

How to Write Wonderful Stories (Senior Primary)

Intelligent Australia Productions

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Intelligent Australia Productions is committed to raising standards
in Literacy and Numeracy in Australian schools.



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"Ever since I began writing, I kept a notebook in which I wrote down ideas! Good writing is hard to come by, and the only way to become a good writer is to practise, practise, practise! When you do get an idea, grab it, and immediately write it down; otherwise, you might forget it. Develop your ideas into stories, paragraphs, or poems. Never become discouraged if it takes a long time before you write something you really like!"

.....Roald Dahl

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About 'How to Write Wonderful Stories'

The famous children's author Roald Dahl once said that, of all tasks that are difficult, good writing is near the top of the list. *"I couldn't begin to tell you how slowly I write. It took me six long years to write 'James and the Giant Peach.'"*

This book has been written to make the task of writing easier, more enjoyable and more rewarding for your students.

How to Use this Book

The book consists of 24 lessons which may be spread over two, three or four terms (depending on time needed for other aspects of the Literacy syllabus).

Two lessons are devoted to each story topic, the first for Warm-up Activities (the *teaching* lesson) and the second for the children to write their story. It is suggested that the two lessons are completed either in the same week or in consecutive weeks.

Lesson 1, the Warm-ups, involves teacher-class discussion where the new strategy/technique (say, *Surprise Ending*) is introduced. Lesson 2 begins with a quick oral review of the new technique (5 minutes) followed by a 5-10 minute oral revision of previously taught strategies. Students are then encouraged to write a story where the new technique is employed while previously learned strategies are incorporated to the extent that the particular topic allows.

'How to Write Wonderful Stories' will teach and encourage students to use skills and techniques of writing that will make their stories much more appealing to the reader.

As an example, you (the teacher) might ask your class to give the following sentence more colour, more impact:

A big dog chased after a black cat.

By giving the sentence an interesting beginning, adding some well-chosen adjectives and a better verb this could become....

In the dimly-lit laneway a huge hairy dog bounded after a terrified scrawny black cat.

You might ask your class to try to improve this sentence:

One day an old man was walking to the market.

By taking turns, and with a little extra being added each time, your students may well end up with:

Once, on a cold and misty morning, a little old fellow was making his way to the bustling village market.

9 Secrets of Wonderful Story Writing

Describe

Appeal to your readers' 5 senses by painting pictures of characters, objects and scenes.

Enrich

Liven up your story with 'doing words' (verbs) that add more 'oomph' than common, over-used ones.

Explain

*Don't stop at saying **what** happened....tell when, how and where it happened.*

Capture

Capture your readers' attention by using creative, high quality sentence beginnings.

Pause

*Add impact by including one or two very short sentences in your story. For example:
*All went quiet.**

Plan

Think up an interesting plot and build it around two things: well-described settings and colourful characters.

Enliven

By including some direct speech you'll make your characters come alive and seem more real.

Compare

Accurate impressions can be conveyed by comparing characters, actions or objects with things known to the reader.

Surprise

Leave your readers in a state of wonder by giving your story an ending they didn't expect.

There are three sets, each of four story writing topics, in this book. The fourth story topic in each set allows the student to employ all three techniques taught in the three preceding topics together with others that were covered in previous sets (see following page).

Note: there is a reproducible page at the back of the book for students who need more lines.

With their attractive borders and illustrations the stories your students write will be perfect for displaying on classroom walls and they'll look great in their portfolios.

Contents

Each
title
here



...has a
different
focus
here



Title	Focus Element	Revision	Page
Delilah the Dolphin	Plot-Setting-Characters: <i>Think up a great plot & interesting characters. Describe your setting well.</i>	Punctuation <i>Capitals, Full stops, Question Marks, Apostrophes</i> Paragraphing	4
My Wonderful Dream	Adjectives: <i>Paint pictures by describing characters, objects and scenes.</i>	Plot-Setting-Characters	8
Lenny, the Loquacious Leprechaun	Verbs: <i>Use powerful 'doing' words (& dispense with ordinary ones) to enrich your story.</i>	Adjectives; Plot-Setting-Characters	12
My Island Adventure	Children write a story combining all 3 Focus elements above.		16
Diving to the Depths	Adverbs: <i>Saying how, where or when something occurs adds texture and colour.</i>	Verbs; Adjectives; Plot-Setting-Characters	20
House of Mystery	Excellent Sentence Beginnings: <i>Capture your reader's attention from the start.</i>	Adverbs; Verbs; Adjectives; Plot-Setting-Characters	24
Pandamonium	Surprise Ending: <i>Stories with surprise endings are different and long remembered.</i>	Sentence Beginnings, Adverbs; Verbs; Adjectives; Plot-Setting-Characters	28
Magic Mountain	Children write a story combining all 6 Focus elements above.		32
Ockie	Direct Speech: <i>Having characters speak directly gives stories a sense of immediacy.</i>	Surprise Ending; Sentence Beg', Adverbs; Verbs; Adjectives; Plot etc	36
Treasure!	Similes: <i>Comparing characters, actions or objects with known things, to convey accurate pictures.</i>	Direct Speech; Surpr' End'; Sentence Beg', Adverbs; Verbs; Adjectives; Plot etc	40
The Great Birthday Surprise	The Short Sentence: <i>Well-placed, these can provide variety and add impact.</i>	Similes; Dir' Sp'; Surpr' End'; Sentence Beg', Adverbs; Verbs; Adjectives; Plot etc	44
The Storm	Children write a story combining all 9 Focus elements above.		48

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's
Notes

Delilah the Dolphin



Class Discussion

- Many people say that the dolphin is their favourite animal. Why do you think this is?
- Dolphins are said to be very intelligent. What evidence is there for this?
- Have you ever had a close-up dolphin 'experience'? What was it like?
- What are some ways in which dolphins differ from sharks?

Teaching Points

Before you begin any story you need to spend a few minutes thinking (and –even better- jotting down) words or phrases to remind yourself of key ideas and points.

What will my story be about? Where will it take place? Who will be 'in' the story?

Don't make your story like everybody else's: make it *special* by having a fascinating plot, an unusual setting and 'colourful' unforgettable characters.

If you really try hard to do this your stories will go from being just ordinary to *very special*.

Focus: Plot, Setting, Characters

1. Plot (Sample response)

An oceanarium is a large sea water aquarium for keeping sea animals.

The gang enter the oceanarium in the middle of the night, firing a drugged dart into Delilah. They tow her to a waiting mega-yacht, fitted out with a large pool (this is Delilah's home for the voyage to Krukimenza). The gang's plans become undone when Kira, Head Dolphin Trainer at the oceanarium, discovers Delilah's whereabouts when searching the internet. The gang is captured and Delilah brought back home.

2. Setting (Sample response)

Paradise Oceanarium is situated at Breakwater Bay, 90km north of Brisbane, Australia.

This is not just any oceanarium; it is the world's largest and is set in breathtakingly beautiful surroundings. Tropical plants, including exotic species of palms and ferns, abound. Waterfalls cascade into deep green pools, fabulous birds of all colours flit to and fro, and giant butterflies float down to rest on your shoulder.

3. Characters

(Sample response)

1st Character: Delilah is a young (4 years) female dolphin who puts on a special show for the millions who come to see her. Her unique double backward somersault trick has captivated admirers from all corners of the globe. Oceanariums throughout the world have offered millions of dollars to buy her but she's not for sale.

2nd Character: Igor Ivanovich, the gang leader, is wanted by police on four continents. He has at least 6 aliases, each one in disguise. He is wanted for smuggling, counterfeiting and kidnapping.

3rd Character: Kira, age 23, has been working with dolphins since the age of 12. It was she who discovered Delilah while surfing at the Gold Coast, one warm September day. Ever since, the bond and rapport between Kira and Delilah matches anything enjoyed by two human friends.

Name Date



Delilah the Dolphin

Warm-up Activities

Plot

1. Suppose Delilah was a much-loved dolphin who performed tricks for the public at an oceanarium. Think up a plot to say how a gang of criminals captured her and smuggled her out of the country; tell briefly what happened.

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Setting

2. Describe the oceanarium.

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Characters

2. Name and describe three main characters for the story you've outlined above. (Delilah should be one and the gang leader another)

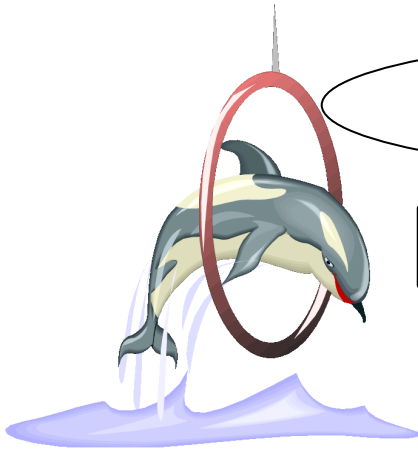
1st Character:

.....

