks off to look for it.

b) Jordan invents a machine that carries everyone on a conveyor belt to their classrooms.

Say how the story ends

a) Amanda finds the snake in the general assistant’s room. The man is so happy that he gives Amanda a huge reward. Amanda gives the money to the school to make up for ruining the things for the fete.

b) Jordan becomes a hero. Everyone gets a good school report.
School life story
Vocabulary bank 2

announces  assembling  assistant
boiling  building
capture  carries  cause  cleaner  conveyor  creature  crawling
dirty  duty

frightened  hero  hiding
inventions  machine
office  ordinary  outside
potion  Principal
report  reward
ruined  screaming  slither  smoky  sneaks  staffroom  strange
terrible  terrified  visitor
water sprinkler  wizard  worried  worst

My own words
A play script is a narrative that has been written for a dramatic performance. Play scripts usually conform to the basic conventions of storying but playwrights do not have the same freedom with structure that story writers have. The work is often organised into large sections called ‘Acts’ within which there are several smaller sections called ‘Scenes’. Unlike the story writer, playwrights have few descriptive tools at their disposal; they need to establish the characters entirely through what they say and do or by what other characters say about them. The playwright, does, however, have other tools to bring the story alive, namely the sets, costumes, lighting and sound.

Like stories, the plot needs to be strong to maintain interest — the audience’s attention needs to be maintained. This is usually achieved by making sure the individual scenes within the play end on an exciting note. The ending of the play is vital to its success.

The audience needs to be satisfied that the characters’ problems and adventures have come to a satisfactory conclusion — they need to have a ‘feel good’ factor after having watched the play.

Students need to be given practice in reading plays. They need to learn about the conventions of play scripting in order to understand which parts of the text are read aloud and which parts are written as stage directions.

Students need a lot of experience in writing effective narratives before they can succeed at writing plays. They need to be aware of the importance of developing the characters and the plot so as not to get carried away with just writing the dialogue!

Examples of play scripts

The gingerbread boy by Vivian French (Walker Books, 2000)
James and the Giant Peach — a play adapted by Richard R George (Random House Children’s Books, 2002)
Dulcie and Dud and the really dumb play by Carol Ann Martin (Scholastic, 2002)
David Wood Plays: The Owl and the Pussycat Went to See...; The BFG (Methuen, 1999)
The Hobyahs and other Plays from Around the World by Edel Wignell (Bushfire Press, 1998)
Tricking the Tiger: Plays based on Asian Folktales by Edel Wignell (Phoenix Education, 2002)
Endangered! Plays about Endangered Australian Animals for Primary Schools by Jill Morris (Greater Glider, 2000)
Readers’ Theatre Middle Primary Book 1 (Blake Education, 2003)
Puss-in Boots by Moira Butterfield (Heinemann, 1997)
Wombat Divine by Mem Fox (Scholastic, 2002)
Things that go bump in the night

Characters

MICHELLE an eight-year-old girl
MRS PRICE Michelle’s mother
MR PRICE Michelle’s father
JULIA Michelle’s best friend and next-door neighbour
GEOFFREY Julia’s older brother

ACT 1

It is MICHELLE’S eighth birthday. Her parents have given her a tent because she wants to go camping in the summer. In order to try out the tent it has been agreed that she can put it up in the garden and ask her friend, JULIA, to stay the night in the tent with her.

Scene 1

The Price’s garden.

Enter MR PRICE, carrying the tent and a tool bag, and MICHELLE.

MR PRICE Right, Michelle, where do you want this?

MICHELLE How about over there, Dad, by the bushes?

MR PRICE carries the tent over to the bushes and puts it down with a thump. MICHELLE excitedly begins to unpack the tent.

MICHELLE I can’t wait till Julia gets here. What time is it now?

MR PRICE Time to put the tent up! Come on, don’t just stand around or we’ll never get it finished.

MR PRICE and MICHELLE work together to put up the tent. They stand back to admire their work.

MICHELLE It looks great, Dad, thanks. (Giving him a hug) I’m going to give Julia a ring to hurry her up.

MICHELLE exits. MR PRICE bangs in the tent pegs one last time to make sure they are firm. He picks up his tool bag and goes into the house.

ACT 1 Scene 2

JULIA has arrived at MICHELLE’S house. They are in MICHELLE’S bedroom. JULIA is sitting on MICHELLE’S bed, watching her putting some things into a bag.

JULIA I don’t think you’ll need all those jumpers, Michelle, it’s not
going to be that cold! (Giggling with a hand over her mouth) And why have you got a torch? Won’t your Mum leave the outside light on?

MICHELLE ‘Course she will, but you just never know what might happen do you? I don’t like the dark.

JULIA (Looking worried) No, me neither. Do you think we’ll be all right by ourselves?

MICHELLE Yes, stop worrying. It’s going to be great!

MICHELLE and JULIA pick up their things and leave the room.

ACT 2 Scene 1

MICHELLE and JULIA are sitting outside the tent. They have just finished eating their dinner. MRS PRICE comes out to see them.

MRS PRICE Do you have everything you need, girls? You’ve got the torch?

MICHELLE Yes, Mum. I think we’ll be all right.

MRS PRICE Well, good night then.

MICHELLE and JULIA (Together) Good night.

MRS PRICE goes back into the house. She turns on the outside light. MICHELLE and JULIA put the dishes away inside the tent and then crawl inside themselves.

ACT 2 Scene 2

Midnight (A church clock strikes twelve). Inside the tent.

MICHELLE Julia, wake up! What’s that noise?

JULIA (Blinking and yawning) Huh? What’s wrong?

MICHELLE Sh! Listen!

The two girls sit up and listen. Suddenly they hear a strange snuffling noise.

JULIA (Looking scared) What on earth is it? (Grabs MICHELLE’S arm) Go outside and take a look.

MICHELLE Me? Why me? You take a look.

JULIA No way. It could be anything. A madman or a vicious dog or something.

MICHELLE Oh, OK, I’ll go. Some brave camper you are! (She crawls to the front of the tent and peeps outside) Oh, no, it’s pitch black out there. The light’s not on. Give me the torch, quick!
(JULIA passes the torch to MICHELLE then hides behind her sleeping bag.)

I’m going out to have a look. If I scream, make sure you come and save me, OK?

(MICHELLE slowly crawls out of the tent. She moves around to the back of the tent, near the bushes. JULIA waits for what seems like ages, straining her ears to listen. Suddenly she hears the snuffling noise again.)

JULIA Michelle? Are you still there? The noise, it’s there again. (Waits and listens) Michelle?

(Suddenly the tent flaps burst open and MICHELLE appears)

You scared the daylights out of me! What’s happening?

MICHELLE (With a big grin on her face) Come and see for yourself.

JULIA crawls out of the tent and follows MICHELLE to the bushes. MICHELLE points the torch and there in the torch light can be seen a small possum.

JULIA (Big smile) Oh, he’s gorgeous! Look at him snuffling about. I didn’t know they made such a loud noise. At least it’s not a monster coming to eat us! (Laughing)

The girls stay to watch the possum for a little while then MICHELLE walks over to the light on the outside of the house.

MICHELLE That’s strange, the bulb’s missing. I wonder what happened to it?

JULIA (Looking alarmed) Do you think the noise wasn’t the possum after all, but a burglar? Do you think we should go and sleep in your room instead?

MICHELLE (Trying not to look worried) No, come on. We’ll be all right.

The girls go back to the tent and settle down again.

ACT 2 Scene 3

Some time later. The girls are awakened by a scratching noise on the tent.

JULIA (Sitting bolt upright in her sleeping bag) Listen! There’s another noise.

MICHELLE (Sleepily) It’s only the possum again. Go back to sleep.

JULIA (Looking very worried) No, it’s not. It’s a different noise. It sounds like someone trying to get in.
MICHELLE  Don’t be so silly, Julia, who on earth would be trying to get in?

A torch light passes over the tent. The girls see the shadow of a person near the tent.

JULIA  (Screams and grabs MICHELLE) See, I told you something was out there. And don’t tell me that’s (Pointing) a possum!

MICHELLE looks really scared also but she bravely grabs the torch and peeps outside. Then she too makes a terrifying scream.

GEOFFREY  (Standing near the tent entrance) It’s me, you goose! (Laughing) Hee, hee. I had you two going there, didn’t I?

JULIA  (Angry) Geoff? Is that you Geoff? Let me get at him!

(JULIA bursts out of the tent and tries to grab GEOFFREY but he dodges out of the way.)

I just knew you’d try something, you rat!

GEOFFREY  (Still laughing) Calm down, calm down. I just couldn’t resist it. I took the bulb out of the outside light just after you went to bed. Then I set my alarm to give you an early morning wake up call.

JULIA  Well, we weren’t really afraid were we, Michelle? We thought it might be you.

GEOFFREY  Oh, so that’s why you screamed so loud. (Laughing again)

MICHELLE  Come on you two, stop fighting. Let’s go inside and have some breakfast. I’ve definitely had enough of this tent for one night.

The three children walk into MICHELLE’S house and close the back door.

The little possum slowly creeps into view, looks at the audience and then scurries into the tent.

An attempt by the character at a little light humour.

The character tries to pretend that she was not really scared.

The story concludes satisfactorily. We know what the sources of the noises were and we know that the characters are safe and sound.

The possum gives the ending a final ‘ah’ factor — a nice memory the audience can take away with them.
Things that go bump in the night

Characters

MICHELLE an eight-year-old girl
MRS PRICE Michelle’s mother
MR PRICE Michelle’s father
JULIA Michelle’s best friend
GEOFFREY Julia’s older brother

ACT 1

It is MICHELLE’S eighth birthday. Her parents have given her a tent because she wants to go camping in the summer. In order to try out the tent it has been agreed that she can put it up in the garden and ask her friend, JULIA, to stay the night in the tent with her.

Scene 1

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MICHELLE I can’t wait till Julia gets here. What time is it now?

MR PRICE Time to put the tent up! Come on, don’t just stand around or we’ll never get it finished.

MR PRICE and MICHELLE work together to put up the tent. They stand back to admire their work.

MICHELLE It looks great, Dad, thanks. (Giving him a hug) I’m going to give Julia a ring to hurry her up.

MICHELLE exits. MR PRICE bangs in the tent pegs one last time to make sure they are firm. He picks up his tool bag and goes into the house.

ACT 1 Scene 2

JULIA has arrived at MICHELLE’S house. They are in MICHELLE’S bedroom. JULIA is sitting on MICHELLE’S bed, watching her putting some things into a bag.
JULIA  I don’t think you’ll need all those jumpers, Michelle, it’s not going to be THAT cold! (Giggling with a hand over her mouth) And why have you got a torch? Won’t your Mum leave the outside light on?

MICHELLE  ‘Course she will, but you just never know what might happen do you? I don’t like the dark.

JULIA  (Looking worried) No, me neither. Do you think we’ll be all right by ourselves?

MICHELLE  Yes, stop worrying. It’s going to be great!

MICHELLE and JULIA pick up their things and leave the room.

ACT 2 Scene 1
MICHELLE and JULIA are sitting outside the tent. They have just finished eating their dinner. MRS PRICE comes out to see them.

MRS PRICE  Do you have everything you need, girls? You’ve got the torch?

MICHELLE  Yes, Mum. I think we’ll be all right.

MRS PRICE  Well, good night then.

MICHELLE and JULIA (Together) Good night.

MRS PRICE goes back into the house. She turns on the outside light. MICHELLE and JULIA put the dishes away inside the tent and then crawl inside themselves.

ACT 2 Scene 2
Midnight (A church clock strikes twelve). Inside the tent.

MICHELLE  Julia, wake up! What’s that noise?

JULIA  (blinking and yawning) Huh? What’s wrong?

MICHELLE  Sh! Listen!

The two girls sit up and listen. Suddenly they hear a strange snuffling noise.

JULIA  (Looking scared) What on earth is it? (Grabs MICHELLE’S arm) Go outside and take a look.

MICHELLE  Me? Why me? You take a look.
JULIA  No way. It could be anything. A madman or a vicious dog or something.

MICHELLE  Oh, ok, I’ll go. Some brave camper you are! (She crawls to the front of the tent and peeps outside) Oh, no, it’s pitch black out there. The light’s not on. Give me the torch, quick!

(JULIA passes the torch to MICHELLE then hides behind her sleeping bag)

I’m going out to have a look. If I scream, make sure you come and save me, ok?

(MICHELLE slowly crawls out of the tent. She moves around to the back of the tent, near the bushes. JULIA waits for what seems like ages, straining her ears to listen. Suddenly she hears the snuffling noise again)

JULIA  Michelle? Are you still there? The noise, it’s there again. (Waits and listens) Michelle?

(Suddenly the tent flaps burst open and MICHELLE appears)

You scared the daylights out of me! What’s happening?

MICHELLE  (With a big grin on her face) Come and see for yourself.

JULIA crawls out of the tent and follows MICHELLE to the bushes. MICHELLE points the torch and there in the torch light can be seen a small possum.

JULIA  (Big smile) Oh, he’s gorgeous! Look at him snuffling about. I didn’t know they made such a loud noise. At least it’s not a monster coming to eat us! (Laughing)

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JULIA  (Looking alarmed) Do you think the noise wasn’t the possum after all, but a burglar? Do you think we should go and sleep in your room instead?

MICHELLE  (Trying not to look worried) No, come on we’ll be all right.

The girls go back to the tent and settle down again.
ACT 2 Scene 3

Some time later. The girls are awakened by a scratching noise on the tent.

JULIA (Sitting bolt upright in her sleeping bag) Listen! There’s another noise.

MICHELLE (Sleepily) It’s only the possum again. Go back to sleep.

JULIA (Looking very worried) No, it’s not. It’s a different noise. It sounds like someone trying to get in.

MICHELLE Don’t be so silly, Julia, who on earth would be trying to get in?

A torch light passes over the tent. The girls see the shadow of a person near the tent.

JULIA (Screams and grabs MICHELLE) See, I told you something was out there. And don’t tell me that’s (Pointing) a possum!

MICHELLE looks really scared also but she bravely grabs the torch and peeps outside. Then she too makes a terrifying scream.

GEOFFREY (Standing near the tent entrance) It’s me, you goose! (Laughing) Hee, hee. I had you two going there, didn’t I?

JULIA (Angry) Geoff? Is that you Geoff? Let me get at him!

(JULIA bursts out of the tent and tries to grab GEOFFREY but he dodges out of the way)

I just knew you’d try something, you rat!

GEOFFREY (Still laughing) Calm down, calm down. I just couldn’t resist it. I took the bulb out of the outside light just after you went to bed. Then I set my alarm to give you an early morning wake up call.

JULIA Well, we weren’t really afraid were we, Michelle? We thought it might be you.

GEOFFREY Oh, so that’s why you screamed so loud. (Laughing again)

MICHELLE Come on you two, stop fighting, let’s go inside and have some breakfast. I’ve definitely had enough of this tent for one night.

The three children walk into MICHELLE’S house and close the back door. The little possum slowly creeps into view, looks at the audience and then scurries into the tent.
Understanding the grammar and punctuation

Taking account of punctuation when reading aloud

Play scripts are meant to be read aloud and performed. The punctuation is therefore vital to the success of that performance.

Have fun reading the following examples using the different intonations of speech.

- **Go back to sleep.** (A command that could be said in a sleepy or quiet voice.)
- **Go back to sleep!** (An exclamation that could be a shout from someone angry.)
- **Go back to sleep?** (A question that could be asked by someone too worried to go back to sleep.)
- **Go, back to sleep.** (A command that is telling someone to go away and then sleep.)
- **Go back? To sleep?** (Questions that could indicate the character is asking: You want me to go back there? You want me to go back there to sleep?)

Ways of presenting text in dialogue

When writing dialogue the author sometimes wants some words to stand out more than others. This helps the reader to understand how to read the dialogue more effectively.

“I don’t think you’ll need all those jumpers, Michelle; it’s not going to be THAT cold!”

The use of capital letters shows that the character is stressing this word more loudly than the others.

Ways of presenting text in play scripts

In play scripts some of the text is meant to be read aloud and some is not.

**ACT 1 Scene 2**

**JULIA** has arrived at **MICHELLE**’s house. **They are in MICHELLE**’s bedroom, **JULIA** is sitting on **MICHELLE**’s bed watching her put some things into a bag.

**JULIA** I don’t think you’ll need all those jumpers, Michelle; it’s not going to be THAT cold! (Giggling, with a hand over her mouth) And why have you got a torch? Won’t your mum leave the outside light on?

The words in *italics* are stage directions. They are not read out. The characters’ names are in **CAPITALS**. The words in **bold** tell us when a scene starts or a character speaks.
Reading sentences aloud

Work with a partner. Take it in turns to read out these sentences. Try to use the right expression and tone in your voice.

1. *Me? You want ME to do the drawing?*

2. *Go away! I don’t want to see you EVER again!*

3. *No, I didn’t know you were going to the party."

4. *Sarah, can you come and help me?*

5. *Are you mad? I will NOT loan you any more money!*

Now make up a reply to each sentence above. Write your answers according to the type of sentence given below. Then practise reading them aloud.

1. A statement

2. A question

3. A question

4. A sentence using a comma

5. An exclamation
Punctuate it!

Read the play script below. The full stops (.), question marks (?) and exclamation marks (!) are missing. Put them in the correct places.

**ACT 3 Scene 1**

_The next morning. In MICHELLE’S bedroom._

**JULIA** I could have thumped Geoffrey last night____

**MICHELLE** Yes, me too____ But it was quite funny though wasn’t it____

**JULIA** Hmm, maybe____ (thinking) You know what we should do____

**MICHELLE** No, what____

**JULIA** We should get him back tonight____

**MICHELLE** Great idea____ What do you have in mind____

_The two girls start whispering together to make their plan._

Now complete the next scene. Remember to use full stops, question marks and exclamation marks correctly.

**ACT 3 Scene 2**

**JULIA’S house. GEOFFREY is watching TV. MICHELLE enters the room. JULIA is hiding behind the door.**

**MICHELLE** Hi, Geoff. Can you come out and help me for a minute?

**GEOFFREY** ______________________________________________________

**MICHELLE** Oh, come on, it won’t take a minute.

**GEOFFREY** ______________________________________________________

**MICHELLE** (Shouts) Now!

**JULIA** throws a bucket of water over GEOFFREY. _The girls both run away._

**GEOFFREY** ______________________________________________________
How play scripts differ from stories

Explain to the students that play scripts tell a story but in a different way to those found in storybooks. Talk about the various differences:

1. The work is organised into large sections called ‘Acts’. Within these Acts the play is further divided into smaller sections called ‘Scenes’.

2. The text is divided up in a special way. There are instructions that relate to stage directions, set production, costumes, lighting and sound as well as text to be read by the characters.

3. In a story every bit of text is meant to be read. In a play only certain parts of it are read aloud.

4. A story writer is able to write long, descriptive pieces to help the reader imagine the setting, characters and plot. A playwright is more limited. He has fewer descriptive tools to use and must develop the characters through the dialogue.

The layout of play scripts

Share various play scripts with the students. Discuss how they differ to stories and other texts. Point out that the font and typography is presented in different ways because it is meant for different people and purposes. Discuss the following points:

1. The play is divided up into larger sections called ‘Acts’ with shorter sections within them called ‘Scenes’.

2. The characters’ names are written in capital letters in the stage directions and on the left-hand side of the page to indicate when a character is speaking. (Although this is not universal in all play scripts. The fact that there are no universal conventions can cause problems for inexperienced readers of plays.)

3. The scene setting is in italics. This is a message to the set designer, prop maker and costume maker. It tells us where the characters are and what props they will need.

4. The characters’ names are written down the left-hand side of the page. This lets the people playing the characters know when it is their turn to speak.

5. The person playing the character only reads the text that is not in brackets.

6. Sometimes some words in the dialogue are also written in capitals or italics to indicate how the words are to be spoken.

7. Words in italics in brackets are stage directions — a message to the director, not the actor.
Helpful hints for writing a play script

✦ List your characters at the top of the page. Use capital letters for the characters’ names. Don’t have too many characters (2 – 5 is enough).

MICHELLE  an eight-year-old girl
MRS PRICE  Michelle’s mother
MR PRICE  Michelle’s father
JULIA  Michelle’s best friend
GEOFFREY  Julia’s older brother

✦ Make your script simple. Just have one or two parts (or Acts) to the story.

✦ Make sure you have a good ending.

MICHELLE  Right, Michelle, where do you want this?
MICHELLE  How about over there, Dad, by the bushes?

✦ Write the opening scene. Try to imagine what it might look like on a stage.

Scene 1
The Price’s garden.

Enter MR PRICE, carrying the tent and a tool bag, and MICHELLE.

✦ Next, write the dialogue. Keep it simple. Write the character’s name on the left-hand side of the page, leave a space and then write what the character says.

MR PRICE  It looks great, Dad, thanks. (Giving him a hug) I’m going to give Julia a ring to hurry her up.

✦ Think of interesting things for your characters to do. What exciting things happen to them?

MICHELLE  That’s strange, the bulb’s missing. I wonder what happened to it?
JULIA  (Looking alarmed) Do you think the noise wasn’t the possum after all, but a burglar? Do you think we should go and sleep in your room instead?

MICHELLE  (Trying not to look worried) No, come on we’ll be all right.

✦ Make each scene end in an exciting way so that the audience will want to know what happens next.

The girls go back to the tent and settle down again.

MICHELLE  Come on you two, stop fighting. Let’s go inside and have some breakfast. I’ve definitely had enough of this tent for one night.

The three children walk into MICHELLE’S house and close the back door. The little possum slowly creeps into view, looks at the audience and then scurries into the tent.
A play script
Scaffold 1

You are going to write a play script.
To help plan your play, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your play.
List them at the top of your page.

a) Meg an eight-year-old girl
Paula Meg’s best friend
Tom the boy next door to Meg
party guests (non-speaking roles)

b) Freddy an eight-year-old boy
Grandpa Freddy’s grandfather
party guests (non-speaking roles)

Stage Two

Choose the scene for Act 1.
The characters are getting ready for a birthday party. They are:

a) sitting in the kitchen wrapping presents.
b) putting up balloons in the living room for a surprise party.

Stage Three

Give the characters a problem.
This will be the dialogue for Act 1 Scene 1.
The telephone rings. It is not good news.

a) The magician hired for the party is ill.
   He cannot make it.

b) There has been an accident with the birthday cake.
   The baker’s helper dropped it on the floor while loading it into the van.
**Stage Four**

Say how the problem is solved. This will be the dialogue for Act 1 Scene 2.

The characters are in the garden.

a) They are making up their own magic trick to entertain everyone at the party.

b) They are making a pretend cake out of cardboard. They fill it with lollies.

**Stage Five**

Choose the scene for Act 2.

a) The characters are in the local hall. The party guests arrive.

b) The characters and guests are in the living room. There are balloons everywhere.

**Stage Six**

Say how the play ends. This will be the dialogue for Act 2.

a) The characters perform the magic trick. Nothing goes wrong. Everyone really enjoys the party.

b) They cut the ‘cake’ open. The lollies spill everywhere and the dog eats them. They decide to go out to buy ice-cream sundaes instead.
A play script
Vocabulary bank 1

accident • hall • party
baker • ice-cream sundae • presents
balloons • kitchen • pretend
birthday • living room • scene
cake • local • surprise
cardboard • lollies • trick
characters • make • wrap
garden • magic •
grandfather • magician •
guest •

My own words
A play script
Scaffold 2

You are going to write a play script.
To help plan your play, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage, or use your own ideas.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your play. List them at the top of your page.

a) Main characters:
   Jordan          an eight-year-old boy
   Simon           Jordan’s twin brother
   Mrs Rush        the twins’ mother
   Mr Rush         the twins’ father

   Other characters:
   people in a crowd
   pet shop owner

b) Main characters:
   Tonya           an eight-year-old girl
   Ria             Tonya’s neighbour
   Mrs Wright      Tonya’s aunt

   Other characters:
   people in a crowd
   security guard

Stage Two

Choose the scene for Act 1.

a) A busy city street. People are rushing everywhere.
   One of the main characters can be seen standing in
   the middle of the crowd, waiting.

b) A theme park on a busy Saturday afternoon.
   People are walking by eating candy floss and ice-creams.

Stage Three

Introduce the characters. Write the dialogue for Act 1, Scene 1.

a) The character is waiting for the other main characters to arrive. They turn up late
   and make apologies. The first character is not very happy but they decide to go to
   the shopping centre.

b) The main characters arrive. They are really excited about spending the day at the
   theme park. They talk about the things they want to do.
Stage Four

Give the characters a problem. This will be the dialogue for Act 1 Scene 2.

a) On the way, one of the characters realises that he/she has lost his/her wallet. They begin to look for it. One of the children spots something in the distance and moves towards it. The others do not see the child running away.

b) They go into the Ghost House. They have fun being scared. When they come out, they realise that Tonya is missing.

Stage Five

Choose the scene for Act 2.

a) A pet shop. The owner is very angry. The place is a mess.

b) The security office at the theme park.

Stage Six

Say how the problem is solved. This will be the dialogue for Act 2 Scene 1.

a) The characters appear in the doorway of the pet shop. They try to find out how the shop got wrecked. The angry owner tells them how a dog came running into the shop chased by a child. The child was trying to get something out of the dog’s mouth.

b) Ria and Mrs Wright are very upset. The security guard helps them search for Tonya. They finally find her in a restaurant near the Ghost House.

Stage Seven

Say how the play ends. This will be the dialogue for Act 2 Scene 2.

a) The adults have to pay for the damage. They are very cross with the child. The pet shop owner takes pity on the child and gives him a pet guinea pig to take home. The adults vow never to take the children shopping again!

b) Tonya is very surprised they had been looking for her. She’d yelled out to them that she was going to get something to eat but they obviously hadn’t heard her. They agree to stay together in future!
A play script

Vocabulary bank 2

afternoon  father  Saturday
angry  ghost  scared
apologise  guard  search
aunt  guinea pig  security
doctor  ice-cream  shopping centre
brother  mother  surprised
candy floss  neighbour  theme park
chased  owner  twins
city  people  upset
crowd  restaurant  wrecked
damage
excited

My own words
The animal story is one of the most popular types of stories in children’s literature. Its popularity can often be attributed to the author’s use of anthropomorphism where the animal characters within the story are given human feelings, characteristics and behaviours. This literary device is known as personification and it allows readers to identify more closely with the animal characters, enabling them to appreciate their problems and situations more sympathetically.

Many animal stories have been written to teach a moral lesson as well as to entertain. Children, it seems, are more willing to accept a moral ‘lecture’ from a ‘cute’ animal character than a human one!

Animal stories also contain great diversity. There are many different types of stories, including:

- realistic biographies (such as Tarka the Otter)
- fantasy animal tales (such as Charlotte’s Web)
- anthropomorphic stories (such as Fantastic Mr Fox)

The anthropomorphic aspect of animal stories allows the author to deal with more challenging story lines for children than in conventional stories about humans. The reader is more willing to accept the harsh truths of issues such as separation and death if they are presented as stories about animals (e.g. Old Pig by Margaret Wild).

Friendships too, can be more unconventional in animal stories, such as between the spider and the pig in Charlotte’s Web.

Although the characters may have human characteristics, most animal stories also make sure the characters have specific animal traits such as the sheepdog’s behaviour with the farmer in The Sheep-Pig.

Some stories have human characters who play a definite role in the story (such as The Sheep Pig) whereas in other animal stories there are no humans at all or they only play a peripheral role (such as Hoot by Carl Hiaasen, Pan MacMillan, 2003).

Examples of animal stories

Old Pig by Margaret Wild (Allen & Unwin, 1999)

The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark by Jill Tomlinson (Egmont, 2003)

The Butterfly Lion by Michael Morpurgo (HarperCollins, 1996)

Clever Duck by Dick King Smith (Puffin Books, 2004)

How the Whale Became by Ted Hughes (Faber & Faber, 2000)

Fantastic Mr Fox by Roald Dahl (Knopf Books, 2002)

The Diary of a Killer Cat by Anne Fine (Puffin Books, 1996)

Babe: The Gallant Pig by Dick King Smith (Random House, 1995)

(For advanced readers)

Charlotte’s Web by E B White (HarperCollins, 2002)

Just So Stories by Rudyard Kipling (Oxford University Press, 1995)

Tarka the Otter by Henry Williamson (Puffin books, 1995)
Farmer Best's farmyard was always very tidy. In one corner stood the old farmhouse with its mud brick walls and tin roof and in the other was the huge corrugated iron barn. In between the two buildings was a gravel yard that Farmer Best's wife was forever trying to keep clean! On the edges of the gravel yard there was a small pig sty, a stone drinking trough and a wooden chicken coop. Farmer Best's bright red tractor stood near the farmyard gate, not far from the small duck pond that was now sparkling in the early morning sunshine.

But something was wrong today. The farmyard was totally empty and quiet. There was no quacking of ducks on the pond, no mooing of cows in the field, no honking of geese in the yard and no barking of Farmer Best's dogs. The only sound to be heard was a faint tapping sound coming from the barn.

"Order! Order!" shouted Malcolm Mouse as he tapped a stone on the handlebars of the old bike on which he was perched. "We won't be able to decide anything unless we listen to each other."

"He's right," said Henrietta, the duck. "We've all got to work together if we want the problem solved."

All of the animals nodded to each other in agreement and then seated themselves on the barn floor. Most of the animals on Farmer Best's farm were at the meeting. There were chickens, geese, lambs, horses, pigs, cows, ducks and lots of mice. Brindle, the cat, however, had decided not to get involved and was at this moment curled up asleep in the hay loft above the other animal's heads. She certainly didn't want to waste valuable sleeping time on trying to solve a problem that she knew the others could do nothing about.

"I've given this problem a lot of thought," continued Malcolm Mouse, "and I think I may have come up with the answer. But you will all have to take part in my plan if we want it to work."

Malcolm Mouse was an ordinary-looking, tiny, brown house mouse but right from the very moment he was born, he was different to all the others in his litter. He was always looking for new ways of doing things — never satisfied with doing something just because his fellow mice had always done it that way. No, Malcolm was different all right. He was the one who had invented a way to escape from the mouse traps that Farmer Best's wife was always setting. He was the one who helped Henrietta cope when one of her ducklings couldn't swim and he was the one who finally worked out a way for Petra the pig to get out of her sty whenever a farm meeting such as this one was held. Malcolm was someone everyone listened to; he was someone you could trust.

"As you know, from next month we might all be without our homes because Farmer Best has been told he must leave the farm unless he can pay the annual rent. We all know he's been working really hard to make enough money to pay the rent but unfortunately he doesn't think he'll have enough. So, what I propose we do is to set up our own farm shop in order to help him pay the rent."

"And just what are we going to sell in this shop then?" asked Harry, the horse.
"Well, I can certainly manage to lay more eggs than usual," suggested Florrie, the hen.

"And I can sniff out and dig up any potatoes that Farmer Best couldn’t find," added Moss, the dog.

"And I could produce more milk," said Honey, the cow.

Everyone started to think of ways they could help. Everyone except, of course, Brindle, who was still sound asleep in the loft above.

Over the next few days and weeks the animals worked very hard day and night to get everything ready. A section of the barn was cleared to make way for the shop. The mice gathered left-over grain and made hundreds of bean-bag toys. The geese used their downy feathers to make lovely soft pillows. The horses gathered all their old horse shoes and painted them to make lucky charms and the ducks made colourful abstract paintings by walking in paint and then waddling all over some large pieces of paper they found in Farmer Best’s shed.

Soon the day came to open their farm shop. The animals were all very excited (everyone except, of course, Brindle, who was fast asleep as usual in her favourite spot in the loft). They were gathered together inside the shop, listening to Malcolm Mouse who was making a speech.

"Right, everyone, a little bit of quiet please," ordered Malcolm as he struggled to be heard above all the animals’ excited voices. “Thanks to all your hard work, the shop is finally ready for business!”

“Hooray!” shouted the animals together.

“I’ve prepared a roster that tells you when you will be serving in the shop. Remember — the more we sell, the more likely we are to stay on Farmer Best’s land.”

Florrie and Henrietta were the first ones to serve in the shop. By lunch time, they had already sold a dozen eggs, a bag of potatoes, six bean toys and four pillows. So they were really pleased with themselves when Malcolm and Moss came in to take their place after lunch.

“I’m off to lay some more eggs,” said Florrie as she hurried out the door.

“And I’m off to have a well-earned rest,” added Henrietta as she slowly waddled outside looking very tired.