2nd Character:

.....

3rd Character:



Delilah the Dolphin

My Story

*Teacher's
Notes*

Quick Revision

Punctuation

*Capital letters, Full stops, Question marks,
Apostrophes, Quotation marks*

Paragraphing

*Remember to start a new paragraph for each
new idea you bring into your story.*

*Focus: Plot, Setting,
Characters*

Writing the Story

Note: This story should bear no resemblance to the one outlined in the Warm-up Activities. It should have an entirely different plot. However the setting (oceanarium) will remain the same.

Students should spend at least a few minutes (up to 10) thinking and planning their story. During this time ideas and key words should be jotted down. Also, the outline of the story should be arranged in paragraphs.

Example: Delilah the Dolphin

Para 1. Intro: *describe setting -oceanarium; (make it different in some way from the setting described in the warm-up activity). eg in the harbour of a big city.*

Para 2. Body: *Delilah has been practising a stunning new trick, out of the public eye. The big day comes where she is about to entertain the crowd (who will surely gasp in awe at the amazing feat). But something is wrong. Where is Kira, Delilah's trusted trainer and the only person capable of coaxing Delilah into performing the trick?*

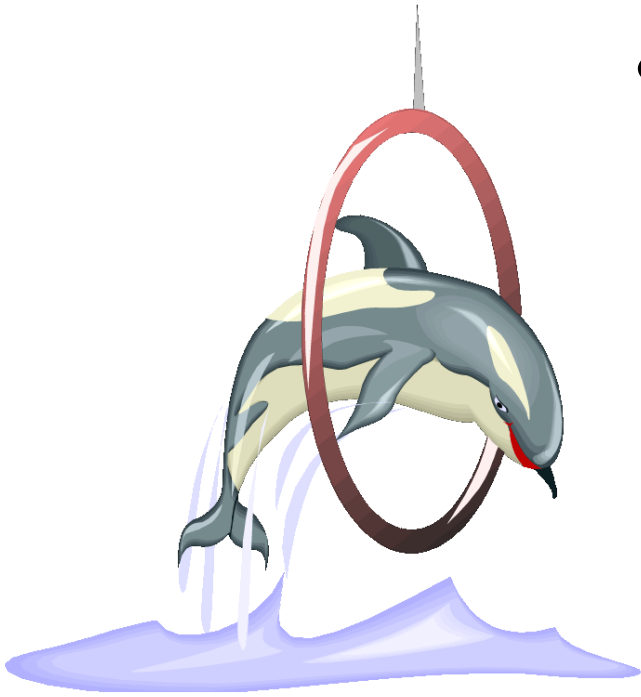
Just as a cancellation announcement is about to be made, Kira appears....her train had been delayed.

Delilah doesn't let the crowd –or Kira- down, carrying out the trick to perfection in front of television crews from near and far.

Para 3. Conclusion: *Delilah, having won over more fans, gets a well-earned rest and Kira receives the Trainer of the Year Award.*

Name Date

Delilah the Dolphin



Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Warm-up Activities

My Wonderful Dream

Teacher's Notes

Class Discussion

There are two types of dreams....night (sleeping) dreams and daydreams.
You may have had a wonderful sleeping dream wherein you were a: sports star; movie star; famed musician; world-renowned artist; great scientist (who saved the world); pioneering adventurer; feted dancer; Lotto winner. (Or were one of these the subject of a *daydream*?) Perhaps your dreams are less grandiose but wonderful nonetheless: a fabulous holiday, a diving adventure, an academic achievement. Dreams have no boundaries.

Teaching Points

1. Avoid over-used adjectives such as big, little etc (you can do better than that!)
2. Do not use the same adjective more than once in a sentence (or even a paragraph).
3. Colours are adjectives and they are good to use. However, rather than say 'green' say 'bright green'; rather than brown say 'dirty brown'.
4. Make use of your dictionary (for spelling and to check meaning) and your thesaurus.

Focus: Adjectives

Describing your characters and scenes paints detailed pictures for your readers.

1 Sample response

swaying palm trees
foam-topped waves
pristine beach
exotic fish
golden sun
soothing breeze

2 Sample response

*I dreamt that I was in **complete** control of the entire world.
I eliminated all poverty,
rid the world of **harmful**
pollutants and brought
lasting peace to all nations.*

3 Sample response

*There is a **beautiful** lake surrounded on all sides by **majestic, snow-topped** mountains. **Healthy** sheep and cattle graze peacefully on the **lush green** hillsides. At the far end of the lake a **tree-lined** river winds gracefully away to the next village.*



Name Date

My Wonderful Dream

Warm-up Activities

1. Suppose your dream was about a holiday on a tropical island. Write an excellent adjective to go with each of these nouns.

..... palm trees waves
..... beach fish
..... sun breeze

2. Tell in two sentences about a dream you had -or would like to have- wherein you achieve something remarkable. *Use 3-4 excellent adjectives.*

.....
.....
.....

3. Suppose you dreamt that you lived in the most beautiful area in the world. *Describe this place, using at least 4 excellent adjectives.*

.....
.....
.....
.....



My Story

*Teacher's
Notes*

My Wonderful Dream

Quick Revision

Plot

*Always spend a few minutes thinking up a good story line. Jot down important key words as you go, for example: **holiday –beach –surfing -rescue** etc*

Setting

Try to have a setting that your readers can relate to or will find interesting in some way (Sideshow Alley at the Annual Fair?)

Characters

Readers love 'colourful' characters, including ones with unforgettable names like Brainy Betty, Tammy the Motormouth, Mrs Worry-Pot, Disaster Danny, Freddy the Fisherman or One-Tooth Dawson.

Focus: *Adjectives*

Describing your characters and scenes paints detailed pictures for your readers.

Writing the Story

First of all decide whether you will write about a dream you had or a dream you would like to have. Then spend 5-10 minutes thinking and planning; this will include making a skeleton draft of your story, with key words and phrases arranged in paragraphs.

Now write an entertaining story using at least 8 really good adjectives throughout.

Caution:

When asked by their teachers to make good use of adjectives many students make the mistake of 'going overboard'...they use too many!

Use a maximum of three adjectives in front of a subject or object and then just one preceding any other nouns in that sentence.

By all means use colours as adjectives but don't overdo it.

My Wonderful Dream

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.



Lenny, the Loquacious Leprechaun

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's Notes

Class Discussion

What are leprechauns? (In Irish folklore, an elf in the form of a tiny old man wearing a cocked hat and leather apron. Solitary by nature, leprechauns lived in remote places and worked as shoemakers. Each was believed to possess a hidden crock of gold. If captured and threatened, a leprechaun might reveal the gold's hiding place, provided his captor never took his eyes off him. Usually the captor was tricked into glancing away, and the leprechaun vanished. Leprechauns are often eccentric little fellows. What does eccentric mean? And the meaning of loquacious.....?)

Teaching Points

- Do not use the same verb more than once in a sentence, or even a paragraph.
- Use your dictionary and/or thesaurus to check spellings, meanings and synonyms.

Focus: Verbs

Avoid common, over-used verbs. You can think of better ones!
walked X staggered ✓ said X muttered ✓

1. Sample responses:

*exclaimed
muttered
sniggered
uttered
laughed
whispered
chuckled
sneered
joked
teased*

2. Sample responses:

- Lenny breezed into the room clutching a lantern.
- We saw Lenny fleeing a dog that was bounding after him.
- Early this morning Lenny tiptoed into the garden and smothered the toadstools with powder.
- Some say it was Lenny who accumulated all those bottle tops and stashed them in the attic.

3. Sample responses:

- limping, striding, etc
- gulped, swallowed, etc
- peered, gazed, etc
- wonder, contemplate, etc
- sketching, painting, etc
- thumping, banging, etc

Name Date

Lenny, the Loquacious Leprechaun

Warm-up Activities



1. Lenny knows he is loquacious. One day he sat under a mushroom and tried to think of all the different ways that he has ever spoken. The first word he thought of was *mumbled*. Then he thought of *shouted*. In what other ways might Lenny speak? (Hint: think of better words than 'said')

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Your task here is to make up sentences about Lenny....each sentence must contain two excellent verbs. **Note:** you may have to write smaller than you normally do.

Examples: *Lenny whistled happily as he swaggered along the path.

*While munching on an apple Lenny gazed down at the village.

- i).....
- ii).....
- iii).....
- iv).....

3. Story writing can be greatly improved by avoiding common, over-used verbs. Can you think of two 'better' verbs to replace each underlined one?

- i) One day Lenny was walking home from the village.
- ii) Lenny quickly ate up all his meal.
- iii) Lenny looked over the high garden wall.
- iv) Lenny likes to lie on the grass and think.
- v) I saw Lenny drawing a tree down by the river.
- vi) Clutching the hammer, Lenny began hitting a rock.