Malcolm settled himself down with the cash tin and began to add up the day’s sales so far. He was very pleased with the amount they had already sold and he was so excited that he quickly jumped up and spun round to tell Moss. As he did do, however, he knocked over the candle he was using to see what he was writing down and it fell onto the bales of straw that formed the counter of the shop. Before either of them could react, the bales caught fire and flames began to burst forth.

Moss began to bark, hoping that Farmer Best might hear him. Malcolm quickly tried to think of what to do. Surely their wonderful farm shop couldn’t be destroyed after all their hard work?

Meanwhile, Brindle raised her sleepy head in the loft above them.
“What on earth is all the noise about?” she thought irritably. “What is that stupid Moss barking about?”

She slowly stretched herself awake and peeped through the boards in the loft.

“Eek!” she yelled, “I’m out of here!” and she quickly dashed out of the loft in order to save herself from the fire. As she did so, however, she knocked over the bucket of water that stood in the loft to catch the drips from the leak in the roof. Miraculously, the water poured through the boards right onto the fire below. The fire was out even before it properly got started and even before Malcolm could think of what to do!

Moss noticed Brindle coming out of the loft.

"Brindle, you’re a hero; you’ve saved us all,” he said.

Moss quickly told all the others how Brindle had put out the fire and saved their farm shop. The animals were all very happy that at last she had done something useful to help.

Brindle, however, kept the accident a secret. She certainly wasn’t going to let on that she only wanted to save herself. Instead she accepted all the glory and happily told her future kittens how she had managed to help Farmer Best pay the rent!
The Tale of Malcolm Mouse

Farmer Best’s farmyard was always very tidy. In one corner stood the old farmhouse with its mud brick walls and tin roof and in the other was the huge corrugated iron barn. In between the two buildings was a gravel yard that Farmer Best’s wife was forever trying to sweep clean! On the edges of the gravel yard there was a small pig sty, a stone drinking trough and a wooden chicken coop. Farmer Best’s bright red tractor stood near the farmyard gate, not far from the small duck pond that was now sparkling in the early morning sunshine.

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“As you know, from next month we might all be without our homes because Farmer Best has been told he must leave the farm unless he can pay the annual rent. We all know he’s been working really hard to make enough money to pay the rent but unfortunately he doesn’t think he’ll have enough money. So, what I propose we do is to set up our own farm shop in order to help him pay the rent.”

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Verbs

Verbs are ‘doing’ or ‘being’ words. They tell you what a person or thing is doing. All sentences have verbs. There can be more than one verb in a sentence.

The geese used their downy feathers to make lovely soft pillows.

Verbs in stories

When the author is telling the story, the past tense is usually used.

“Order! Order!” shouted Malcolm Mouse as he tapped a stone on the handlebars of the old bike on which he was perched. (past tense)

Verb tenses

The tense of a verb can be past, present or future.

Present: Malcolm taps the stone.
Past: Malcolm tapped the stone.
Future: Malcolm will tap the stone.

Changing simple verbs

Changing the verb in a sentence for another that is more appropriate can dramatically improve the piece of writing and even change the meaning of the sentence.

Malcolm sat on the handlebars.
Malcolm perched on the handlebars.
Malcolm rested on the handlebars.
Malcolm teetered on the handlebars.

Commas in lists

Commas are used to separate items in a list.

The word ‘and’ is used before the last item in the list.

There were chickens, geese, lambs, horses, pigs, cows, ducks and lots of mice.
Verbs

Change the verbs in these sentences using words from the box. Talk to a friend about how it has change the meaning of the sentence. The first one has been done for you.

waved played waited laughed looked rented slowed

1. Farmer Best’s bright red tractor stood near the farmyard gate.
   
   Farmer Best’s bright red tractor waited near the farmyard gate.

2. All of the animals nodded to each other.

3. Brindle slept in the loft.

4. The animals opened a farm shop.

5. “Hurray!” shouted the animals together.


7. She peeped through the boards in the loft.
Using commas in lists

Put commas in the correct places in these sentences. Rewrite each one. The first one has been done for you.

1. There were chickens geese lambs horses pigs cows ducks and lots of mice.
   There were chickens, geese, lambs, horses, pigs, cows, ducks and lots of mice.

2. The animals sold eggs milk potatoes toys and pillows.

3. Malcolm Mouse was brave clever helpful and friendly.

4. Brindle was lazy thoughtless sleepy and a coward.

Make up three sentences of your own using commas to separate items in a list. Write them here.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Writing features

Story settings

Explain to the students that one of the most important elements of their story, along with the plot and the characters, is the setting. Can they imagine a film with no background? The time and location of a story is just as vital. The setting is crucial in establishing the mood of the story.

Use the following ideas to help explain to the students how to create an effective backdrop to their story.

1. Describe the time that the story takes place.

   *Farmer Best’s bright red tractor stood near the farmyard gate, not far from the small duck pond that was now sparkling in the early morning sunshine.*

2. Describe the appearance of the location or locations in your story. You might also tell the reader about the atmosphere, sounds and smells of the setting.

3. Make sure that you choose a setting which you know enough about to bring to life in the mind of the reader.

   *Farmer Best’s farmyard was always very tidy. In one corner stood the old farmhouse with its mud brick walls and tin roof and in the other was the huge corrugated iron barn. In between the two buildings was a gravel yard that Farmer Best’s wife was forever trying to sweep clean! On the edges of the gravel yard there was a small pig sty, a stone drinking trough and a wooden chicken coop. Farmer Best’s bright red tractor stood near the farmyard gate, not far from the small duck pond that was now sparkling in the early morning sunshine.*

4. One way to add intrigue to a story is to describe the setting in such a way that questions are raised in the mind of the reader.

   *But something was wrong today. The farmyard was totally empty and quiet. There was no quacking of ducks on the pond, no mooing of cows in the field, no honking of geese in the yard and no barking of Farmer Best’s dogs. The only sound to be heard was a faint tapping sound coming from the barn.*

5. Stories can begin with a description of a setting into which a character does not appear to ‘fit’. The reader is then left to wonder why that character came to be in this location; the answer can form the basis of the plot.

   *The baby elephant wandered all alone into Farmer Best’s farmyard. He staggered into the barn and collapsed in a heap on a pile of straw. Soon he was fast asleep.*

6. The setting can be described from the point of view of a new character, so that the reader sees it through the eyes of the character and shares his/her first impressions.

7. The setting can mirror the feelings of the characters in the story.

   *The barn seemed as empty as Malcolm’s heart. He realised that he would never see his family again.*

8. If the setting is an historical one, make it as accurate and as full of historical detail as possible. If it is a future one, include information that tells the reader how it is different from the present. Maybe amazing gadgets or machines are present in the background.

   *Malcolm caught the moving pavement to the flying bus docking station. On board he used his wrist computer to contact his best friend.*

© Blake Education ISBN 978 1 92114 367 0  Story-writing Scaffolds - Middle Primary
Helpful hints for writing an animal story

✦ Use animals that you know about in your story. This will help you when you describe what they look like and what they do.

✦ Give your characters names that sound right for the type of animal.

✦ Decide whether your animals will have human feelings and actions.

✦ Decide if you are going to have humans in your story.

✦ Start the story with a good description of the setting so the reader can imagine the scene being described.

Farmer Best’s farmyard was always very tidy. In one corner stood the old farmhouse with its mud brick walls and tin roof and in the other was the huge corrugated iron barn. In between the two buildings was a gravel yard that Farmer Best’s wife was forever trying to keep clean! On the edges of the gravel yard there was a small pig sty, a stone drinking trough and a wooden chicken coop. Farmer Best’s bright red tractor stood near the farmyard gate, not far from the small duck pond that was now sparkling in the early morning sunshine.

✦ Write your story in the past tense.

Order! Order!” shouted Malcolm Mouse as he tapped a stone on the handlebars of the old bike on which he was perched.

✦ Give your characters a problem to solve.

✦ Decide how the problem will be solved.

✦ Animal stories usually have a happy ending. Think of a good way to end the story.

Instead she accepted all the glory and happily told her future kitteens how she had managed to help Farmer Best pay the rent!
Animal story
Scaffold 1

You are going to write an animal story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

Stage One
Choose the characters for your story.

a) A dog, a cat and a mouse.

b) A duck, a goose and a rabbit.

Stage Two
Start your story with a good beginning.

a) It was a lovely summer’s day. The garden was quiet and peaceful. There were colourful flowers growing in tubs and baskets around the verandah where Mitzy the cat was sound asleep in the sun. Not far from Mitzy lay Gemma, the dog, also asleep in her favourite spot near the roses. Suddenly...

b) Randolf, the duck, and Gandy, the goose, swam slowly up the little creek that bordered the farm. It was their favourite feeding place and they often went there in the afternoon. Little did they know that today would be one the most exciting days of their lives.

Stage Three
Set the scene for the story.

The characters meet another animal they do not know.

a) A mouse suddenly appears from behind the garden shed.

b) The duck and goose see a rabbit waving to them from the banks of the creek.
Stage Four

**Give the characters a problem.**

The new character has come to ask for help.

a) The mouse explains that another family of mice have moved into the garden and want to live there. The two families have begun to fight with each other.

b) The rabbit is very worried. One of the baby rabbits from his warren has fallen into the creek. He has managed to grab onto a small log but the log is now heading towards the waterfall downstream.

Stage Five

**Say how the problem is solved.**

a) The dog and cat decide to hold a contest to see which family of mice can stay. (say what the contest is)

b) The duck and goose call out to all their friends. Together they make a line across the stream just in time. The baby rabbit is rescued.

Stage Six

**Say how the story ends.**

a) The winning mice family are so happy they arrange a party for the dog and cat.

b) The duck and goose are treated like heroes by all the rabbits. They hold a banquet in their honour. From that day on the rabbits, goose and duck have a special friendship.
Animal story
Vocabulary bank 1

animal
baby
banquet
cat
contest
creek
dog
duck
exciting
family
fight
friends
garden
geese
goose
heroes
honour
quiet

party
peaceful
rabbit
summer
swim
verandah
warren
water wheel
worried

My own words
Animal story
Scaffold 2

You are going to write an animal story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage or use your own ideas.

Stage One
Choose the characters for your story.

a) Characters:
   - a dog who is always busy and on the go
   - a bright and clever cat
   - an eight-year-old boy

b) Characters:
   - a young fox
   - a clever rabbit
   - an old sheep
   - some chickens

Stage Two
Begin with a good opening sentence and set the scene.

a) The frightened boy ran at breakneck speed down the road.
   (Describe how he is feeling.)

   The scene:
   The boy is being chased by some other boys. He runs into his garden, closes the gate behind him and stands there, puffing and out of breath.

b) As darkness fell, all was quiet on Saltbox Farm.
   (Describe the farm.)

   The scene:
   Inside the chicken coop the chickens have called a meeting.
Stage Three

Give the characters a problem.

a) The boy is being bullied by the other boys. He sits down in the garden and tells the dog and cat all his troubles as usual. They decide to try and work out a solution together.

b) A young fox has been seen in the neighbourhood. The chickens are worried that he will attack them. They decide to ask the wise old sheep for some help.

Stage Four

Say how the problem is solved.

The next day.

a) The dog goes to each boy’s house and madly barks outside to get their attention. He makes them follow him to an old factory site. The dog disappears inside. The boys follow but strange and scary things keep happening to them — all caused by the dog and cat. They run outside screaming. The first boy is waiting for them with a camera. He threatens to show everyone at school the photo showing how scared they are.

b) The sheep tells them about a special rabbit living nearby who has learned how to outwit the fox. The rabbit tells them to dress up as wolves and wait inside their coop. The fox enters the coop that night. The dressed-up chickens scare the living daylights out of the fox!

Stage Five

Say how the story ends.

a) The bullies never bother the boy again. The cat and dog become neighbourhood heroes, admired by all the other cats and dogs.

b) The fox is never seen again. The chickens pass down the story to the next generation of chickens who now have the knowledge to outwit a fox.
Animal story
Vocabulary bank 2

adventure
attack
attention
breath
bright
bullied
camera
chased
chickens
clever
coop
darkness
decide

disappeared
frightened

garden
generation
heroes
knowledge
meeting
neighbourhood
outwit

photograph
scary
screaming
special
speed
strange
troubles
wolves
worried

My own words
The indigenous or original inhabitants of Australia are commonly referred to as Australian Aborigines. Their culture is diverse, consisting of around 500 different clans or tribes, each with its own distinct language or dialect, many of which are now extinct. All Australian Aborigines were semi-nomadic hunter gatherers, who moved around their own territory, which was defined by rivers, mountains or other geographic features.

There is no written Aboriginal language. Theirs is an oral history – kept alive in stories, dance and art.

The key to Aboriginal culture and history is the LAND. This not only provided their food and shelter, but also their spiritual identity. Aboriginal people believe that they are the direct descendants of the creative ancestors (the forces and powers who created the world) from the Dreaming. Their belief is that in the beginning, the earth was flat, dark and silent. The creative ancestors rose up from the ground and made their way across the desolate surface of the earth, hunting and fighting. In doing so, they changed the form of the land and created the plants and animals, the natural landforms and elements and even the celestial bodies. When they were exhausted from their activities, these beings returned to the earth to sleep.

The Dreaming stories told by Aboriginal people tell of these creation events. They tell of the code of law for the Aboriginal people and they also examine consequences for our actions. As a result, the Aboriginal students are taught that they belong to the land and that they must respect it. It is their past, their present and their future.

Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island stories are meant to educate. The complexity of the story changes with the level of knowledge already attained by the recipient of the story, the listener or reader. They are also translated into dance and visual art.

These stories were once always oral stories, told sitting around a campfire or out in the bush while collecting food, hunting or fishing. They tell about the features of local environments and the appearance and behaviour of birds and animals, as well as how to live according to community rules that maintain the environment and social structures. They also often incorporate spirit ancestors and creation beings from the Dreaming, the time of creation, and explain how the ancestors live on in the environment.

The South Australian Department of Education website (www.aboriginaleducation.sa.edu.au) recommends that, if a student asks if a story is true, ask them what they have learned from the story and if that is true. ‘The unusual aspects of stories make them memorable.’

Individual members of a clan or tribal group are entrusted with the responsibility of being the ‘story keeper’ for their language group. They must keep the Dreaming stories protected, so that they are correctly remembered and passed on through the generations. It is a sacred trust and one that those replicating or reproducing Dreaming stories should respect. Copyright in each story belongs to the custodians or community of its origin, and they have given their permission for this story to be reproduced here and to be photocopied for distribution to students.

Examples of Indigenous Australian Dreaming legends

Cocky, the Crow and the Hawk by Matingali Napangka Mudgetell (Working Title Press, 2002)


Jalesa the Emu by N B Kerr and C S Craig (Penguin Books, 2001)

Wurradi, Wondee and the Dancing Brolgas by S Mayton and L Doyle (Greater Glider, 1999)

Pheasant and Kingfisher by C H Bendt & Nganal Gindja (Scholastic, 1998)


(For more advanced readers)

Stradbroke Dreamtime by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (HarperCollins, 1992)

Nargun and the Stars by Patricia Wrightson (Penguin Books, 1992)
Long long ago in the Dreaming, when the land was new, Gandji and his family and Wurrpan and his family lived at a place by the sea called Nurrurrumba, in the far north of Australia.

Gandji and his children would often go down to the sea to fish. One day they were fishing for stingrays in the warm salt water. As they waded through the shallow crystal-clear water, they speared all sorts of stingrays and brought them back to the shore.

The children gathered driftwood and built a fire on the beach, over which they cooked the stingrays, separating the meat from the fat. They wrapped the meat and fat in some strips of bark and took it back to their camp just over the sand dunes.

Back at the camp, Wurrpan sent one of his children over to Gandji to collect their share of the stingrays. But when Wurrpan unwrapped the parcel of bark he realised that Gandji had kept the sweet, fresh stingray meat and had given Wurrpan and his family some old tasteless pieces.

Nevertheless, Wurrpan and his children ate what they had been given. When they had finished their meal, Wurrpan got up and went to talk to Gandji. "Why did you keep the sweet, fresh stingrays for your own family, while you gave my family the old tasteless ones," he shouted. However, Gandji argued, "You should not have stayed in camp then. Maybe you should have gone fishing yourself if you are not happy with what we gave you."

The brothers-in-law continued to argue as both their tempers rose. Finally Gandji got so frustrated that he grabbed some hot coals from the fire and threw them at Wurrpan. But even then he was still angry. So he picked up a Buyburu, a smooth rock used for grinding nuts, and threw this at Wurrpan too. The Buyburu hit Wurrpan hard on his chest. After realising what he had done to his brother-in-law, Gandji was fearful of what Wurrpan would now do to him. He was so worried that he started to jump up and down and flap around. Each time he jumped he went higher and higher into the air until he turned into a Jabiru, but without a beak.

Wurrpan was angry at Gandji for what he had done, and he thought that he might fly away and escape, so he called to his children to help him. They gave him his spear, called Wandhawarri Djimbarmirri, which he threw at Gandji flying around above him. The spear hit Gandji in the behind and went right through his body until it poked out of his face. This gave Gandji, the Jabiru, his beak.

Emu and Jabiru

This is the traditional way to begin a Dreaming story.

Prepositions describe the position of a noun: Where is the place? By the sea.

The opening paragraph establishes the setting for the story.

Traditional family activity. Aborigines were hunter gatherers.

Traditional Aboriginal method of carrying food.

This is an adverbial phrase, which tells the reader when the action took place.

Preposition.

Aboriginal tribal language is used to name the item.

In the tradition of Dreaming legends, impossible things happen. A human is transformed into a bird.

The reader is forewarned that something else will happen to give the Jabiru its beak.

Commas to separate clauses.

The name of the spear is given in the Aboriginal tribal language.

Cause – Gandji is speared through the body and face.

Effect – the Jabiru is given a beak.
Now it was Wurrpan’s turn to be afraid of what would happen next. He gathered his children to him and together they ran inland, away from the sea. As they were running as fast as they could, they began to change into Emus. The ash from the hot coals that Gandji had thrown turned their feathers grey and the Buyburu stone had left a bump on the front of their chests where it had hit.

Today the people of Arnhem Land, Yolngu, remember the story of Wurrpan and Gandji. When they cook emu meat, it is only half-cooked and they carefully wipe off the ash from the fire before they eat it. And the emu’s eggs are the same shape as the Buyburu stone that hit it.

**Note:** This story comes from the Marrkula clan in Arnhem Land. They are members of the Gapuwiyak people.

**Glossary**

Gandji — **garn jee**
Wurrpan — **were pan**
Buyburu — **birra boo** (smooth rock used for grinding cycad nuts)
Wandhawarri Djimbarrmirri — **wun dar wurry jim bar mirri** (a spear)

The reader is forewarned that Wurrpan will change form too.

The coda provides a link between the story and the actions of Aboriginal people today.
Emu and Jabiru

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**Note:** This story comes from the Marrkula clan in Arnhem Land. They are members of the Gapuwiyak people.

Story by Clancy Guthijpuy Marrkula
Translated by Bangana Wunungmurra

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About the Gapuwiyak people

Gapuwiyak is about 150 kilometres west of the mining town of Nhulunbuy in the Northern Territory. The community has a population of around 1 000 Yolngu people. The people of Gapuwiyak take pride in the community’s history and traditional stories. Their vision is to have a community that can prosper through the activities of its people, the preservation of its culture, the nurturing of its children and the promotion of a Gapuwiyak lifestyle.

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Prepositions

A preposition is a word which is used to show the relationship between two things, usually indicating a location or time. Prepositions are generally found before a noun or pronoun in a sentence. Not all sentences need to have a preposition.

Prepositions in context

Prepositions are used to provide more information to the reader to describe the position of something or the place where something is happening.

Wurrpan and his family lived at a place by the sea.

One day they were fishing for stingrays in the warm salt water.

The children gathered scattered driftwood and built a fire on the beach, over which they cooked the stingrays …

Prepositions and tense

Prepositions are not effected by the tense of the sentence.

Past: They fished for stingrays in the salt water.
Present: They are fishing for stingrays in the salt water.
Future: They are going to fish for stingrays in the salt water.

Commas and clauses

Commas can be used in a sentence to separate clauses and make the meaning of the sentence clearer.

Back at the camp, Wurrpan sent one of his children over to Gandji to collect their share of the stingrays.

In this case the comma allows a pause to highlight the prepositional clause ‘Back at the camp’.
Prepositions

Choose a preposition to finish these sentences below.

1. Place the plank ____________________ the water so you can walk to the other side.
2. I found your dirty socks _____________________ your bed.
3. The little girl was hiding _____________________ the tall gum trees.
4. They cooked the stingrays _____________________ the hot coals.
5. The children went _____________________ their father to the beach.
6. Taran often goes skiing _____________________ the cold winter months.
7. As the man walked _____________________ the shop he noticed something in the window.
8. I got a party invitation _____________________ my best friend at school.
9. The tennis balls are _____________________ the cricket stumps in the back shed.
10. The trees _____________________ the creek rustled in the breeze.

Now write your own sentences using these prepositions:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
Commas separating clauses

The commas in the sentences below are incorrect. Rewrite each sentence, putting the commas in the correct place. The first one has been done for you.

1. After walking for a long time the group, of children felt hot and tired.
   After walking for a long time, the group of children felt hot and tired.

2. Running down to, the post office the young girl tripped and fell on the footpath.

3. Just as he heard the snap of a twig the boy, froze with fear.

4. Instead of going straight to work he went down to the park to, play football.

5. When the music started the choir, began to sing and everyone cheered.

In the space below, write three more sentences using commas to separate clauses. They may be sentences you could use in your own Dreaming narrative.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
Dreaming stories are generally told chronologically, that is, the events are told in the order in which they happened. They start at the beginning (often the beginning of creation), move on in time to a middle where there is a complication and conclude with an ending where there is a solution to the problem and often a coda or moral message to the reader.

In a Dreaming narrative, the progress of time is marked by time adverbial words and phrases. These adverbials identify the time in which an action (verb) is performed. Sentences can have one, several or no adverbials in them and their position can vary. These time adverbials replace the need for students to overuse ‘and’ and ‘then’.

**Time adverbial words:**
- Next, later, finally, eventually, suddenly, now

**Time adverbial phrases:**
- Long long ago, after realising, as they were running, towards the end of the day, all at once, when Wurrpan unwrapped, one day

It is a deliberate ploy of the author to not specify how much time has elapsed. The reader is left to use their own experiences. Moving the position of an adverbial phrase can make the sentence more interesting, or highlight the next step in the sequence of events.

*Wurrpan got up and went to talk to Gandji when they had finished their meal.*

or

*When they had finished their meal, Wurrpan got up and went to talk to Gandji.*

It is useful to make a word bank of these time adverbials and add to it from books read by the students, and from the students’ own writing. Make use of such word banks when drafting, revising and editing written narratives.

**Cause and effect**

This is a very important feature of Dreaming narratives. It explains why things happen or how animals, natural features and structures came to be in the form they are now. There needs to be a credible link between what happened and why it happened.

Cause: *Gandji was speared.*
Effect: *This gave him the Jabiru beak.*

Cause: *Wurrpan had been touched by the hot coals from the fire.*
Effect: *The emu’s feathers are ash grey.*

When creating their own Dreaming-style narratives, students should select their animal or natural feature first and then decide how it may have come to look the way it does today. Was the echidna attacked by a tribe throwing spears? Or perhaps the large lake in the desert was created by the tears of the tribe who broke the law of their ancestors?
Helpful hints for writing an Indigenous Australian Dreaming legend

✦ Begin your story by making it sound as if it happened in the beginning of time. Use beginnings such as:
  – Once there was...
  – Long long ago...
  – Back in the Dreaming...
  – A long time ago...

✦ Set your story in Australia before European settlement. Use books to help you find the Aboriginal names for places you know and the tribal or language group who lives / lived there.

Examples include:
  – Yolngu (people of Arnhem Land)
  – Ngarrindjerri (people who lived on the shores of Lake Alexandrina in South Australia)
  – Wongutha (people of Eastern Goldfields in Western Australia)
  – Dharawal (one of the major language groups within Sydney)

✦ There is usually a conflict in the story involving one or more of the characters. They may be too greedy, or proud, selfish or unkind.

✦ Dreaming legends may include events which are not possible, such as people transforming into animals or landforms, or walking through the stars.

✦ Some Dreaming legends end by telling us a reason for the story. It is often to explain an event or feature in nature (such as why the birds are so colourful) or an aspect of human behaviour (such as why it is not good to be greedy).

• Many Dreaming legends are stories about how creatures came to look or behave the way that they do, or how natural features such as mountains or lakes came to be. Your characters may need to change from human to non-human or animal form.
You are going to write a Dreaming legend.
To help you plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

### Stage One

**Choose the characters for your story.**

a) A young boy called Billy who nobody likes because he is always playing practical jokes on others in the tribe.

b) A young girl called Molly who is an orphan and has no family to look after her.

### Stage Two

**Start your story with a good beginning.**

a) The night of the corroboree was here at last, and Billy was pretending to be a great hunter recreating his hunting exploits. Billy was having a fantastic time, showing off in front of some others boys from the tribe. He had rubbed mud on his face and carried a small stick instead of a spear.

b) Molly sat alone in the dappled shade of the gum trees. She felt very lonely. The other children in the tribe would not play with her. When she tried to talk to them and join in their games, they always turned and walked away.

### Stage Three

**Set the scene for the story.**

The child decides to show the other children in the tribe that he/she is better than they are.

a) One day Billy follows the men as they track a mob of kangaroos. The hunters do not notice the small boy darting behind trees and sheltering in the scrub.

b) Molly decides that she should make herself useful in the tribe, so that the others start to admire her for her skills. She will do more work than the others can and she will do it faster than them.
Give the characters a problem.

The child’s idea does not go according to plan.

a) Billy has been following the hunters since early in the morning. It is now late in the afternoon. The baking sun had made him very thirsty. He gives up the chase and returns to the hunter’s camp where he finds water and drinks it all, leaving none for the hunters when they return.

b) As she tries to help, Molly gets in everyone’s way. They get angry with her, but that only makes her try harder and become more annoying. Just as the women are preparing the evening meal, she decides to bring them more firewood. She carries too much and ends up dropping it all and ruining the meal.

Say how the problem is solved.

a) The hunters return to discover what the boy has done and are very angry with him. They start to chase the boy, who climbs a nearby gum tree to get away from them. He turns into a koala that rarely drinks and can only eat eucalyptus leaves.

b) The women chase the girl in order to punish her for her clumsy behaviour. She runs away as fast as she can, but the women keep chasing. As the girl runs faster and faster she turns into a dust storm, or willy-willy, that the women cannot catch.

Say what happens in the end.

a) The children of the tribe learn that they must always share what they have with the rest of the tribe. It does not pay to be greedy, even when you are in need.

b) Whenever there is a dust storm, or willy-willy, the women of the tribe rush to cover up the food, lest it be spoiled by the dirt and wind.
Indigenous Australian Dreaming legend

Vocabulary bank 1

admire • firewood • practical joke
afternoon • gum tree • pretending
annoying • greedy • punish
baking • hunter • recreating
behaviour • kangaroos • return
chase • koala • scrub
children • lonely • sheltering
corroboree • mob • spear

dappled • morning • spoiled
darting • orphan • thirsty
eucalyptus • tribe
evening • willy-willy
exploits • • •

My own words
Indigenous Australian Dreaming legend
Scaffold 2

You are going to write a Dreaming legend.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage, or use your own ideas.

**Stage One**

Choose the characters for your story.

a) **Characters:**
   - Harmless snake
   - Giant goannas
   - Animals

b) **Characters:**
   - Harmless lizard
   - Giant dingoes
   - Animals

**Stage Two**

Start with a good opening sentence.

a) A long time ago, the earth and all its creatures were created by the ancient ancestors. Many of the creatures were huge, much bigger than the people who lived with them.

b) Many years ago in the Dreaming, life was very difficult for the Aboriginal people. Dangerous creatures often lurked in the tall grasses and near billabongs.

**Stage Three**

a) The giant goannas/dingoes were terrifying the Aboriginal tribes. They would capture anyone who went alone into the bush and eat them for dinner.

b) The mothers constantly warned their children not to stray into the tall grass because there the dingo/goannas lurked, ready to carry them away from their tribe.
Give the characters a problem.

The animals were having a meeting because they were worried about the actions of the giant goannas/dingoes. They thought that when the giant creatures had eaten all the people, that they would start eating the other smaller animals.

a) The harmless lizard/snake volunteered to go and fight the goannas/dingoes, but the other animals just laughed at him. They called him weak and small.

b) The lizard/snake volunteered to stop the dingoes/goannas from attacking the children, but nobody listened to him because they didn’t think he was dangerous enough.

Say how the problem is solved.

a) The harmless snake goes out into the bush to find the goannas. It creates a diversion and manages to steal the goanna’s poison. The goanna becomes weak and small without its poison and cannot hurt anyone anymore.

b) The lizard decides to create a disguise to frighten away the dingoes. He gathers leaves and wraps them around his neck. The dingoes are scared of this strange creature and run off into the desert.

Say what happens in the end.

All the animals are pleased that the threat has gone and they are safe.

a) The snake refuses to throw away the goanna’s poison and instead keeps it for himself, so the other animals won’t laugh at him any more for being weak.

b) The lizard liked his disguise so much he kept it and became known as the frill-necked lizard. He only shows his frills when there is danger around.
### Indigenous Australian Dreaming legend

**Vocabulary bank 2**

| ancestor | frill-necked lizard | strange |
| ancient | gathers | stray |
| attacking | giant | terrifying |
| billabongs | goanna | threat |
| capture | harmless | volunteered |
| create | laughed | weak |
| creatures | lurked | worried |
| dangerous | poison | |
| dingo | refuses | |
| disguise | snake | |
| diversion | |

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**My own words**


Humorous stories

Writing a story intended to make someone laugh and to entertain them is a challenge. After all, every reader has a slightly different sense of humour. Authors of comic stories sometimes employ a first-person narrator and adopt an informal, conspiratorial tone. It is through the eyes of this stock hero that events unfold.

The characters frequently have amusing or alliterative names and appear slightly larger than life. The ‘good’ characters triumph at the conclusion of the tale. Animal characters are another common feature of humorous stories.

Amusing stories often contain an element of slapstick: knockabout, rough and tumble humour. This may take the form of a series of disasters but, as in the best cartoons, the characters pick themselves up and dust themselves down after even the most horrible of experiences.

Comic stories may include puns, jokes and hyperbole, which is deliberate exaggeration used for effect.

Examples of humorous stories

- *The Giggler Treatment* by Roddy Doyle (Scholastic, 2000)
- *Flat Stanley* by Jeff Brown (Egmont, 2003)
- *Captain Underpants and the Attack of the Talking Toilets* by Dav Pilkey (Scholastic, 1999)
- *Funny Stories for 8 year olds* by Helen Paiba (Pan Books, 2003)
- *Killer Underpants* by Michael Lawrence (Sagebrush Education Resources, 2003)
- *Gigglers Aqua series* (Blake Education, 2005)
- *Gigglers Gold series* (Blake Education, 2006)
- *The Day my Bum went Psycho* by Andy Griffiths (Pan Macmillan, 2001)
Muddler Morgan was a farm-hand on Farmer Barnstable's livestock farm. He had worked there for just a little over a year but, unfortunately, it had not been a very successful year! Everyone liked Muddler even though he was a strange-looking character. He was so thin that he had to run around in the shower just to get wet! And yet he was also so very strong that he could work all day without getting even a little bit tired. The good things about Muddler were that he was always cheerful and happy and never had a bad word to say about anyone. He was very kind and thoughtful and he really loved working with animals but somehow he always got things muddled up! He was always forgetting to do things and he never seemed to quite understand what Farmer Barnstable asked him to do but he muddled along and usually got things done. The farmer put up with Muddler's ways because he liked having his cheery face around the place and he knew how good he was at looking after the animals — in fact they had never looked healthier!

It was the night before the annual Country Show and Farmer Barnstable had decided to take his best sheep, cow, duck and goat to the Show to try and win first prize in the 'Best in Show Competition'. He had never won a first prize before — lots of seconds and thirds — but this year he was certain that with Muddler's extra care they would beat all the rest hands down. So he went off to find Muddler at the hen house.

"Now, don't forget, Muddler, I want you to make sure the animals have their feed tonight and then change their bedding so that they look their very best for the morning," reminded Farmer Barnstable.

"Ok, Mr Barnstable, you can rely on me," replied Muddler.

Farmer Barnstable returned to his farmhouse and Muddler made his way to the feed shed.

"Right, I've got to make sure the animals have their feed tonight and then change their bedding or was it to change their feed and make sure they have their bedding?" thought Muddler. "Yes, that was it, I've got to change their feed and make sure they have their bedding. But I wonder how I've got to change their feed?" he wondered as he picked up the sheep's feed.