My Story

Teacher's Notes

Lenny, the Loquacious Leprechaun



Quick Revision

- Adjectives
- Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: *Verbs*

By choosing really 'good' verbs you

- *give your story more action*
- *make your story more interesting*

Writing the Story

There should be lots of things happening in your story. This will give you the chance to use plenty of interesting verbs (action words). There are several verb types: *moving* verbs (staggered), *talking* verbs (muttered), *thinking* verbs (wondered), *looking* verbs (peered), *eating* verbs (gulped), *laughing* verbs (giggled), etc.

See how many excellent verbs you can include in your 'Lenny' story....aim for 10.

Name Date

Lenny, the Loquacious Leprechaun



Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's
Notes

My Island Adventure

Class Discussion

Imagine sailing into a bay of a beautiful tropical island. You step onto land. What fauna might you discover? Are there any interesting natural features: volcanoes, waterfalls, caves? Maybe the island is inhabited...but by whom...a native tribe, just one person, 'lost' children? Might there be spectacular riches hidden away somewhere?



Teaching Points

- Whenever you use a noun try to think of a wonderful adjective that could go with it.
- Whenever you're about to use a verb try to use one that's not common...you can come up with a much better one.

Focus: Verbs, Adjectives,
Plot-Setting-Characters

Think hard on these to make a
rich and powerful story.

1. Sample response:

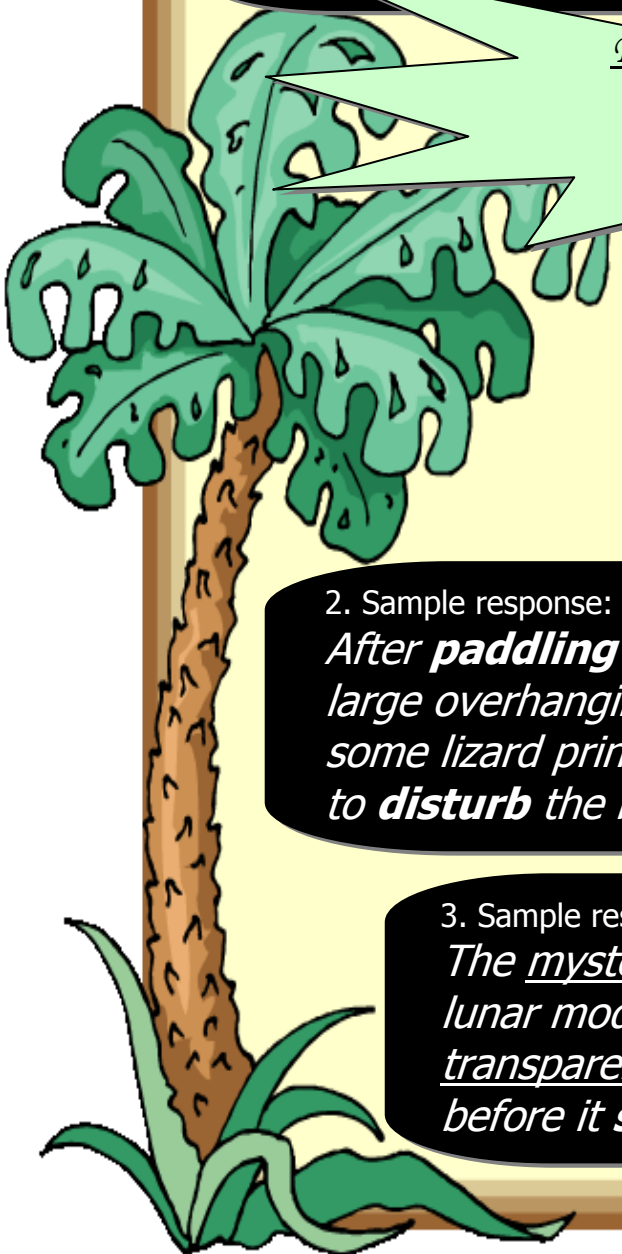
*I see a **towering** volcano with **lush** vegetation on its slopes and **yellowish gases** fizzing skywards from its **mighty** cone.*

2. Sample response:

*After **paddling** to shore I **secure** my boat to a large overhanging palm branch. Then I **follow** some lizard prints to a deep cave, being careful not to **disturb** the boundless wildlife I **encounter**.*

3. Sample response:

*The mysterious creature's legs **jut** out like a lunar module's telescopic landing poles. It's transparent blue-grey wings **vibrate** violently before it **soars** away to other edible plants.*



Name Date

My Island Adventure

Warm-up Activities

1. Say what you see. (use 3 adjectives)

.....

.....

.....

.....



2. Say what you do. (use 3 verbs)

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.....

3. You discover an unusual species of insect. Describe it and say what it does. (use 3 adjectives and 3 verbs)

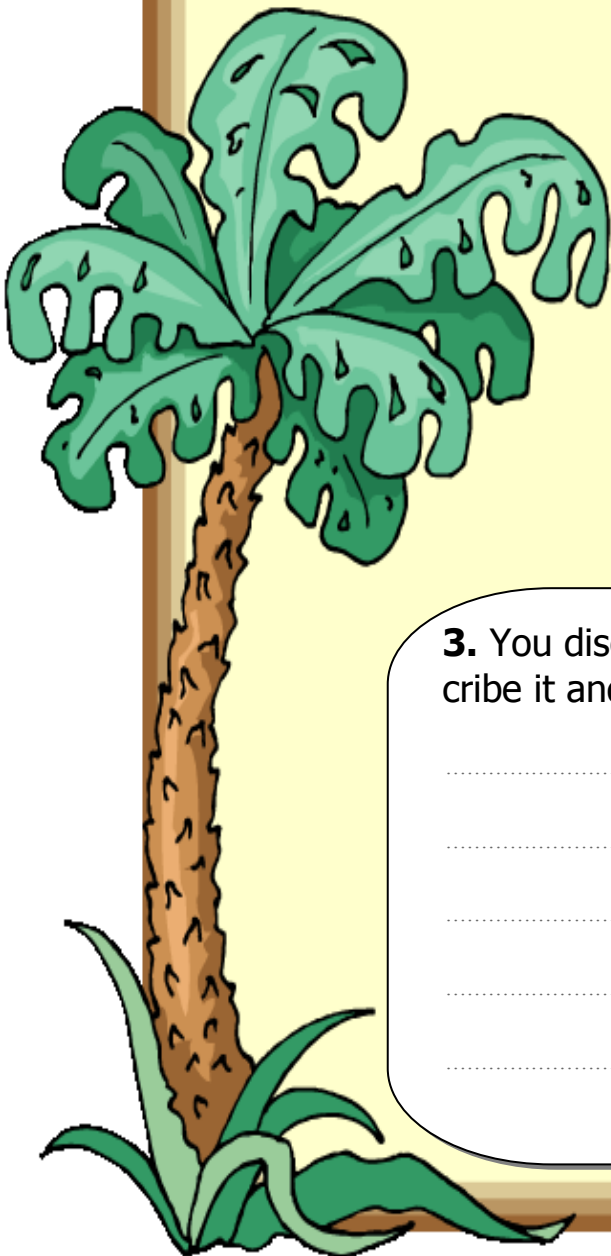
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My Story

*Teacher's
Notes*

My Island Adventure

Quick Revision

Verbs Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters



*Focus: Verbs, Adjectives,
Plot-Setting-Characters*

*Think hard on these to make
a rich and powerful story.*

Writing the Story

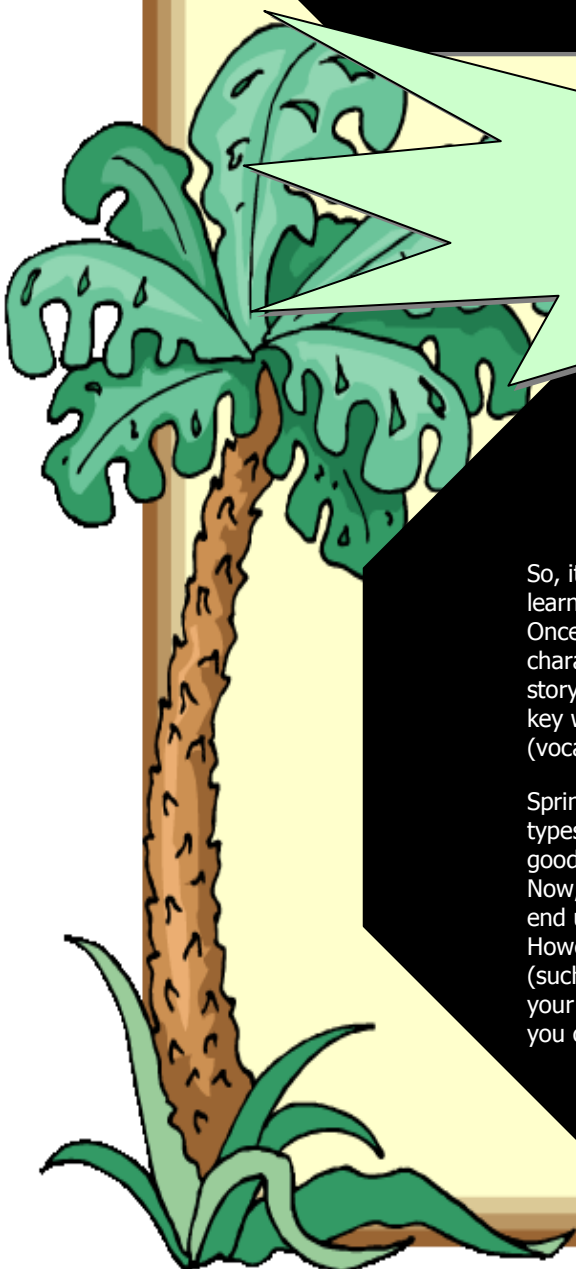
So, it's time to merge together all the things we've been learning about so far.