Feeling quite confident, Muddler fed the duck the sheep's feed, the goat the cow's feed, the sheep the duck's feed and the cow the goat's feed. He did wonder why Farmer Barnstable wanted him to suddenly change the animals' feed around but he concluded that the farmer knew what he was doing — perhaps it was some special method to make sure the animals were at their very best for tomorrow! Then Muddler thought about making sure the animals had their bedding. He pondered over this for some time.
“But they already have their bedding,” he thought. “Some of it looks a bit dirty, but they DO have it, so everything must be OK,” he concluded and went home for the night.

The next day some very strange things happened! Firstly, Muddler noticed that the goat was extremely dirty. He had been rolling in the dirty bedding and was covered in muck and hay.

“Oh, dear,” thought Muddler, “I’d better try and clean him up before Farmer Barnstable comes.”

That was when he noticed the second strange thing. When Muddler called the goat to him, instead of making his usual goaty noises, he started mooing! Muddler was dumbstruck! What on earth was going on?

He cleaned the goat up and put him in another pen. The goat remained quiet and Muddler eventually thought that he’d imagined the mooing sounds.

Next he went to see the duck. She too was covered in dirty bedding so when Muddler grabbed her to clean her up, she started to protest but instead of quacking she was bleating!

“Oh no,” thought Muddler. “What have I did? It must be because I changed their feed around. Farmer Barnstable will kill me!”

He quickly ran around to see the sheep and the cow and sure enough, the cow was making goat noises and the sheep was quacking like a duck! What was he going to do now? Farmer Barnstable would be here in a moment, ready to take them to the Show. Muddler tried to think as fast as he could, which wasn’t in fact very fast! All that he could come up with was that he’d have to try and disguise the animals in some way. He ran to the duck’s pen and gathered up all the old feathers he could find. Then he went to the barn and gathered some black paint, a huge ball of string, some sheep’s wool and some orange cardboard and glue from home. He raced back to the animals and began work.

After an hour he had changed the duck into a sheep by covering her with so much wool that she could hardly walk. He had covered the sheep with duck feathers and made a beak and feet out of orange cardboard. Then he painted the goat in large black patches and covered the cow in loads of string that hung down like the goat’s hair.

“No-one will ever notice the difference,” he thought as he herded the animals into the truck ready for the Show.

Meanwhile Farmer Barnstable was leaving the farmhouse. He made a last minute adjustment to his tie and hat in the hall mirror and then shut the front door firmly behind him.
“Ah, there you are, Muddler. Everything ready?” he asked as he spied Muddler coming across the farmyard.

“Yes, Mr Barnstable, everything’s just fine. I bet the crowd will be absolutely amazed at the animals you’ve brought this year,” replied Muddler as they both climbed into the truck and drove off.

Throughout the journey they could hear the animals moving about a lot more than usual.

“What on earth do you think they’re doing back there?” asked Farmer Barnstable.

“I think they is excited about the prospect of winning that first prize,” said Muddler, hoping that the farmer wouldn’t stop to check.

Finally they arrived at the Show. Farmer Barnstable jumped out and went to open the back of the truck. Muddler stood nearby with his fingers crossed and his eyes closed.

“What on EARTH is THIS?” screamed Farmer Barnstable, as the animals walked down the plank. “What have you done to my prize animals, Muddler? Oh, what HAVE you DONE?” he cried as he stood and looked in disbelief at the bedraggled bunch of animals before him.

“That’s it! You’ve gone too far this time, Muddler. You’re FIRED! I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole farming community if I try and put these creatures on show!”

Just then an almighty burst of thunder split the air and a huge torrent of rain poured down from the skies. It was more rain than all the previous months put together. Poor Muddler and Farmer Barnstable were absolutely soaked within seconds. But then an amazing thing happened. Before their very eyes, the wool started to fall off the duck, the black paint washed off the goat, the hair fell off the cow and the feathers fell away from the poor old sheep. Within a minute or so the animals were returned to their normal selves and were standing there clean and bright as if they had just emerged from a bath.

“I haven’t got time to ask you what madness possessed you to cover my precious animals in all this muck,” bellowed Farmer Barnstable, “but at least they all look presentable at last. Hurry up or we’ll be late for the judging. I’ll speak to you later!”

Soon Muddler was able to stand with pride in the judging ring with Farmer Barnstable. The judges were undecided as to who had the best range of animals. The quality was very high and Farmer Barnstable feared that he would only come second or third again this year.
“Attention everyone,” boomed a voice over the loud speaker. “In order for us to make our final judgement we will be asking the farmers to call their animals to them to watch how well-behaved they are.”

“Oh no,” thought Muddler. “They always make a noise when Farmer Barnstable calls them. What’ll I do?”

But it was too late to do anything. One by one the farmers each called their animals and the crowd cheered and clapped as they watched the magnificent animals running to their owners. When it was Farmer Barnstable’s turn, however, the whole stadium suddenly became totally silent. People stared in amazement and disbelief as they heard the sheep quacking like a duck, the duck bleating like a sheep, the cow bleating like a goat and the goat mooing like a cow!

Farmer Barnstable stood there with a face as red and explosive as a pimple about to burst! He looked so angrily at Muddler that it seemed as if he might strangle him! But before he could actually do him any harm, the whole crowd stood up on their feet and were clapping and cheering as they never have before. They were amazed that Farmer Barnstable had trained his animals to do such wonderful tricks!

The judges, seeing the crowd’s reaction, awarded first prize to Farmer Barnstable who now stood beaming from ear to ear in the centre of the arena.

Muddler was very relieved. Farmer Barnstable forgave him for his mistake and even started laughing about Muddler’s attempt to disguise the animals. And Muddler decided he would never mix up the animals’ feed ever again!
Muddler’s Dreadful Mistake

Muddler Morgan was a farm-hand on Farmer Barnstable’s livestock farm. He had worked on the farm for just a little over a year but unfortunately it had not been a very successful year! Everyone liked Muddler even though he was a strange-looking character. He was so thin that he had to run around in the shower just to get wet! And yet he was also so very strong that he could work all day without getting even a little bit tired. The good things about Muddler were that he was always cheerful and happy and never had a bad word to say about anyone. He was very kind and thoughtful and he really loved working with animals but somehow he always got things muddled up! He was always forgetting to do things and he never seemed to quite understand what Farmer Barnstable asked him to do but he muddled along and usually got things done. The farmer put up with Muddler’s ways because he liked having his cheery face around the place and he knew how good he was at looking after the animals — in fact they had never looked healthier!

It was the night before the Country Show and Farmer Barnstable had decided to take his best sheep, cow, duck and goat to the Show to try and win first prize in the ‘Best in Show Competition’. He had never won a first prize before — lots of seconds and thirds — but this year he was certain that with Muddler’s extra care they would beat all the rest hands down. So he went off to find Muddler at the hen house.

“Now, don’t forget, Muddler, I want you to make sure the animals have their feed tonight and then change their bedding so that they look their very best for the morning,” reminded Farmer Barnstable.

“Ok, Mr Barnstable, you can rely on me,” replied Muddler.

Farmer Barnstable returned to his farmhouse and Muddler made his way to the feed shed.

“Right, I’ve got to make sure the animals have their feed tonight and then change their bedding or was it to change their feed and make sure they have their bedding?” thought Muddler. “Yes, that was it, I’ve got to change their feed and make sure they have their bedding. But I wonder how I’ve got to change their feed?” he wondered as he picked up the sheep’s feed.
Feeling quite confident, Muddler fed the duck the sheep’s feed, the goat the cow’s feed, the sheep the duck’s feed and the cow the goat’s feed. He did wonder why Farmer Barnstable wanted him to suddenly change the animals’ feed around but he concluded that the farmer knew what he was doing — perhaps it was some special method to make sure the animals were at their very best for tomorrow! Then Muddler thought about making sure the animals had their bedding. He pondered over this for some time.

“But they already have their bedding,” he thought. “Some of it looks a bit dirty, but they DO have it, so everything must be ok,” he concluded and went home for the night.

The next day some very strange things happened! Firstly, Muddler noticed that the goat was extremely dirty. He had been rolling in the dirty bedding and was covered in muck and hay.

“Oh, dear,” thought Muddler, “I’d better try and clean him up before Farmer Barnstable comes.”

That was when he noticed the second strange thing. When Muddler called the goat to him, instead of making his usual goaty noise, he started mooing!! Muddler was dumbstruck! What on earth was going on?

He cleaned the goat up and put him in another pen. The goat remained quiet and Muddler eventually thought that he’d imagined the mooing sounds.

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He quickly ran around to see the sheep and the cow and sure enough, the cow was making goat noises and the sheep was quacking like a duck! What was he going to do now? Farmer Barnstable would be here in a moment, ready to take them
to the Show. Muddler tried to think as fast as he could, which wasn’t in fact very fast! All that he could come up with was that he’d have to try and disguise the animals in some way. He ran to the duck’s pen and gathered up all the old feathers he could find. Then he went to the barn and gathered some black paint, a huge ball of string, some sheep’s wool and some orange cardboard and glue from home. He raced back to the animals and began work.

After an hour he had changed the duck into a sheep by covering her with so much wool that she could hardly walk. He had covered the sheep with duck feathers and made a beak and feet out of orange cardboard. Then he painted the goat in large black patches and covered the cow in loads of string that hung down like the goat’s hair.

“No-one will ever notice the difference,” he thought as he herded the animals into the lorry ready for the Show.

Meanwhile Farmer Barnstable was leaving the farmhouse. He made a last minute adjustment to his tie and hat in the hall mirror and then shut the front door firmly behind him.

“Ah, there you are, Muddler. Everything ready?” he asked as he spied Muddler coming across the farmyard.

“Yes, Mr Barnstable, everything’s just fine. I bet the crowd will be absolutely amazed at the animals you’ve brought this year,” replied Muddler as they both climbed into the truck and drove off.

Throughout the journey they could hear the animals moving about a lot more than usual.

“What on earth do you think they’re doing back there?” asked Farmer Barnstable.

“I think they is excited about the prospect of winning that first prize,” said Muddler, hoping that the farmer wouldn’t stop to check.
Finally they arrived at the Show. Farmer Barnstable jumped out and went to open the back of the truck. Muddler stood nearby with his fingers crossed and his eyes closed.

“What on EARTH is THIS?” screamed Farmer Barnstable, as the animals walked down the plank. “What have you done to my prize animals, Muddler? Oh, what HAVE you DONE?” he cried as he stood and looked in disbelief at the bedraggled bunch of animals before him.

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“Oh no,” thought Muddler. “They always make a noise when Farmer Barnstable calls them. What’ll I do?”
But it was too late to do anything. One by one the farmers each called their animals and the crowd cheered and clapped as they watched the magnificent animals running to their owners.

When it was Farmer Barnstable’s turn, however, the whole stadium suddenly became totally silent. People stared in amazement and disbelief as they heard the sheep quacking like a duck, the duck bleating like a sheep, the cow bleating like a goat and the goat mooing like a cow!

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Muddler was very relieved. Farmer Barnstable forgave him for his mistake and even started laughing about Muddler’s attempt to disguise the animals. And Muddler decided he would never mix up the animals’ feed ever again!
Understanding the grammar and punctuation

Pronouns and verbs

The verb in a sentence must always agree with the pronoun (or noun).

*I think they are excited.*

*NOT*

*I think they is excited.*

Sometimes however, incorrect grammatical agreement is used deliberately by an author to add a comic touch to the story or a particular character.

Commas

Sometimes a comma is used after the time words.

*Firstly, Muddler noticed that the goat was extremely dirty.*

Using words to show that time has passed

There are lots of words and phrases that can be used to show how time has passed in your story. These words provide the reader with a better understanding of the sequence of events and how the passage of time may have affected the characters and setting in the story.

*firstly, secondly, lastly, finally, in the end, at last*

These tell us in what order the things happened.

*previously, before, at the beginning*

These tell us what happened before the story began.

*meanwhile, at the same time, meantime*

These tell us what is happening at the same time as the main action.

*after, next, the next day, before long, soon, eventually*

These tell us what happened next.
Pronouns and verbs

Write either **were** or **was** in each of these sentences.

1. Everyone liked Muddler even though he ________ a strange-looking character.
2. He ________ a very kind person.
3. It ________ too late to do anything.
4. She ________ very good at making things.
5. That was the direction they ________ headed in.
6. I ________ going to go to the Show.
7. We did not know that we ________ late.

Write either **is** or **are** in each of these sentences.

1. “I think they_______ excited.”
2. We ________ going to the Show.
3. They ________ very nice people.
4. He ________ taller than all the other children in his class.
5. The Browns went to Spain last year and this year they ________ going to Italy.
6. She ________ a very good dancer.
7. We ________ visiting our grandma this weekend.

Write two sentences of your own using the words ‘he’ and ‘they’, as well as ‘were’ or ‘was’.  

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
Time words

Put a comma in each sentence below to make a short pause.

1. Firstly Muddler tried to make the animals look like they sounded.
2. Secondly Muddler hid the animals from Farmer Barnstable.
3. Meanwhile Farmer Barnstable was getting ready for the Show.
4. Finally they arrived at the Show.

Use a word or phrase from the box to complete these sentences.

- then
- the next day
- soon
- finally
- from then on

1. ______________________ _________________ Farmer Barnstable always fed the animals the night before a Show.
2. ______________________ _________________ it began to rain and the animals got soaking wet.
3. Muddler dressed up the animals and _________________ he put them into the truck.
4. ______________________ _________________ Farmer Barnstable hung his First Prize ribbons in his living room for everyone to see.
5. ______________________ _________________ it was time for the animals to be judged.

Complete these sentences using your own ideas.

1. Firstly, __________________________________________________________________
2. Secondly, __________________________________________________________________
3. Finally, __________________________________________________________________
Writing a funny story is quite a challenge because different things make different people laugh, but there are certain tools that the writer can use to create a sense of fun:

**Alliteration**

Alliteration is when adjacent or closely connected words begin with the same phoneme:

- **Muddler Morgan**
- *...absolutely amazed at the animals...*

Alliterations encourage us to have fun with words — to roll the words around on our tongues as we read them. They are great for reading out loud to an audience and can even create the sound or action of the character or thing being described. For example:

> The stealthy snake hissed and swayed as it slithered silently across the sand.

**Word play**

Puns are a form of word play. These are words with a similar sound but a different meaning used to create a humorous effect. For example:

- **Those who jump off a Paris bridge are in Seine.**
- **It was an emotional wedding, even the cake was in tiers.**
- **I’m on a seafood diet — I see food and I eat it.**
- **Spooky Tales by R U Scared.**

Another way to play with words is to make the characters’ names or places relate to their meaning, for example:

- **Meg Byte (a computer expert)**
- **Farmer Barnstable**
- **Muddler**
- **Mr Floss (the dentist)**

This encourages the reader to have a wry smile before the story even starts and sets the mood for the rest of the story.

**Onomatopoeia**

Onomatopoeia are words that sound like their meaning. Comic books are full of them:

> Bang! Crash! Biff! Zap! Splash! Bash! Boom!

These kinds of words create an exciting performance when the story is read out loud.

**Similes**

Similes are when the writer compares something to something else, using the words ‘like’ or ‘as’. Similes can make funny situations even funnier by creating a humorous image in the reader’s mind.

> Farmer Barnstable stood there with a face as red and explosive as a pimple about to burst!

**Character descriptions**

When describing characters in humorous stories, the writer has a good opportunity to create a laugh by describing the characters in a humorous way. This is a very effective way of creating a vivid image in the reader’s mind — as long as it’s not overdone! Instead of saying the character was thin, for example, you could say:

> He was so thin that he had to run around in the shower just to get wet!
Helpful hints for writing a humorous story

✦ Give your characters funny sounding names that tell the reader something about what they are like. For example, Muddler is called that name because he muddles things up all the time.

Sometimes it is fun to make the characters’ names into an alliteration. For example:

- Muddler Morgan
- Sharon Shanty
- Beefy Barnes

✦ Many funny stories are about ‘normal’ people who find themselves in a humorous or unusual situation.

✦ Many funny stories have animals in them.

✦ Describe your characters by comparing them to something else. Think of funny things to compare them with.

 Farmer Barnstable stood there with a face as red and explosive as a pimple about to burst!

Or, describe your characters by saying funny things about them.

- He was so thin that he had to run around in the shower just to get wet!

✦ Use slapstick in your story. Have your characters fall over or bump into things. But remember – just like in comics – the characters never get hurt!

✦ Things can happen in funny stories that just would not be possible in real life – use comic books and cartoons to get ideas.

✦ Make sure you have a happy ending where the main character wins out in the end.
Humorous story
Scaffold 1

You are going to write a funny story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

Stage One
Choose the characters for your story.

a) A brother and sister.
b) Two brothers.

Think of some funny names for your characters.

Stage Two
Start your story with a good beginning.

a) The two children dashed across the road to get out of the rain. They raced into the corner shop, sending tins of food flying everywhere.
b) Mrs Nash stood at the door waving goodbye to the children. She watched them as they walked down the road together, hoping that she’d made the right decision.

Stage Three
Set the scene for the story.

The children are going to help their uncle in his corner store every weekend.

a) They are really excited about helping and can’t wait to begin work.
b) They are very unhappy about having to work in the shop. They wanted to play sport on the weekend instead.
Stage Four

Give the characters a problem.

Their uncle asks them to tidy up the food shelves at the back of the store.

a) They accidentally knock all sorts of things over when tidying the shelves. The floor is very slippery because it is covered in sugar and flour. Customers slip and fall over. One customer knocks over a large honey jar which covers him in sticky goo.

b) They decide to have fun by changing all the labels on the foods. (They put the salt label on the sugar, for example).

The customers complain very loudly to the children’s uncle.

Stage Five

Say how the problem is solved.

Their uncle wants them to think of a way to make the customers happy again.

a) They dress up in funny costumes everyday and make people laugh. The customers come flocking back just to see the children.

b) They invent a robot that stands outside the shop inviting people inside. The robot gets up to all sorts of naughty tricks but the customers like it.

Stage Six

Say what happens in the end.

a) The characters decide they enjoy working in the shop so much that they also work there after school.

b) The uncle is glad to have his customers back but decides that he doesn’t want the children to help him any more in case something else goes wrong!
# Humorous story

## Vocabulary bank 1

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## My own words

...
You are going to write a funny story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage, or use your own ideas.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your story.

a) Characters:
   A boy (X) who is very tall and skinny
   His moggy cat who likes to play tricks
   The boy’s mother who never listens to him

b) Characters:
   A girl (Y) who wears her hair in a very strange way
   Her dog who is deaf
   The girl’s father who is always fixing things around the house

Think of some funny names for your characters. Write interesting descriptions of what they look like and what they like to do.

Stage Two

Begin with a good opening sentence and set the scene.

a) X/Y burst into the kitchen, knocking the cat/dog flying as he/she did so.

b) X/Y couldn’t wait to get home to tell his/her parent about his/her brilliant new idea.

The scene:

X/Y has a fantastic idea. He/she wants to make money by looking after other people’s pets while they are away on holidays. He/she tells her parent but the parent either doesn’t listen properly or is too busy to realise what the child has said and says “That’s nice dear.”
Stage Three

Give the characters a problem.

The character manages to get one parrot, one cat and one dog to look after. The three pets all cause problems for the character’s own pet and the parent.

a) The parent is very confused about where all the animals have come from and thinks he/she is going mad! The animals end up fighting and completely wreck the house.

b) The parent thinks the animals have all escaped from a pet shop and tries to capture them all. In doing so furniture gets knocked over, things go flying and chaos reigns!

Stage Four

Say how the problem is solved.

A passing journalist sees the messy house and takes some photos. He writes a newspaper story.

a) A famous designer loves the ‘new’ messy look so much he asks the parent if he/she will agree to have a photo shoot for an expensive house magazine! The family makes enough money to pay for all the damages done to the house.

b) The family get an offer from a TV house make-over program to help them re-do the house.

Stage Six

Say what happens in the end.

a) All the pets are returned safely and the house returns to normal. But then X/Y gets another money-making idea!

b) The pet owners are proud that their animals have become famous and they agree to let X/Y look after them every weekend. X/Y’s parent is not amused!
Humorous story
Vocabulary bank 2

animals
brilliant
busy
confused
damages
designer
family
famous
fantastic
fighting

- hair
- holidays
- house
- idea
- journalist
- magazine
- mother
- newspaper
- parent
- parrot
- pets
- photos
- problems
- program
- realise
- skinny
- weekend
- wreck

My own words
Traditional fairytales

Fairytales are magical morality tales where the ‘good’ characters triumph over evil and restore order. These traditional stories usually contain a range of stock characters: a weak father; a wicked step-mother; a heroine who is as good as she is beautiful; a handsome prince; a wicked witch; a dutiful youngest son; a magical animal or creature who helps the hero or heroine. The heroine of the story is essentially rather passive, but she can be spurred into action by dire need or when given a helping hand by a magical character. Although the hero or heroine is usually given a name, many of the characters are known simply by their position in society or their relation to the protagonist, for example ‘the king’ and ‘Jack’s mother’.

Weak characters may come to realise the error of their ways by the end of the tale, but wicked characters rarely change and frequently meet their end in particularly gruesome ways. The plot often includes a contrast between the way a good character and a wicked character respond to a challenge or adversity.

The setting for fairytales is beautiful countryside dotted with wonderful castles. The forests in this countryside contain wild beasts, which often help the hero or heroine.

As well as using character types, writers of traditional fairytales use antiquated language and conventional phrases, such as:

- Once upon a time;
- ...as good as she was beautiful;
- He set off to make his fortune;
- They lived happily ever after.

Conventional similes, or similes drawn from the natural world, are another feature of these stories:

- Her skin was as white as snow.

Some of the characters speak in rhyme:

- Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
- Who is the fairest of them all?

Fairytales are usually narrated in the third person, sometimes in a wry tone, and may contain repetition of certain phrases.

**Examples of traditional fairytales**

- *The Emperor’s New Clothes* by Hans Christian Andersen (Penguin, 2005)
- *The Snow Queen* retold by Bertie Doherty (Scholastic, 1991)
- *The Selfish Giant* by Oscar Wilde (Random House, 2001)
- *A First book of Fairytales* by Mary Hoffman (Dorling Kindersley, 2001)
- *Hans Christian Andersen Fairytales* read by Judi Dench (Hodder Headline Audiobooks, 1997)
- *Russian Fairytales* retold by Gillian Avery (Knopf Publishing Group, 1995)

(For more advanced readers)

- *Grimm’s Fairytales* by the Brothers Grimm (Sagebrush Education resources, 2002)
- *Grimm’s Fairytales* by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm (Puffin Classics, 1994)
Once upon a time in a land far away, there lived a king who had five daughters, all of whom were happily married, except for one. The four married princesses were all very sensible but rather ugly and plain. The youngest unmarried princess, however, was as good as she was beautiful but she didn’t have an ounce of common sense in her. Every time a young prince came to court, the young princess scared him away by doing something very silly that made him quickly change his mind. After all, these princes would one day be kings, and they didn’t want their kingdom to be ruled by a queen with no sense.

One day the king decided to try and do something about his senseless young daughter. He loved her very much but he wanted to try and help her to learn some common sense so he decided to send her to live with the woodcutter who lived in the forest at the far side of his kingdom. The king knew the woodcutter to be a sensible man with a family of three daughters of his own who were all very capable and sensible girls.

“But why do I have to go away, dear father? What have I done that you no longer want me to be here with you and dear mamma in our lovely palace? Must I bid farewell to the only people in the world whom I hold dear?” asked the princess.

“It will only be for a short while, my dear. The months will go by very quickly and you will soon return to us safe and sound as before. Don’t fret, my dear, it will all be for the best,” replied the kindly king.

So the princess set off with her three maids on their long journey to the woodcutter’s cottage. She had never been to the forest on the far side of the kingdom before so she was a little afraid of what might lie before her. The travellers journeyed over hill and down dale, through fields filled with flowers and crops swaying gently in the breeze. Suddenly the group came across a weasel that was caught in a trap.

“Help, please help me,” cried the weasel. “Please have mercy on me. I know I am only a poor weasel but I have a large family to take care of and I’ve never done anyone any harm.”

The princess was a kindly soul and she couldn’t bear to see the weasel struggling in the trap so she asked one of her maids to release it.

“Take the weasel to the herb woman who lives in our village, she will know what to do,” ordered the princess.
"But shouldn’t we just let the weasel go here so it can find its family again?” asked the maid timidly.

"No, take the weasel to the herb woman. She will look at its poor damaged foot and will know how to mend it."

So the maid unwillingly walked away to travel the five miles to the herb woman in the village.

Meanwhile the princess and her remaining two maids continued on their journey. By and by they came across a little stream and they stopped to have a rest and quench their thirst. Whilst they were resting, a flight of doves settled in the trees overhead. One of them flew down and landed on the princess’s hand.

"Oh, little bird, you gave me such a fright,” said the princess. “But you are so very sweet. Your feathers are so soft and beautiful and you have such a pretty face that I’d like you to come and live in the palace with me when I return from my travels.”

So she ordered the second of her maids to carry the dove back to the palace and put it in the special royal aviary to await her return.

The princess and her one remaining maid set off again for the forest. Presently they came across a huge patch of flowers; the most beautiful the princess had ever seen.

"Oh aren’t they lovely?” she said. “I just have to have them in my room; lots and lots of them.”

So she ordered her maid to collect hundreds of the flowers to take them back to the palace. The maid tried to tell her that the flowers would all die before she returned but the princess would not listen.

"Don’t be silly,” she said. “The flowers are living well enough here; why shouldn’t they do so at the palace?”

So the poor maid was sent to walk all the way back while the princess continued on her journey to the woodcutter’s cottage.

She walked for some hours before she finally realised that she was now all alone and she began to worry.

"Oh, I have been silly. Really silly this time. Papa will be very cross with me. Why did I send all my maids away? What will happen to me if I can’t find my way?”
And with that she sat down and began to cry. Suddenly a white rabbit appeared at her side.

"What's the matter, my beauty?" asked the rabbit. "Why do you cry so?"

The princess told the rabbit how she had sent all her maids away in turn and that now she was all alone and very afraid.

"Oh dear," said the rabbit. "That was very silly of you."

"Yes," said the princess. "I'm always doing silly things and that's why there is no prince in all the land that wants to marry me. My father, the king, has sent me away to learn some common sense from the woodcutter's family. But now I suppose I'll never get married." And with that she began to sob again in earnest.

It was more than the poor rabbit could bear. He hated to see the pretty young princess looking so miserable so decided to confide in her.

"I was once the prince of Huntingland. My father thought I was very silly too, so he asked the palace magician to turn me into a rabbit. He thought that would soon bring me to my senses!" said the rabbit in a very sad voice.

"Oh, but that is horrible," said the princess, forgetting her own worries. "But why are you out here all alone?"

"I felt so ashamed that my father thought so little of me that I decided to run away. And now, like you, I am all alone and very afraid," said the rabbit.

The princess and the rabbit sat together for a long time, taking comfort from one another. Suddenly a band of men appeared, together with a very large roly-poly man in royal regalia and a court magician.

"It's my father," said the rabbit. "Quick, hide me!"

But it was too late. King Huntingland had seen the rabbit and made a grab for it.

"Oh my poor precious son. We have found you at last. How will I ever forgive myself? Quick, magician, turn my son back as he should be!"

With that the magician waved his magic wand and there before the princess stood the most handsome prince she had ever seen. King Huntingland hugged his son to him and told him that he had not meant him to stay a rabbit for long. He had only wanted to teach him a lesson for being silly that day.
“We were so worried when we discovered that you had gone missing. We’ve been searching for you for days. Can you ever forgive me?” asked the king.

“Yes I can but only if you agree that I can marry this beautiful princess that you see before you. She has been so kind to me and doesn’t care how silly I am.”

So King Huntingland agreed and the princess returned to her father with the handsome prince at her side. A huge crowd of people from all over the kingdom came to see the happy couple on their wedding day and the two lived happily ever after, never to be silly again.

Collective noun.
The prince and princess always marry in a traditional fairytale.

Typical story ending.
The Silly Princess

Once upon a time in a land far away, there lived a king who had five daughters, all of whom were happily married, except for one. The four married princesses were all very sensible but rather ugly and plain. The youngest unmarried princess, however, was as good as she was beautiful but she didn’t have an ounce of common sense in her. Every time a young prince came to court, the young princess scared them away by doing something very silly that made them quickly change their minds. After all, these princes would one day be kings, and they didn’t want their kingdom to be ruled by a queen with no sense.

One day the king decided to try and do something about his senseless young daughter. He loved her very much but he wanted to try and help her to learn some common sense so he decided to send her to live with the woodcutter who lived in the forest at the far side of his kingdom. The king knew the woodcutter to be a sensible man with a family of three daughters of his own who were all very capable and sensible girls.

“But why do I have to go away, dear father? What have I done that you no longer want me to be here with you and dear mamma in our lovely palace? Must I bid farewell to the only people in the world whom I hold dear?” asked the princess.

“It will only be for a short while, my dear. The months will go by very quickly and you will soon return to us safe and sound as before. Don’t fret, my dear, it will all be for the best,” replied the kindly king.

So the princess set off with her three maids on their long journey to the woodcutter’s cottage. She had never been to the forest on the far side of the kingdom before so she was a little afraid of what may lie before her.
The travellers journeyed over hill and down dale, through fields filled with flowers and crops swaying gently in the breeze. Suddenly the group came across a weasel that was caught in a trap.

“Help, please help me,” cried the weasel. “Please have mercy on me. I know I am only a poor weasel but I have a large family to take care of and I’ve never done anyone any harm.”

The princess was a kindly soul and she couldn’t bear to see the weasel struggling in the trap so she asked one of her maids to release it.

“Take the weasel to the herb woman who lives in our village, she will know what to do,” ordered the princess.

“But shouldn’t we just let the weasel go here so it can find its family again?” asked the maid timidly.

“No, take the weasel to the herb woman. She will look at its poor damaged foot and will know how to mend it.”

So the maid unwillingly walked away to travel the five miles to the herb woman in the village.

Meanwhile the princess and her remaining two maids continued on their journey. By and by they came across a little stream and they stopped to have a rest and quench their thirst. Whilst they were resting, a flight of doves settled in the trees overhead. One of them flew down and landed on the princess’s hand.

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So she ordered her maid to collect hundreds of the flowers to take them back to the palace. The maid tried to tell her that the flowers would all die before she returned but the princess would not listen.

“Don’t be silly,” she said. “The flowers are living well enough here; why shouldn’t they do so at the palace?”

So the poor maid was sent to walk all the way back while the princess continued on her journey to the woodcutter’s cottage.

She walked for some hours before she finally realised that she was now all alone and she began to worry.

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And with that she sat down and began to cry. Suddenly a white rabbit appeared at her side.

“What’s the matter, my beauty?” asked the rabbit. “Why do you cry so?”

The princess told the rabbit how she had sent all her maids away in turn and that now she was all alone and very afraid.

“Oh dear,” said the rabbit. “That was very silly of you.”

“Yes,” said the princess. “I’m always doing silly things and that’s why there is no prince in all the land that wants to marry me. My father, the king, has sent me away to learn some common sense from the woodcutter’s family. But now I suppose I’ll never get married.” And with that she began to sob again in earnest.

It was more than the poor rabbit could bear. He hated to see the pretty young princess looking so miserable so decided to confide in her.
"I was once the prince of Huntingland. My father thought I was very silly too, so he asked the palace magician to turn me into a rabbit. He thought that would soon bring me to my senses!" said the rabbit in a very sad voice.

"Oh, but that is horrible," said the princess, forgetting her own worries. "But why are you out here all alone?"

"I felt so ashamed that my father thought so little of me that I decided to run away. And now, like you, I am all alone and very afraid," said the rabbit.

The princess and the rabbit sat together for a long time, taking comfort from one another. Suddenly a band of men appeared, together with a very large roly-poly man in royal regalia and a court magician.

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"Yes I can, but only if you agree that I can marry this beautiful princess that you see before you. She has been so kind to me and doesn’t care how silly I am."

So King Huntingland agreed and the princess returned to her father with the handsome prince at her side. A huge crowd of people from all over the kingdom came to see the happy couple on their wedding day and the two lived happily ever after; never to be silly again.
Understanding the grammar and punctuation

Nouns

A noun is a word that names a thing, person, animal or place.