Once the 'nuts and bolts' of your story –the plot, setting and characters- have been decided upon, and the skeleton of the story has been set out in draft form (showing paragraphs and key words/phrases), it's time to concentrate on the 'enrichment' (vocabulary) side of things.

Sprinkled throughout your story there should be various verb types (speaking verbs, action verbs, thinking verbs, etc) and a good number of adjectives (noun describers).

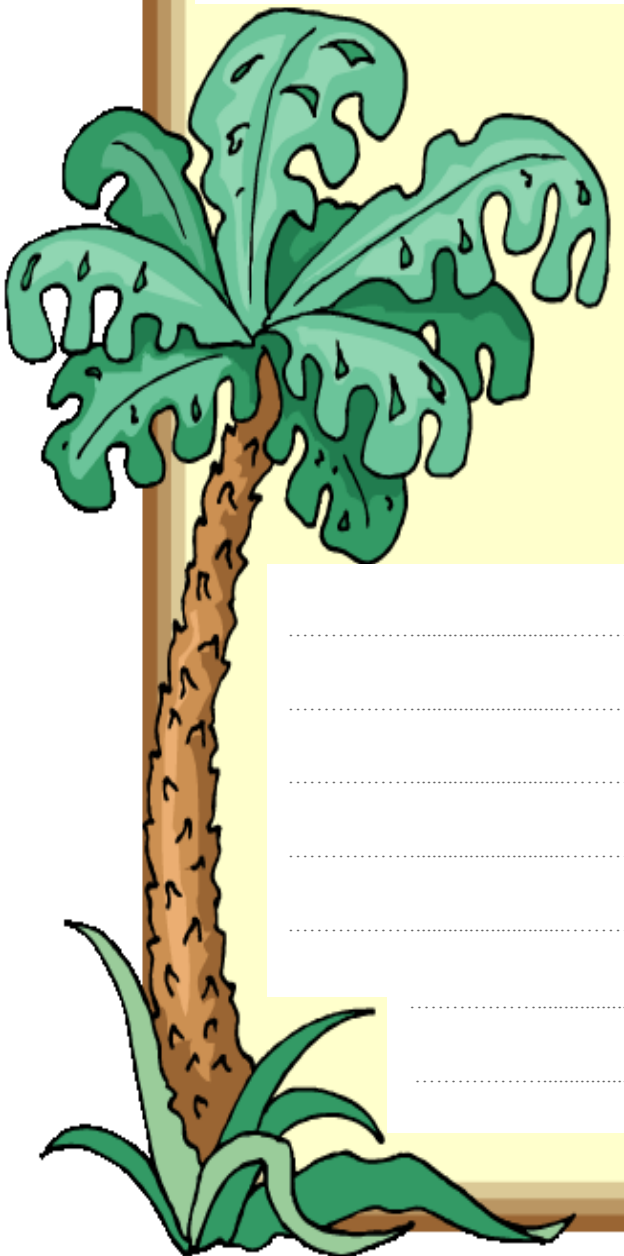
Now, if you decide to use common verbs and adjectives you'll end up with a 'common' or ordinary type of story.

However if you put a lot of thought and effort into your work (such as using a dictionary and/or thesaurus) the quality of your story will be raised to a level that not even *you* thought you could achieve!



Name Date

My Island Adventure

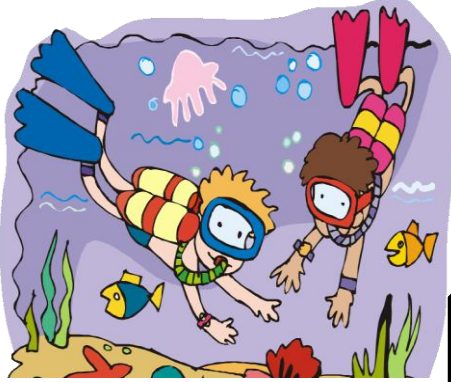


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Warm-up Activities

Teacher's
Notes

Diving to the Depths



Teaching Points

- Tell your readers **how** (carefully), **when** (yesterday) and/or **where** (behind) the actions are carried out.
- Use your dictionary and/or thesaurus to check spellings, meanings and synonyms.

Class Discussion

Beneath the sea is a world teeming with life, both animal and plant. Colourful, exotic creatures of all shapes and sizes abound in this environment, one as dangerous as it is exciting. Apart from marine fauna and flora what else lies beneath the sea? Shipwrecks, some long-forgotten, are surely there somewhere, waiting to be discovered.....what fantastic treasures may they be hiding?

Focus: Adverbs

If, instead of writing, "They pointed to the treasure chest" you write, "Excitedly, they pointed to the treasure chest" your readers will be more enthused and more eager to read on.

1. Sample response:

I carefully climbed the coconut tree all the way to the top, quickly snapped off two nice specimens and quietly slid back down to the ground.

2. Sample responses:

*hiked briskly
swam freely
jumped excitedly
explored carefully
rowed rhythmically
peered curiously
swallowed quickly*

3. Sample responses:

*drinking thirstily
muttering softly
watching intently
resting peacefully
eating hungrily
thumping loudly
sweating profusely*

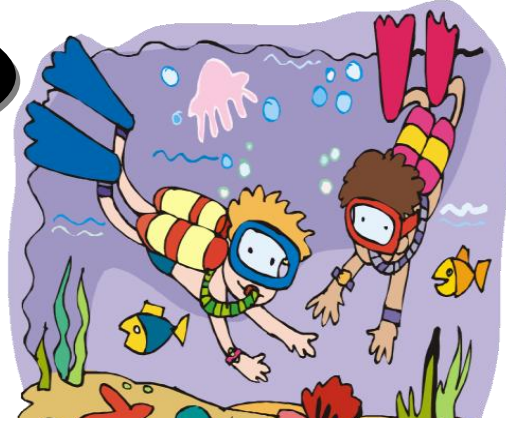
4. Sample responses:

*magnificently
foolishly
solemnly
proudly
fiercely
wonderfully
elegantly*

Name Date

Diving to the Depths

Warm-up Activities



1. Rewrite this sentence by inserting three adverbs which tell how the verbs (in bold) were carried out:

*I **climbed** the coconut tree all the way to the top, **snapped** off two nice specimens and **slid** back down to the ground.*

2. Write an adverb for each verb:

hiked

swam

jumped

explored

rowed

peered

swallowed

3. Rule lines linking the verbs and adverbs.

Careful: some have more than one match!

drinking

peacefully

muttering

intently

watching

thirstily

resting

loudly

eating

profusely

thumping

softly

sweating

hungrily

4. Make adverbs from these adjectives:

magnificent

foolish

solemn

proud

fierce

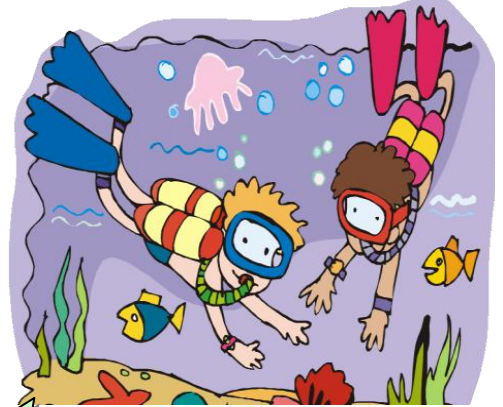
wonderful

elegant

Diving to the Depths

Quick Revision

- . Verbs
- . Adjectives
- . Plot-Setting-Characters



Focus: *Adverbs*

Which is 'richer'?....

"Look what I found!" exclaimed Toni. OR
"Look what I found!" exclaimed Toni gleefully.

Writing the Story

OK, the plot, setting and characters are in place, outlined as they are in the story's draft 'skeleton' which also contains jottings of key words and phrases.

Verbs and adjectives have been practised previously, and revised.
Now it's time to really enrich your story.

By including adverbs –wherever there are verbs- stories rise to new heights.

James clambered up the side of the rocky hill becomes
*James clambered **determinedly** up the side of the rocky hill* and

Dark storm clouds began to gather becomes
***Ominously**, dark storm clouds began to gather.*

Name Date

Diving to the Depths



Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Sketch

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's
Notes

House of Mystery

Class Discussion

What do you associate with a house of mystery? ...one or more of these perhaps: strange tenants, ghosts, talking portraits, creaking doors and floorboards, objects that move of their own accord, false trapdoors leading to basement laboratories, hidden treasures? (the list is limited only by your imagination)

Teaching Points

Some of the best sentences begin with adverbs or adverbial phrases that tell how, when or where.

- ***Nervously opening the creaking door...***
- ***Curiously peering into the dimly-lit attic....***
- ***Cautiously descending the dusty staircase...***



Focus: Sentence beginnings

'Grab' your readers from the start.

1. Sample answer:

I was sitting at my desk doing my homework at about 8pm. Suddenly I heard a weird sound coming from the direction of the old quarry. I went outside to investigate and soon realised that the strange noise was coming from the abandoned house half way down the hill. In the stillness of that moonlit night I was overcome by a rush of bravery and I boldly made my way toward the ramshackle cottage.

2. Sample answer:

I tiptoed over the creaky floorboards, my little torch barely emitting enough light to show the way. With my face and arms brushing dangling cobwebs I somehow reached the far side of the room and it was there that I saw it. Trembling uncontrollably, I realised that what lay before my eyes was exactly what I had dreamt about the night before....the ventriloquist's wide-eyed and smiling mannequin!

3. Sample answer:

Curiously he had the bottom part of his long white beard tucked into his top pocket. He'd shuffle along the footpath, stopping at each house whereupon he'd pass an inquisitive eye over the letterbox. Gazing at the letterbox from above, the sides, and from below, he'd then tap on the top three times while snorting loudly before proceeding purposefully on to the next one.

Name

Date

House of Mystery

Warm-up Activities



- 1.** Strange sounds could be heard last night. *Using at least one excellent sentence starter say how you found where the sounds came from. (Write 3-4 sentences)*

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- 2.** In 2-3 sentences say what you discovered when you entered the basement of the house. *Have at least one excellent sentence beginning.*

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- 3.** You and your friend notice something strange about the person living at 284 Shakespeare Street. Write 2-3 sentences telling about this. *Begin each sentence with an excellent phrase.*

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House of Mystery



Quick Revision

Adverbs Verbs
Adjectives Plot-
Setting-Characters

Focus: *Sentence beginnings*

'Grab' your readers from the start.

Writing the Story

With the outline of your story in place (ie the 'skeleton' draft) it's now time to really get your story-writing thinking cap on.

Up to this point in your quest to write wonderful stories you've had the opportunity to practise lots of useful writing techniques and here's your chance to include another....**great sentence beginnings**.

Consider how well your story may turn out if you include sentences such as these...

- *Moaning, pitiful wails could be heard, each one sending shivers of fear up and down my spine.*
- *"Welcome to my domain," uttered the shimmering face in the painting.*
- *I stood transfixed in the middle of the room as the walls shuddered, buckled and bent and as if in an earthquake.*

Name Date

House of Mystery



Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's
Notes

Pandamonium



Class Discussion

The 'word' pandamonium is a play on pandemonium, a word meaning *chaos, confusion, uproar, hullabaloo, wildly noisy*.

What do you know about panda bears? (The panda bear, or Giant Panda, is an endangered animal native to mountainous regions of China and Tibet. Despite being classed as a carnivore its diet is 99% bamboo though it may eat other foods such as honey, eggs, fish and yams).

Pandas are usually depicted as eating bamboo while reclining and this accounts for the docile image they present.

Their cute teddy bear appearance makes this 1.5m long, 75cm tall, 100kg animal a great favourite of the public.

Teaching Points

The surprise ending should come right at the very end of your story....maybe even in the last sentence. Depending on the plot and the outcome it will leave your readers wondering, guessing or perhaps even amazed.

Throughout your story you (unwittingly) build up certain expectations in the reader. When you 'drop in' the surprise ending readers undergo an instant (subconscious) replay of the story in their minds, trying to see how everything comes together in the conclusion that it does. It really gets them thinking!

Focus: *Surprise Ending*

Leave your readers wondering.

1. Sample response:

Onlookers young and old were amazed to see Penny, the most playful (though pesky and petulant) panda, dive on the fish and grab the poor dead creature between her tiny teeth. Then she flung it high into the air, and, as it plummeted back down, she lunged upward, catching it in her huge black paws.

2. Sample response:

The zoo keeper had forgotten to close the gate after feeding time and the GP had found its way to the outside world by burrowing under the zoo's perimeter fencing. It wandered into the grounds of a visiting circus and, after being adopted and trained by circus staff, became a key attraction in future shows.

3. Sample response:

Peking was such a hit -with all classes at the school- that it was decided to have an annual Panda Day. Jenny/Johnny took Peking to school every Panda Day, when students came dressed in black and white, and the whole community raised funds to help prevent these loveable animals going extinct.

Name Date

Pandamonium

Warm-up Activities



1. Write a surprise ending to this passage.

Use at least 30 words (contained in two or more sentences).

We watched as the four baby pandas scrambled to retrieve the honey-soaked fish the zoo keeper threw to them.

Onlookers young and old were amazed to see

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2. Say how a story about a Giant Panda who goes missing from a zoo has a surprise ending.

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3. Write a surprise ending:

Jenny (or Johnny if you prefer) was delighted to receive a baby pet panda (Peking) for her/his 12th birthday. Under pressure from schoolmates Jenny/Johnny took the petite patchy pet to school for a day (in a cage). What happened.....?

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Pandamonium



Quick Revision

Sentence Beginnings
Adverbs Verbs
Adjectives Plot-
Setting-Characters

Focus: Surprise Ending

This really makes your story 'different'.

Writing the Story

You have an added, special challenge here.....your story needs to 'fit' with its title so the central theme should be *pandemonium*, featuring a panda or pandas.

When you've developed the plot it's time to think how you can give your story a special ending. Well, there's nothing quite like the element of surprise.

Why is it sometimes good to have a surprise ending?
You probably like surprises....and so do most people.
Surprises are...well...surprises...they go beyond the expected and the ordinary.

The surprise ending technique has been used by famous writers for centuries. It's often used in mystery stories where the villain turns out to be the last person you'd expect.

However, there's no rule to say that you can't use a surprise ending in *any* story, even one about cute and gentle animals like pandas.

Try it and see. Your friends will be impressed!

Date _____



Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's
Notes

Magic Mountain

Class Discussion

How could a mountain be magic?
Perhaps it changes colour frequently. Maybe strange sounds emanate from it.
Could it be that mountaineers who venture there return with reports of mysterious beasts in its many caves?
Is it that those who scale the mountain's steep sides and make it to the summit return with extraordinary powers?
In what other ways could the mountain be magic?



Teaching Points

Try to use: **two excellent adjectives, two excellent verbs, two excellent adverbs, two excellent sentence beginnings** in every story you write.

Focus: Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Plot-Setting-Characters, Sentence Beginnings, Surprise Ending

1. Sample response:

As if in a dream I gazed in awe as it rose from the ground like a giant witch's hat ready to cast its spell over any who dare invade its territory.

2. Answers:

Adjectives

strange exhausted curious mythical mystical

Verbs

trekking clambering trudged grasped

Adverbs

mysteriously eerily cautiously warily unbelievably

3. Answers:

approached **verb**
towering **adjective**
realised **verb**
forgotten **verb**
navigational **adjective**
Pressing **verb**
reached **verb**
Amazingly **adverb**
Suddenly **adverb**
dull **adjective**
whirring **verb**
large **adjective**
Nervously **adverb**
entered **verb**
dark **adjective**
tiny **adjective**
terrified **adjective**
closely **adverb**
cramped **adjective**

Name Date

Magic Mountain

Warm-up Activities

1. Write a sentence –with an excellent beginning– about the first time you see the mountain.

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2. Here are some words that could be used in a story about a magic mountain.

Place each word under the correct heading: *mysteriously trekking strange exhausted eerily clambering cautiously trudged curious mythical warily mystical unbelievably grasped*

Adjectives

Verbs

Adverbs

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3. Write down each underlined word and alongside it (in brackets) say whether it's a verb, adverb or adjective.

As I approached the towering mountain I realised I'd forgotten to take my map and navigational compass. Pressing on, I soon reached the mountain's base. Amazingly, there were caves everywhere I looked. Suddenly, I heard a dull whirring sound which seemed to be coming from the large cave that was just ahead of me. Nervously, I entered this dark cavern and was astonished to see three tiny, terrified people huddled closely together in a cramped corner.