*The travellers journeyed over hill and down dale, through fields filled with flowers and crops swaying gently in the breeze.*

Collective nouns

Collective nouns are nouns that refer to a group of people, things or animals. This means that in English, the word ‘group’ can be written in hundreds of different ways:

- a *flight* of doves
- a *tower* of giraffes
- a *mob* of kangaroos
- a *leap* of leopards
- a *charm* of finches
- a *quiver* of arrows
- a *parliament* of owls
- a *gaggle* of geese
- a *band* of men
- a *crowd* of people

Capital letters and full stops

Every sentence should begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop (or exclamation mark or question mark). Students often have problems deciding where to place the full stop. A sentence must be able to stand alone – it must make sense; otherwise it is just a sentence fragment. For example:

*Once upon a time, in a land far away.*

The above is not a complete sentence; there is neither a subject nor a verb. We need to complete the sentence.

*Once upon a time, in a land far away, there lived a king who had five daughters, all of whom were happily married, except for one.*
Collective nouns

Match each collective noun to the correct thing. One has been done for you.

1. a _________________ of children  2. a_________________ of whales
3.  a _________________ of stars  4. a _________________ of coins
5. a _________________ of painters  6. a _________________ of fleas
7. a _________________ of kittens  8. a _________________ of monkeys
9. a _________________ of mobile phones 10. a ________________ of babies

Look at these unusual collective nouns. Then make up some of your own for the words below.

a quiver of arrows  a murder of crows  a sneak of weasels
a mustering of storks  a business of ferrets  a tower of giraffes

1. a _________________ of children  2. a _________________ of whales
3. a _________________ of stars  4. a _________________ of coins
5. a _________________ of painters  6. a _________________ of fleas
7. a _________________ of kittens  8. a _________________ of monkeys
9. a _________________ of mobile phones 10. a ________________ of babies
Capital letters and full stops

Look at the passage below. All the capital letters and full stops are missing. Add in the capitals and full stops to make six sentences.

once upon a time, long long ago, there lived a beautiful princess she lived in a magnificent palace with her parents, the king and queen one day whilst walking in the palace gardens, she came across a tiny green frog sitting on the garden wall the frog looked very sad so the princess asked him what was wrong

“oh dear I just don’t know what to do,” said the frog “the wicked witch from the forest has turned me into a frog and in order to release the spell I must find a princess and ask her to do three special tasks ”

Now continue the story. Write the next few sentences. Remember to use capital letters and full stops.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

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Writing features

Traditional story language

The styles and voices of traditional story language

Explain to the students that traditional fairytales have many language features in common that set them apart from other types of stories. Foremost is the use of common phrases such as the opening and closing sentences of ‘once upon a time’ and ‘lived happily ever after’. These phrases alone suggest to the reader that the story is going to be set in a fantasy world where talking animals and magic spells are expected.

Other common language features are the use of antiquated language:

- Must I bid farewell to the only people in the world whom I hold dear?
- The travellers journeyed over hill and down dale...

and the repetition of certain phrases:

- Mirror, mirror on the wall, Who is the fairest of them all?
- Fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman.

The use of rhyme in such phrases is also very common and enables the young reader (or listener) to participate in the story by repeating the familiar lines. This is a trace of the oral tradition of fairytales — the repetitive words and phrases make it easier for a person to retell the story and so pass on the tale.

The language of fairytales is simple. There are no detailed descriptions of characters or settings. The characters usually have only one attribute (good, evil, honest, kind), they do not change physically, nor do they grow old.

The narrative is in the third person. The voice of the narrator sometimes breaks into the narrative to give comments on what is happening to help the reader’s understanding of the story:

After all, these princes would one day be king, and they didn’t want their kingdom to be ruled by a queen with no sense (did they?).

Story endings

The ending of a story is of paramount importance as, to a certain extent, it determines the reader’s lasting impression of a story.

Fairytales invariably have a ‘happy ever after’ ending. Most adventure stories also end happily, with the triumph of the virtuous characters. All the loose ends are tied up and the reader feels satisfaction that wrongs have been righted and order restored.

Other stories end sadly so that the reader is left with a sense of melancholy and even lingering regret. In many cases, the tragic conclusion is necessary to drive home the central theme or message of the story.

Detective stories often culminate in the revelation of the identity of the criminal, which may come as a surprise to the reader. Many stories conclude with a clever twist.

Many adventure stories contain cliffhangers, terrifying situations from which the characters must extricate themselves. A cliffhanger often comes at the end of a chapter and is a device to enthrall the reader and encourage them to read on.

Have fun experimenting with different story endings. Fairytales are an excellent vehicle for this activity. Choose familiar fairytales and challenge the students to change the endings! What might happen if there wasn’t a happy ending after all? What might become of Cinderella and Snow White, for example? You could make a class book that contains the familiar beginning but lots of different endings written by the students.
Helpful hints for writing a fairytale

✦ Begin your story in the usual way for fairytales. Use opening phrases such as:

  Once upon a time...
  Long, long ago...
  There was once a...
  In the days when there were still fairies...

✦ Choose characters that are usually found in fairytales, such as:

  a kind and beautiful princess
  a brave and handsome prince
  a king and queen
  an evil person such as a witch
  a dangerous animal such as a dragon
  a woodcutter

✦ Remember to set your story in the past. The people would ride on horseback, not in cars. There were no televisions or phones then.

✦ Set your story in a usual fairytale setting such as the countryside with forests, rivers and lakes. There would be old-fashioned towns, magnificent palaces and old castles.

✦ In fairytales the princess is usually in some kind of trouble. She is lost or meets a scary creature such as a dragon, or she meets a character that has had a magic spell put on them.

✦ There is usually magic of some kind in fairytales. Animals are able to talk and they usually help the characters in the story in some way.

✦ The bad characters in the story never win. They usually die in some horrible way or are never seen again.

✦ The hero is usually the handsome prince who saves the beautiful princess in some way.

✦ Use some old-fashioned words and phrases in your story, such as:

  Must I bid farewell?
  The travellers journeyed over hill and down dale...
  By and by they came across...
  What's the matter my beauty?

✦ Have a happy ending. There is often a wedding between the prince and the princess. Use the usual fairytale ending:

  And they all lived happily ever after.
You are going to write a fairytale.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your story.

a) A poor woman and her son
   An old man

b) A beautiful princess
   A dragon
   A brave and handsome prince

Stage Two

Start your story with a good beginning.

a) Once upon a time there lived a poor woman and her son. They lived in a tumble-down cottage on the edge of the woods. The son earned what little money he could by selling wildflowers that he gathered in the fields.

b) There was once a beautiful princess who lived in a magnificent palace at the edge of the woods. The princess had everything she could ever dream of and was spoilt and pampered in every way.

Stage Three

Set the scene for the story.

a) One day the boy goes off to the market as usual and on the way back he meets an old man.

b) Every day the princess walks through the woods to the lake where she sits down to read a book.
Stage Four

Give the characters a problem.

a) The man asks the boy to buy a lantern from him. He tells him it is a magic lantern and that it will grant him three wishes. The boy is very happy. He thinks they can now become rich, but when he returns home, his mother is very angry. She tells him they need money, not old lanterns. She grabs the lantern and says: “I wish your ears were bigger so you can listen to me better when I tell you not to talk to strangers.” Suddenly the boy’s ears grow to the size of an elephant’s.

b) One day she is captured by a fierce dragon who takes her to his cave. The king is very upset and sends his servants to every part of his kingdom to see if anyone can help save the princess.

Stage Five

Say how the problem is solved.

a) The boy is very upset. He says “I wish your nose was as big as an elephant’s!” The mother’s nose grows into an elephant’s trunk and now they are both upset. They solve the problem by wishing that they were both back like they were before. All the three wishes have been used up.

b) The handsome prince comes to the rescue. He tricks the dragon into coming out of his cave by saying he will swap the princess for his ten sisters. As the greedy dragon comes out of the cave, the prince fires an arrow into its heart and kills it.

Stage Six

Say what happens in the end.

a) The characters are happy as they are. The boy continues to sell flowers at the market and they live happily ever after.

b) The prince falls in love with the beautiful princess. They get married and have the ten sisters as bridesmaids. They live happily ever after.
Fairytale
Vocabulary bank 1

- arrow
- beautiful
- brave
- cave
- cottage
- dragon
- elephant
- fields
- fierce
- flowers
- handsome
- heart
- kingdom
- lantern
- magic
- magnificent
- man
- market
- married
- money
- palace
- prince
- princess
- servants
- sisters
- son
- stranger
- three
- wedding
- wildflowers
- wishes
- woman
- woods

My own words
You are going to write a traditional fairytale.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage, or use your own ideas.

### Stage One

**Choose the characters for your story.**

a) A handsome young man who was very poor
An old lady
A princess

b) A young man who was very kind
A wicked witch
A princess

### Stage Two

**Start your story with a good beginning.**

a) Once upon a time there lived a handsome young man who was very brave but very poor. He lived with his family in a run-down cottage on the edge of the dark, dark forest.

b) There was once a very kind young man who lived with his brothers and sisters in a house in the woods. He was so gentle and kind that he was able to make friends with all the different kinds of animals and birds that lived in the woods surrounding his happy home.

### Stage Three

**Set the scene for the story.**

One day the King sent his servants to all parts of his kingdom with a message. He offered one hundred gold pieces to anyone who could:

a) Bring a smile to his young daughter’s face because in all the girl’s life she had never laughed or smiled.

b) Rescue his daughter from a wicked witch who held her captive in a house made of ice.
Stage Four

**Give the characters a problem.**

a) The young man decided to try and win the reward. On his journey he met an old woman. She gave him three gifts to take to the princess — a beautiful feather, a sparkling crystal and a bottle of perfume. As the young man continued on his way, he met a fierce dragon, a grumpy troll and a ferocious bear.

b) The young man decides to try and win the reward but he is very afraid. He doesn’t know how he can possibly rescue the princess.

Stage Five

**Say how the problem is solved.**

a) The young man pointed the crystal at the dragon. It caught the sun and blinded it. He used his feather to tickle the troll under the chin to make it happy. He threw some of the perfume at the bear who hated it so much that he ran away.

b) All the creatures of the forest help the young man. The birds pick away at the ice and the heat from the bodies of all the animals who surround the house made of ice slowly causes it to melt. The animals attack the witch and she runs away screaming, never to be heard from again. The princess meets all the animals and they become friends.

Stage Five

**Say what happens in the end.**

a) The young man finally reaches the palace and is so flustered after all his troubles that he trips over the steps and drops all his gifts at the feet of the princess. By magic the crystal turns into the largest diamond ring the kingdom has ever seen, the feather turns into an exotic bird that flies up and sits on the princess’s shoulder and the perfume fills the room with the wonderful scents of spring. The princess is so amazed and surprised that her face slowly turns into a radiant smile. The young man falls in love with the princess. They marry. He sends the gold to his family and everyone lives happily ever after.

b) The young man gets his reward. The princess is so pleased with the young man’s kindness and his way with animals that she falls in love with him. They marry and live happily ever after.
## Fairytale
### Vocabulary bank 2

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**My own words**
Writers of adventure stories aim to enthral, excite and entertain the reader. To do this, they create a hero or heroine who is essentially ‘good’ from a moral perspective but who has no ‘superhuman’ powers. The writer then places this hero or heroine in a terrible predicament: the main character may be challenged by a sinister villain or forced to do battle with the elements in a natural disaster of some kind.

Adventure stories are usually action-packed and, just when the reader breathes a sigh of relief that the hero has managed to extricate himself from a perilous situation, another life-threatening emergency occurs. The reader is repeatedly left in suspense by a series of cliffhangers, wondering whether the hero will be able to overcome yet another obstacle. However, the conclusion of most adventure stories brings triumph for the hero over the adversity that he or she faced.

Adventure stories may be set in exotic locations or against a more mundane background with colourful villains, but they are always rooted in reality, albeit an amazing one!

Common themes in adventure stories are:
1. The indomitable capacity of the human spirit to reveal bravery when confronted with an ordeal of some kind.
2. That separation from one’s parents or the familiar leads to vulnerability.
3. That insight and understanding can be gained from horrifying experiences.

Other frequent elements of adventure stories are an initially apparently secure setting or situation that lulls the reader into a false sense of security and death-defying escapes which take the form of a race or a chase.

A successful adventure story is the ultimate page-turner, which grips the reader with thrills and spills. Once finished, it leaves the reader with an enormous sense of satisfaction, almost a feeling of exhilaration!

Examples of adventure stories

- **Cliffhanger** by Jacqueline Wilson (Transworld, 1995)
- **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban** by J K Rowling (Bloomsbury, 2002)
- **Emily Eyefinger and the Puzzle in the Jungle** by Duncan Ball (Angus & Robertson, 2005)
- **Akimbo and the Snakes** by Alexander McCall Smith (Bloomsbury, 2006)

(For more advanced readers)

- **Kensuke’s Kingdom** by Michael Morpurgo (Scholastic, 2004)
- **Swallows and Amazons** by Arthur Ransome (Sagebrush Education Resources, 1998)
- **True Desert Adventure Stories** by Paul Dowswell (Usborne ‘True Stories’, 2003)
"Will you two stop fighting?" said Mr Murray, exasperated. "Look, you can see the signs to the camping site. We're nearly there now."

Cameron and David stopped bickering and sat up. They eagerly looked out of the car windows, anxious to see a glimpse of the place where they were going to be staying for the next two weeks. The journey from their home had been long and tiring, and because they were fed up they had begun to pick on each other; much to their father's annoyance.

This was to be the first camping holiday the three of them had ever taken together on their own. They usually went on holiday as a family but this year their mother was off visiting an old friend in Melbourne which left Mr Murray and the two boys to organise the holiday themselves this time. Both David and Cameron had wanted to go somewhere with arcade games, cinemas and skateboard ramps but Mr Murray was determined to give them a traditional holiday this year, one where they would have to rely on themselves for their own entertainment.

"Maybe without their mum they will be more grown up and will help out more," thought Mr Murray as he drove into the camping site. "And maybe I'm just kidding myself," he chuckled as he stopped the car. "Come on you two, we're here at last. Two whole weeks of no TV, no computers and no skateboards; what more could you ask for?"

Cameron and David gave him a worried look but quickly jumped out of the car, anxious to stretch their arms and legs. They looked around with a mixture of relief and horror; relief to be out of the hot, cramped car at last and horror at what lay before them. There was nothing but tents and a toilet block. There was no swimming pool, no playground and no shop.

"Dad, what HAVE you brought us to?" moaned Cameron. "What on earth are we going to DO for two whole weeks?"

"Don't worry," said Mr Murray cheerfully, "we'll find plenty to do. Now come on, let's get unpacked."

The boys reluctantly helped unpack the car and pitch the tent. Two hours later they were sitting outside the tent in the fading light of the day.

"Now what could be better than this?" asked Mr Murray, sitting back in his deck chair.

"I could think of lots of places," said David sulkily.
Mr Murray laughed and replied, "You’ll soon get used to it. Just give it a chance, eh?"

The first week went by quite quickly. The boys were still quite bored at times but they enjoyed fishing with their dad each day and they liked the freedom of getting up and going to bed whenever it suited them.

The third day of the second week, however, was to be a day that none of them would ever forget. It started normally enough with the boys deciding they wanted to go on an all day walk to Anderson’s Bay, about ten kilometres from their campsite. They packed a picnic lunch, some drinking water and a first-aid kit and set off just after breakfast.

They reached Anderson’s Bay at about 11 o’clock and although the day had started warm and sunny, clouds now loomed darkly overhead and rain looked likely. By the time they had finished lunch, however, a storm had blown in and the rain was bucketing down. The three of them raced for cover in an old boathouse. As they ran through the doorway, one of the rotting floorboards gave way and Mr Murray fell through it. He screamed out in pain as he tried to lift himself back up.

"My ankle!" he cried out. "I think it’s broken."

David and Cameron lifted their father up as best as they could to try and make him more comfortable. "I’ll run for help," suggested Cameron. "But it’s pouring," replied Mr Murray. "You’ll catch your death in this."

"I’ll be fine, it’s only water after all,” said Cameron. "I’m a fast runner so I’ll be back in no time."

And before anyone could argue any further, he had gone.

Cameron ran swiftly along the walking track, making good time at first. However, the rain made it difficult for him to see clearly and he had to keep wiping his face to see where he was going. As he was coming to the top of a hill he closed his eyes momentarily against the driving rain and he failed to see a huge pothole in front of him. His foot fell awkwardly into the hole and he twisted his ankle badly.

"Oh, no," he thought. "What am I going to do now? I’ve been an idiot to rush away like this without thinking properly. How will Dad get help now?"