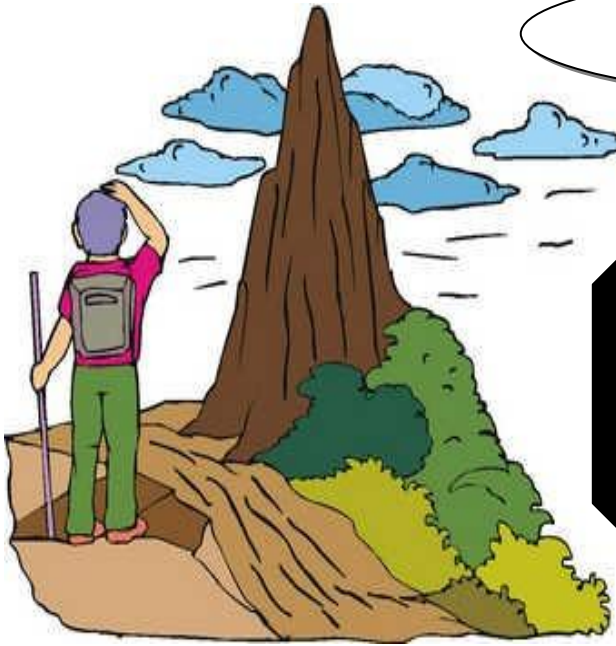
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Magic Mountain



Quick Revision

Surprise Ending
Sentence Beginnings
Adverbs Verbs Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Plot-Setting-Characters, Sentence Beginnings, Surprise Ending

Writing the Story

The time has arrived to put into practise all that you've learned so far.....and you've learnt a lot!

When writing a story featuring something like a magic mountain it can be a good idea to have characters (human and/or non human) who possess unusual -perhaps even supernatural- qualitiesit 'fits' well with the theme. Some possibilities....*a lost tribe, alien visitors, an undiscovered animal (or plant) species, a highly intelligent hermit who'd become disillusioned with society, 'lost' children who had made the mountain and its caves their home, etc.*

Name Date

Magic Mountain



Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's
Notes



Ockie

Class Discussion

What do you know about octopuses (octopi)? Octopi are cephalopods. They inhabit diverse parts of the ocean, often being found around coral reefs. They have soft bodies with no internal skeleton. They have a beak.

Octopi are extremely intelligent animals whose performances in problem-solving and maze experiments show that they have both short and long term memory. They have three hearts. Octopi are preyed on by moray eels and other predatory fish. They inject a thick blackish ink to escape from predators. This ink dulls the predators' sense of smell. If under attack they can detach an arm which will crawl, distracting the predator. They can camouflage themselves by changing to any one of three different colours (usually reds, yellows, browns).

What would it be like to have 8 arms? What are some different things that you could do at one time?

Teaching Points

- The quotation marks at the end of the speaking part always follow the comma/full stop/question mark/exclamation mark.
- If the speaking part of your sentence comes first, follow it with a comma. If it comes at the end of the sentence it should be preceded by a comma.
- Each time a different person speaks take a new line.
- Direct speech can be very powerful; it can add 'punch' to your story because it makes your character(s) come alive. However as with some of the other techniques you've been learning about, don't over-use it.

Focus: Direct Speech

Make your characters 'come alive' by letting your readers 'hear' what they actually say.

1. Sample response:

Ockie reached out to Oliver with one arm and shook a 'hand'.

"Hey Oliver," said Ockie, "great to see you."

"You too," replied Oliver, "I hear you've been practising your famous vertical arm-walk."

2. Sample response:

Ockie was crawling along the seabed when he noticed an old crab caught up in some fishing net.

"You look like you could use some help," said Ockie.

"Oh yes," replied the crab, "the more I struggle to get out the worse it gets."

With all eight arms undoing knots in the net Ockie was soon able to free the crab.

"Oh thanks so much," said the grateful crustacean, "that's one I owe you."

3. Solution:

Ockie said, "Oliver, have you seen any sharks today?"

"Only one," replied Oliver, "but I zapped it with ink and it swam away."

Date.....



1. Tell about an encounter between Ockie and his octopus friend Oliver. Use some direct speech.

[illegible]

Only one, replied Oliver, but I zapped it with ink and it swam away.

[illegible][illegible]

Ockie



Quick Revision

Surprise Ending
Sentence Beginnings
Adverbs Verbs
Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: *Direct Speech*

Make your characters 'come alive' by letting your readers 'hear' what they actually say.

Writing the Story

Here's a challenge:

Write a story about a pet Ockie, who's adapted to life on the land.

Don't worry, he's given lots of water through the day and spends time in the bath.

Hey, what a great personal assistant he could be for you (see the picture)!

To be able to use direct speech in a story you don't need to have more than one character.

Direct speech may be used for thoughts.

Example: (Ockie is in his natural habitat)

***Ockie swam away as fast as he could and thought,
"I don't feel like being shark food today."***

If your story does have more than character make sure they interact with one another so that your opportunities for including direct speech are greater.

Remember to start a new line when a different character speaks.

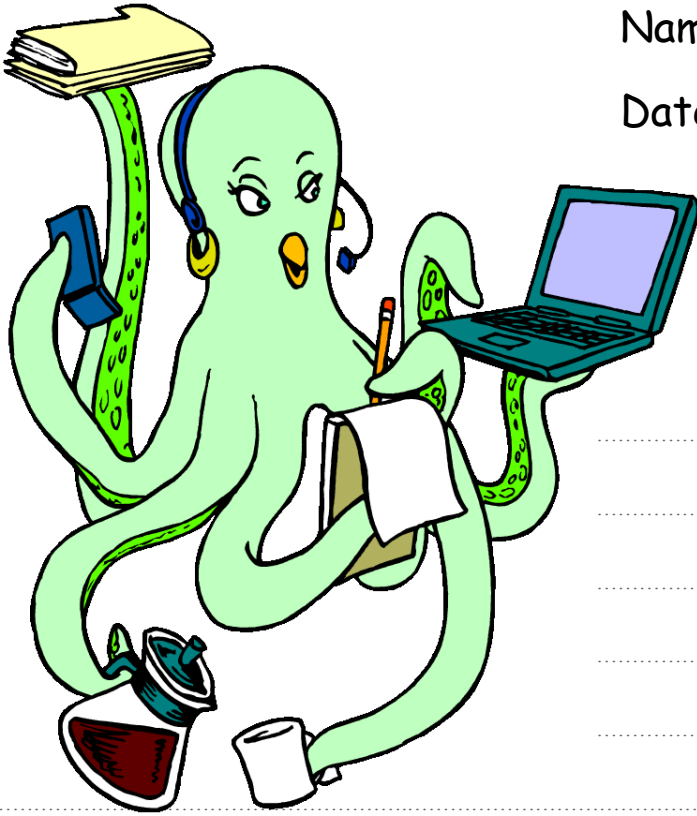
"Oliver, what do you do when you see a moray eel approaching?" asked Ockie.

Oliver replied, "I usually change colour and get in amongst the coral."

(Ockie is in his natural habitat)

Name.....

Date.....



Ockie

Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's Notes

Treasure!



Teaching Points

Similes come in two kinds:

- 1) comparing things using **like**
 - 2) comparing things using **as**.
- Similes help us to make our point, to 'drive home' the image we're trying to convey.

Consider these examples:

- *The coins glistened **like** a million twinkling stars in the night sky.*
- *I was as happy **as** a polar bear on ice.*

Class Discussion

- What is treasure? (coins, jewellery etc)
- Where is treasure found? (buried in the ground, in sunken ships, in the attic,...)
- If you found some treasure would you report it to the police?
- Who would you tell?
- What would you do with it?

Focus: Similes

Appeal to your readers' senses by comparing objects, characters etc to things your readers are familiar with.

1. Sample response:

*It was **like** a fantastic dream.*

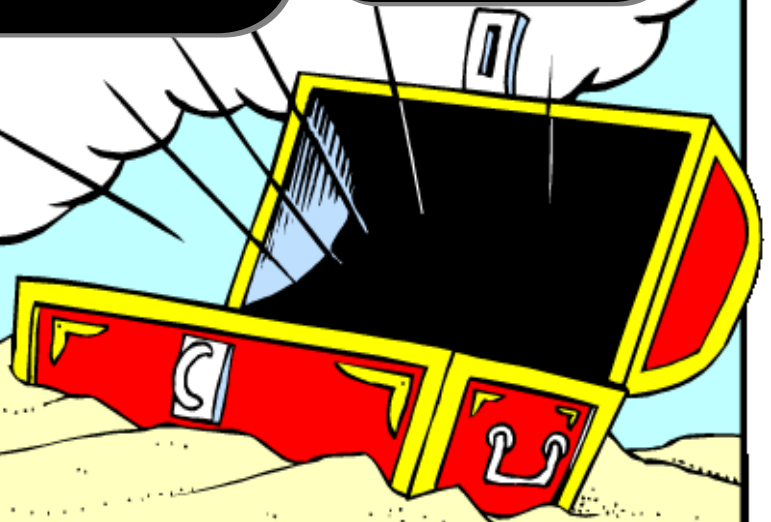
*I was as excited **as** a palaeontologist in a pit of dinosaur bones.*

2. Sample responses:

- the cave hiding the treasure
*The cave was **like** a cold dimly-lit dungeon.*
- discovery of the treasure
*I felt **like** Columbus must have felt upon sighting America.*
- the treasure chest itself
*The treasure chest was **like** a giant colourful music box.*

3. Sample responses:

*They were as astonished **as** Jack when he laid eyes on the beanstalk.*



Name

Date

Treasure!