For the first time in many years, he began to cry. His ankle was swollen and very painful and he felt angry with himself for being so careless. He tried...
to get up again and start walking but it was useless, he just couldn’t
balance properly and he kept falling over. He sat down again on the
rain-soaked path and tried to work out what he could do.

Back at the boathouse, some five hours later, David was beginning to
worry. His father had finally fallen asleep after taking some painkillers
from the first-aid kit but he still looked very uncomfortable and
there was still no sign of Cameron.

"Where is he?" he thought. "What’s happened? Why has he taken so
long? Should I leave Dad and try to find him or should I just wait here
for help to arrive?"

Poor David was very confused. He knew that it was better to be safe
and dry in the boathouse but he was worried that Cameron had got lost
and was all alone in the terrible storm. He realised that although he
was always arguing with his brother he certainly didn’t want anything
horrible to happen to him and after all, they had finally begun to get on
much better with each other on this holiday. The lack of entertainment
had forced them to do things together for a change.

He waited another hour and then decided he would go and look for
Cameron. He wrote his dad a note, left him the remainder of their
picnic and quietly closed the boathouse door. It was pitch black and still
raining so he was very glad he had found a torch in his backpack. He
turned the torch on and made his way along the walking track, still very
worried and calling out Cameron’s name as he went.

Meanwhile, Mr Barnes, the owner of the camp site, was also very
worried. He’d seen the Murray family leave earlier that morning but had
not seen them return. He couldn’t work out why they’d been out so long
in such terrible weather. Finally, he decided to contact the police.

Whilst this was happening, David slowly made his way along the track.
Everything looked much scarier at night. Animals suddenly scuttled out
from beneath bushes and tree branches looked like strange monsters in
the eerie light of his torch. He began to shiver and feel afraid. He was
cold, wet and hungry and very much wanted to be back at home all
warm and safe and sound.

Suddenly he heard a sound. It was coming from the side of the track.
He shone his torch in that direction but could see nothing. He called out
Cameron’s name. Nothing. He began to feel really spooked now and was
just turning back to the track when he heard the sound again.

A cliffhanger. We are not told what will happen to Cameron. We are left
wondering too, what he will do as the story reverts back to the other
characters.

Conjunction.

The character is faced with a dilemma. He wants to help his father AND his brother.

The terrible situation has given the character a greater understanding and appreciation of his family.

The character tries to act responsibly but the reader is still wondering what might happen next.

At last the reader is assured that everything might turn out all right. But will help arrive in time?

Tension builds again as the character has more frightening experiences.
"Cameron, Cameron, is that you?"

"Yes, it’s me. Thank goodness you’ve come at last. I was beginning to think I was going to die out here."

David gave him his spare jumper from his backpack and helped him to his feet from the bushes from where he had been sheltering. Together they began to hobble along the track to the camp site.

They hadn’t gone far when they were met by a search party that had been alerted by Mr Barnes. Cameron was so relieved he felt like crying again.

The next day saw Cameron and his dad both sitting up in a hospital bed. They were comparing wounds whilst David sat on Cameron’s bed, eating the chocolates he had brought them.

"Well, that’s one holiday I’ll never forget in a hurry," said Mr Murray. "I’m glad you two seem to be getting on better with each other now though. Perhaps we’ll go camping every year!"

Neither David nor Cameron knew quite how to respond!
The Holiday

“Will you two stop fighting?” said Mr Murray, exasperated. “Look, you can see the signs to the camping site. We’re nearly there now.”

Cameron and David stopped bickering and sat up. They eagerly looked out the car windows, anxious to see a glimpse of the place where they were going to be staying for the next two weeks. The journey from their home had been long and tiring and because they were fed up they had begun to pick on each other; much to their father’s annoyance.

This was to be the first camping holiday the three of them had ever taken together on their own. They usually went on holiday as a family but this year their mother was off visiting an old friend in Melbourne which left Mr Murray and the two boys to organise the holiday themselves this time. Both David and Cameron had wanted to go somewhere with arcade games, cinemas and skateboard ramps but Mr Murray was determined to give them a traditional holiday this year, one where they would have to rely on themselves for their own entertainment.

“Maybe without their mum they will be more grown up and will help out more,” thought Mr Murray as he drove into the camping site. “And maybe I’m just kidding myself,” he chuckled as he stopped the car. “Come on you two, we’re here at last. Two whole weeks of no TV, no computers and no skateboards; what more could you ask for?”

Cameron and David gave him a worried look but quickly jumped out of the car, anxious to stretch their arms and legs. They looked around with a mixture of relief and horror; relief to be out of the hot, cramped car at last and horror at what lay before them. There was nothing but tents and a toilet block. There was no swimming pool, no playground and no shop.

“Dad, what HAVE you brought us to?” moaned Cameron. “What on earth are we going to DO for two whole weeks?”

“Don’t worry,” said Mr Murray cheerfully, “we’ll find plenty to do. Now come on, let’s get unpacked.”

The boys reluctantly helped unpack the car and pitch the tent. Two hours later they were sitting outside the tent in the fading light of the day.
“Now what could be better than this?” asked Mr Murray, sitting back in his deck chair.

“I could think of lots of places,” said David sulkily.

Mr Murray laughed and replied, “You’ll soon get used to it. Just give it a chance, eh?”

The first week went by quite quickly. The boys were still quite bored at times but they enjoyed fishing with their Dad each day and they liked the freedom of getting up and going to bed whenever it suited them.

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“Oh, no,” he thought. “What am I going to do now? I’ve been an idiot to rush away like this without thinking properly. How will Dad get help now?”

For the first time in many years, he began to cry. His ankle was swollen and very painful and he felt angry with himself for being so careless. He tried to get up again and start walking but it was useless, he just couldn’t balance properly and he kept falling over. He sat down again on the rain soaked path and tried to work out what he could do.

Back at the boathouse, some five hours later, David was beginning to worry. His father had finally fallen asleep after taking some painkillers from the first-aid kit but he still looked very uncomfortable and there was still no sign of Cameron.

“Where is he?” he thought. “What’s happened? Why has he taken so long? Should I leave Dad and try to find him or should I just wait here for help to arrive?”

Poor David was very confused. He knew that it was better to be safe and dry in the shed but he was worried that Cameron had got lost and was all alone in the terrible storm. He realised that although he was always arguing with his brother he certainly didn’t want anything horrible to happen to him and after all, they had finally begun to get on much better with each other on this holiday. The lack of entertainment had forced them to do things together for a change.

He waited another hour and then decided he would go and look for Cameron. He wrote his Dad a note, left him the remainder of their picnic and quietly closed the boathouse door. It was pitch black and still raining so he was very glad he had found a torch in his backpack. He turned the torch on and made his way along the walking track, still very worried and calling out Cameron’s name as he went.

Meanwhile, Mr Barnes, the owner of the camp site, was also very worried. He’d seen the Murray family leave earlier that morning but had not seen them return. He couldn’t work out why they’d been out so long in such terrible weather. Finally, he decided to contact the police.
Whilst this was happening, David slowly made his way along the track. Everything looked much scarier at night. Animals suddenly scuttled out from beneath bushes and tree branches looked like strange monsters in the eerie light of his torch. He began to shiver and feel afraid. He was cold, wet and hungry and very much wanted to be back at home all warm and safe and sound.

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Neither David nor Cameron knew quite how to respond!
Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words that join parts of sentences. They can connect words, phrases or clauses.

Conjunctions include: and, but, so, because, however, or, neither...nor, either...or, while, until

Cameron and David stopped bickering and sat up.

This is a coordinating conjunction connecting words, phrases or clauses that have equal stature or the same grammatical function.

Neither David nor Cameron had wanted to go...

This is an example of a correlative conjunction. They work in pairs to connect elements in a sentence.

As they ran through the doorway, one of the rotting floorboards gave way and Mr Murray fell through it.

This is an example of a subordinating conjunction, which connects elements with different grammatical functions, usually a dependent and independent clause.

Punctuating dialogue

Speech marks (" ") are used to show the words spoken by a character.

Use a comma (,), a full stop (.), a question mark (?) or an exclamation mark (!) before closing the speech marks.

“I’ll run for help,” suggested Cameron.

He said, “I’ll run for help.”

“Dad, what HAVE you brought us to?” moaned Cameron.

“My ankle!” he cried out.

Speech interrupted by narrative

“Don’t worry,” said Mr Murray cheerfully, “we’ll find plenty to do.”

Show students how the first part of the above example is actually one sentence separated by narrative; therefore commas are used to separate the speech from the rest of the sentence. They precede the closing speech marks of the end of the first part of speech and the opening speech marks before the second part of the speech. The second part does not begin with a capital letter because it is a continuation of the sentence.
Conjunctions

Choose a word to join each part of the sentences below.

and  but  until  because  after  before

1. The storm was over _____________ it was still very hot.
2. We had to clean our teeth _____________ we went to bed.
3. The thief grabbed the money _____________ ran for his life.
4. The child was crying _____________ she fell over.
5. The house will not be finished _____________ the kitchen is painted.
6. We are allowed to watch TV _____________ we have done our homework.
7. _____________ we got on the train, we said goodbye to our friends.
8. The food was low in price _____________ very poor in quality.
9. The man went jogging every morning _____________ every evening.
10. We waited _____________ the film had finished _____________ leaving the cinema.

Now write your own sentences using these conjunctions:

so  while  unless  since

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
Punctuating dialogue

The punctuation is wrong in each of the sentences below. Put a circle where the mistakes are. Then rewrite each sentence correctly.

1. “Where are we going? asked Cameron.

2. “We would rather do something else than camping “said David.

3. Mr Murray replied, You’ll soon get used to it.

4. “I like it here now,” said David because I like going fishing.

5. Do you want to go camping again next year asked Mr Murray

Now write your own dialogue between two people. Remember to use capital letters, speech marks, commas, question marks, exclamation marks and full stops correctly.
Writing features
Creating credibility of events

The setting
Adventure stories may often be set in exotic locations but they are always based in reality. There are no futuristic journeys or magical happenings that might be found in fantasy or science-fiction stories. The hero of an adventure story usually finds himself in a familiar setting that suddenly presents him with challenging, frightening or amazing circumstances.

How then to create events that are credible? The first thing to remember is that you can’t suddenly pull a rabbit out of a hat to help rescue your hero or heroine! He/she can’t suddenly have a fast car to escape with or some kind of weapon for protection if these objects have not already been introduced in the story. In The Holiday then, the first-aid kit and a picnic lunch were mentioned right at the beginning of the characters’ journey to Anderson’s Bay so the readers are happy to accept that painkillers and food and water could be given to the injured father. It is entirely credible that the family would equip themselves with necessary supplies when embarking on a long walk to an isolated place.

The characters
The characters in the story need to be believable too. The young boys in The Holiday behave very plausibly. They are fed up with the long car journey; they often fight with each other; they are not looking forward to a holiday that their father has chosen; they reluctantly help set up camp; they sulk and get bored easily. When faced with the events in the story, they behave credibly too. They don’t think carefully enough about going for help — Cameron rushes off before anyone can stop him; David leaves his father alone and walks out into the dark, wet night.

The role of the writer
In order to make the events in the story credible, the writer needs to put him or herself mentally into the situation presented in the story. What sorts of things are likely to happen in such a location? How are people likely to react? In The Holiday the family are faced with a sudden downpour. As would be expected, they dash for cover and, equally credibly, one of them has an accident in the rush. The fact that one of the characters leaves the others and sets off alone adds suspense to the plot. The reader is left wondering whether something will now happen to this lone person and when it does, it is again a credible event — this character also injures himself because of the weather conditions and because he was hurrying. The plot needs to continue to develop in an appropriate way — the hero cannot suddenly be rescued by finding a magic lamp to rub or something equally unbelievable. Thus in The Holiday, Cameron is finally saved by the owner of the camp site who has noticed they are late returning and organises a search party.

In conclusion
Adventure stories, then, need to contain believable events and situations. The characters may perform incredibly brave and daring feats but it is important for the writer to consider whether or not these feats could be achieved by the characters they have portrayed. A very elderly and frail person, for example, could not suddenly run ten kilometres to escape an enemy — the reader would lose faith in the plausibility of the story.
Helpful hints for writing an adventure story

✦ Set your story in an ordinary situation such as:
  a holiday
  a visit to a friend
  exploring a new place

✦ Make your characters seem ordinary — they do not need superhuman powers or be able to make magic.

✦ Make something happen to the characters that is dangerous, exciting or frightening.

✦ Think about how the characters will solve the problem they have. Remember — they do not have special powers — they need to be able to solve the problem themselves.

✦ Include speech to show what your characters are feeling and thinking.
  “Dad, what HAVE you brought us to?” moaned Cameron. “What on earth are we going to DO for two whole weeks?”
  “Where is he?” he thought. “What’s happened? Why has he taken so long?...”

✦ Show how the characters are changed by their adventure. Perhaps they are nicer to others after their troubles. Perhaps they get over a fear they once had.

✦ Make your story end happily. Make sure the characters get through their adventure safely.
Adventure story
Scaffold 1

You are going to write an adventure story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your story.

a) Two brothers and their father.

b) A mother and her daughter and son.

Stage Two

Set the scene for the story.

The family are going on a holiday.

a) The characters are having their first holiday together for some time.

b) The characters are visiting their aunty who has a large caravan park by the beach.

Stage Three

Start your story with a good beginning.

a) Everyone in the Harris family was really excited. At last it was time to go on the holiday they had looked forward to for months. The car was packed, the house was locked up and they were finally ready to go.

b) The journey was taking ages. The car was hot and sticky. Everyone seemed to be in a bad mood but as soon as they rounded the final bend in the road they could see the sea and suddenly everyone cheered up.
Stage Four

Give the characters a problem.

The characters set out for a long walk together.

a) One of the characters hurts themselves in some way. The others have to decide what to do.

b) One of the characters gets lost and can’t find the others. Say how frightened this character is feeling.

Stage Five

Say how the problem is solved.

a) They agree that one of them goes back for help. This person falls and cuts himself/herself, loses his/her way for a while but eventually gets back safely with help.

b) The character finds an old house. Inside the house is a hermit. The hermit frightens the character at first but eventually they get talking and they find out they have something in common. The hermit helps the character find his way back.

Stage Six

Say what happens in the end.

a) The characters decide that they don’t want to go on holiday again for a while but they agree they now get on much better with each other.

b) The characters want to go back to the same place next year because they enjoyed their adventure so much.
Adventure story

Vocabulary bank 1

adventure  everyone  hurt
aunty  excited
beach  family  journey
brother  father  mother
caravan park  frightened  packing
daughter  help  son
enjoyed  hermit  walk
  holiday  house

My own words
Adventure story
Scaffold 2

You are going to write an adventure story.
To help plan your story, use the framework below.
Choose one option from each stage, or use your own ideas.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your story.

a) Characters:
A 19-year-old girl who wants to become a travel presenter on TV.
Her best friend who is a life-guard at the local swimming pool.

b) Characters:
A mum who is a nurse.
A dad who is a chef.
Their 8-year-old son.

Stage Two

Begin with a good opening sentence and set the scene.

a) The ship sailed majestically out of the harbour and everyone on board settled down to relax.

b) “Hurry up! We’ll be late,” shouted X as he/she raced away from the car.

The scene:
The characters are going on a holiday cruise. None of them have ever been on a cruise ship before. Say what they are looking forward to most. Say what they do in the first few days of their trip.
Stage Three

Give the characters a problem.

A fire breaks out on board the ship.

a) One of the characters finds the fire and tries to put it out. He/she makes the problem worse. The character runs to get help but falls and injures himself/herself badly.

b) The fire spreads really quickly through the ship. Everyone heads for the life boats. The characters have to wait their turn to get into the boat but the fire is getting closer and closer to them.

Stage Four

Say how the problem is solved.

a) The other character(s) searches for him/her. It takes ages but finally they find him/her just in time before the fire gets to them. They alert the crew and the fire is put out.

b) The characters jump overboard. The crew left on board throw them life jackets and then jump themselves, just before the ship sinks.

Stage Five

Say how the story ends.

a) The characters agree they never want to go on a cruise holiday again but secretly they enjoyed their adventure.

b) Everyone is safe and sound and they all return home. They feel closer to each other after their adventure.
Adventure story
Vocabulary bank 2

adventure
alert
bravely
chef
crew
cruise
enjoyed
fire
friend
harbour
holiday

injure
life-guard
life jackets
nineteen
nurse
on board
overboard
presenter
problem
quickly

relax
safely
sailed
searches
sinks
spreads
sports centre
swimming
throw
travel
worse

My own words