Warm-up Activities



1. *Imagine you find a treasure chest hidden away in a cave. Write two sentences, each containing a simile, that describes your excitement.*

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2. *Make up 'like' similes for these: Write whole sentences.*

the cave hiding the treasure

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your discovery of the treasure chest

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the treasure chest itself

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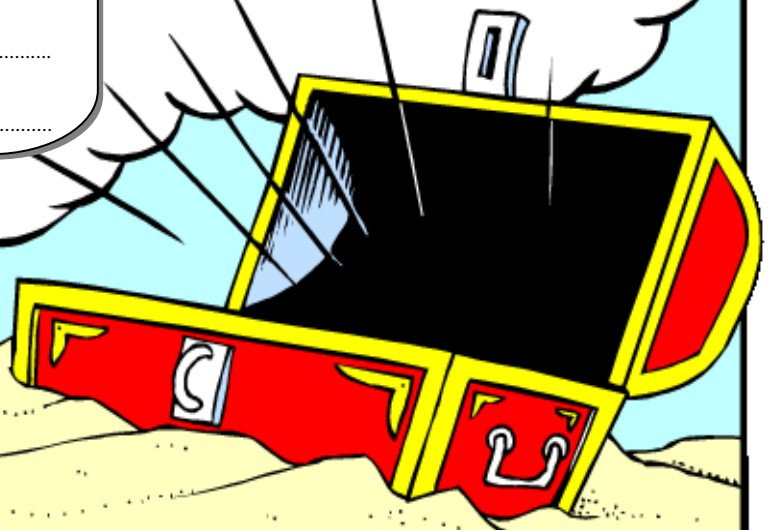
3. *Make up an 'as' simile for this: Write a whole sentence.*

your parents' astonishment at your find

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My Story

*Teacher's
Notes*



Treasure!

Quick Revision

Direct Speech Surprise Ending Sentence Beginnings
Adverbs Verbs Adjectives Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: *Similes*

Appeal to your readers' senses by comparing objects, characters etc to things your readers are familiar with.

Writing the Story

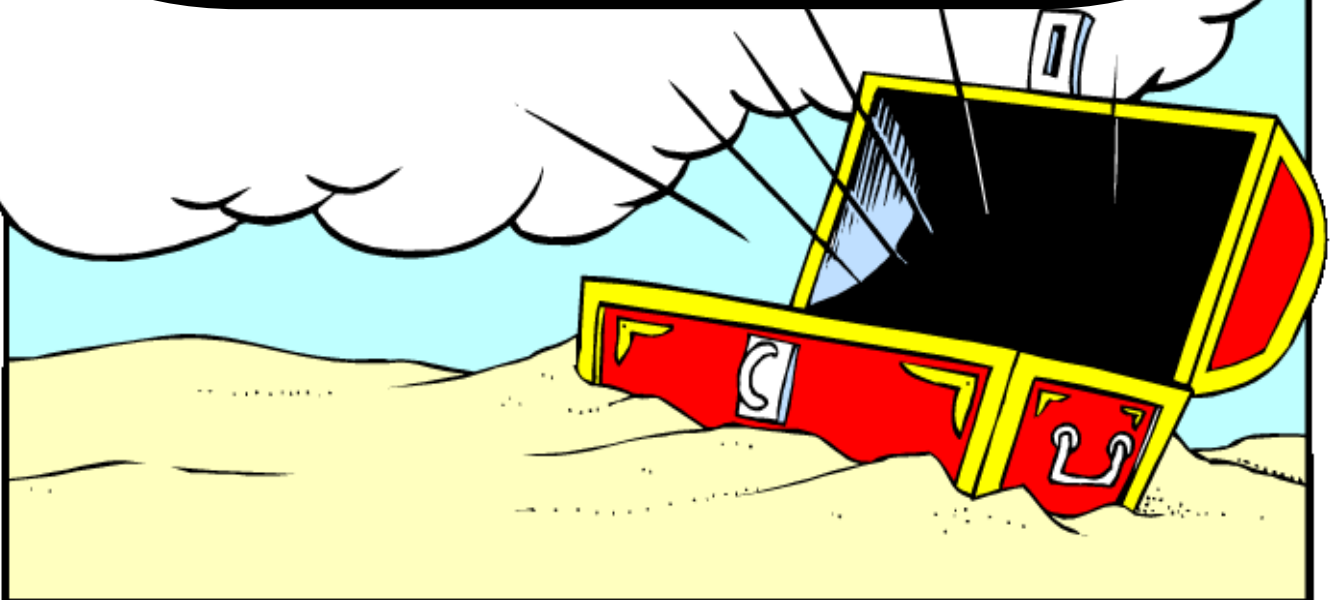
A story about treasure provides a perfect opportunity for you to practise similes. Try to include at least one of each kind of simile in your story..... a **like** one and an **as** one.

An excellent sentence beginning here and there would add a lot to your story and if you can think up a surprise ending as well that would be even better.

A little bit of Direct 'Speech' would be good too....remember, it could be for thoughts (not just speech).

Here's an example:

With one hand on the open lid I gazed open-mouthed at the fortune before my eyes and wondered, "What on earth will I do with this?"



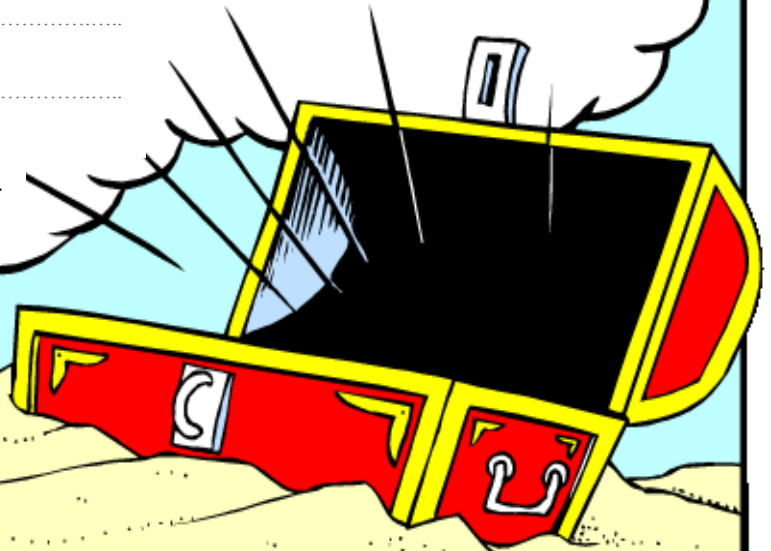
Name

Date

Treasure!



Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.



Class Discussion

Young people love birthdays.
Why is this?

Well, there **are** the gifts you receive. Then there's the extra freedom (and responsibilities) you get by being that one year older.

Sometimes too, there are surprises!



Warm-up Activities

Teacher's Notes

The Great Birthday Surprise

Teaching Points

A short sentence is used to best effect when it follows several longer ones....

Example

I looked over my carefully wrapped presents, wondering which one to open first. Should I start with the biggest, the smallest or that one there with the funny shape?

I chose the one with the funny shape and unwrapped it as quickly as I could.
I shouldn't have!

Focus: The Short Sentence

A short sentence, especially when 'dropped in' after a long-ish passage, has the effect of making your readers 'sit up' and take notice.

1. Sample response:

I'll open my presents and sit down to breakfast with my family. After that I'll get dressed and check my messages. Then I'll contact Donna to see if she'll be coming to my party. Today's going to be one of the best day's of my life. I hope!

2. Sample response:

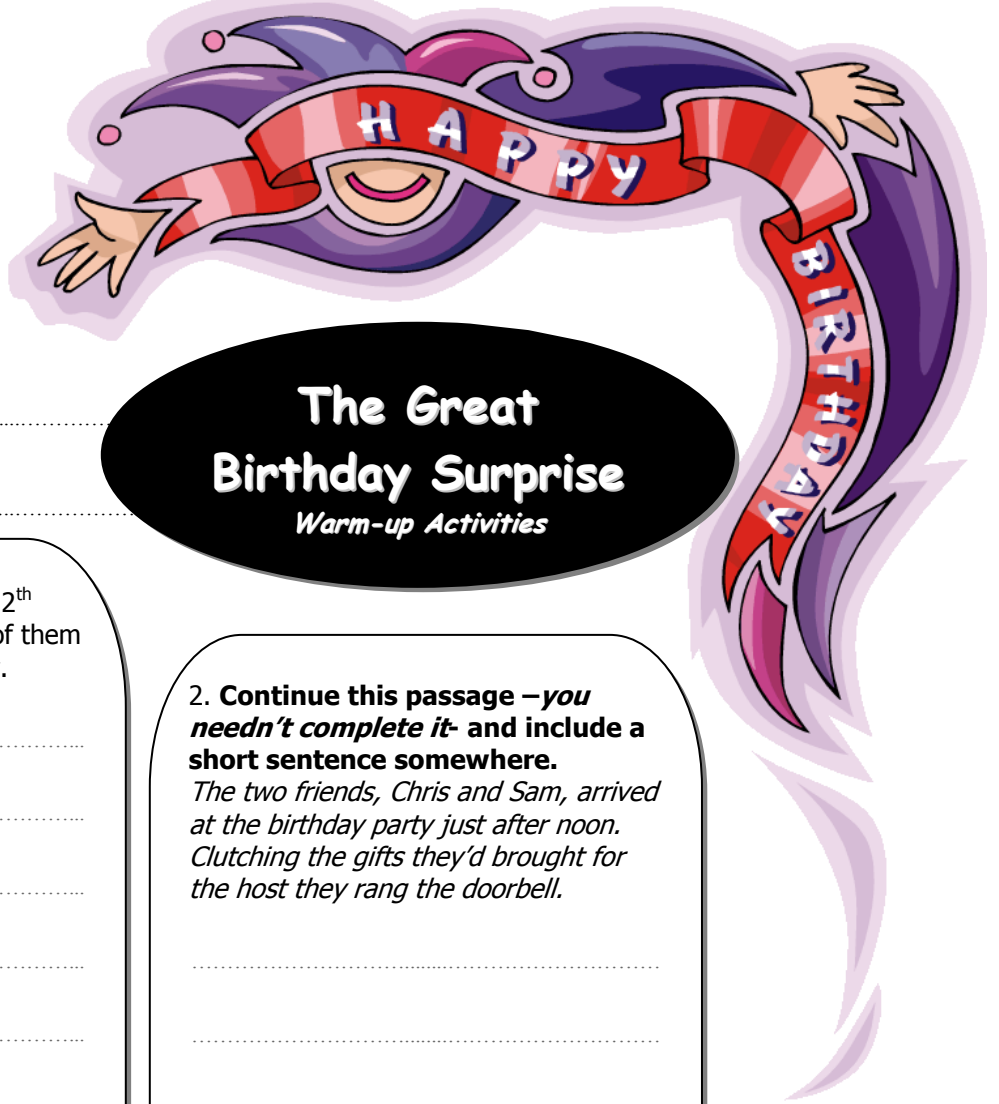
The two friends, Chris and Sam, arrived at the birthday party just after noon. Clutching the gifts they'd brought for the host they rang the doorbell. After waiting a minute or so they rang again. Still no answer.

"Hey," said Sam anxiously, "are you sure this is number 24?"

3. Sample response:

Having my birthday party on a boat was great fun. Soon we sailed into a little bay and Uncle Jim said we could go ashore for a bit of 'fun and a run'. Cruising in slowly toward the jetty we saw some dark clouds and lightning off in the distance.

*"Don't worry," said Uncle Jim assuredly, "that storm's passing away to the north."
What luck!*



The Great Birthday Surprise

Warm-up Activities

Name

Date

1. You've just awoken and it's your 12th birthday. In 3-5 sentences (the last of them short) say what your plans are today.

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2. Continue this passage –*you needn't complete it*– and include a short sentence somewhere.

The two friends, Chris and Sam, arrived at the birthday party just after noon. Clutching the gifts they'd brought for the host they rang the doorbell.

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3. Write a passage -an extract from a longer story- about a wonderful birthday party that had been prepared for you. End with, *What luck!*

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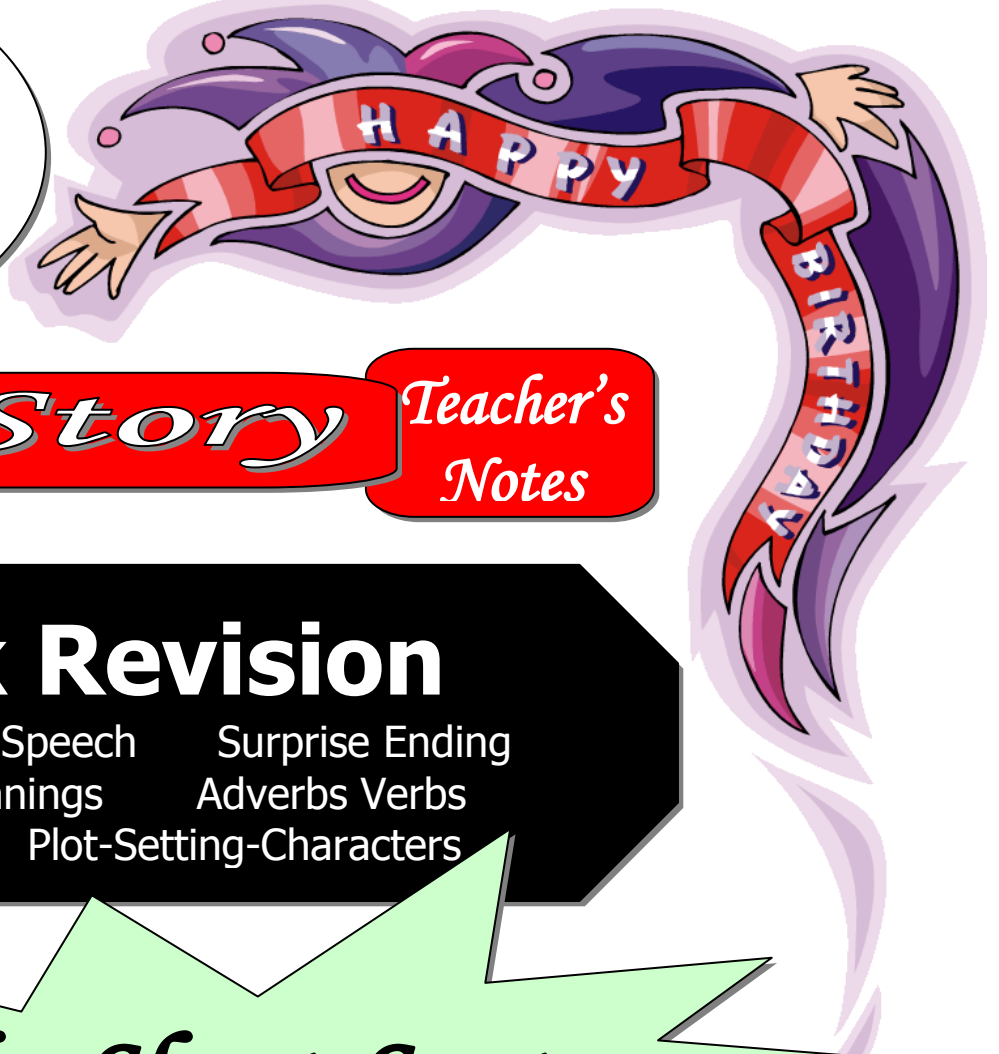
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The Great Birthday Surprise



My Story

Teacher's Notes

Quick Revision

Similes Direct Speech Surprise Ending
Sentence Beginnings Adverbs Verbs
Adjectives Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: The Short Sentence

A short sentence, especially when 'dropped in' after a long-ish passage, has the effect of making your readers 'sit up' and take notice.

Writing the Story

Having decided upon the plot, setting and which characters will feature in your story it's time to start writing.

You may be wondering when is the best time to use the short sentence. Well, a short sentence can be used at any place in your story: at the beginning, in the middle or at the end.

As a general rule, the more sentences that precede it (in the paragraph) the better.

All of the following would be suitable short sentences in a story entitled, "The Great Birthday Surprise."

What fun! I sat and watched. What? Yippee! I gulped.

I didn't care. Definitely! Mum looked at me. Yes, sure.

That was that. Oh, alright. It started again. Dad chuckled.

Name

Date

**The Great
Birthday Surprise**



Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

Warm-up Activities

Teacher's Notes

The Storm

Class Discussion

- There are different kinds of storms. What are some of them? (*thunder and lightning, cyclone/hurricane, tornado*)
- Do you have a storm experience you'd like to share with the class? Where were you and what happened?
- What are some safety precautions we should observe in storms? (*don't go outside or be on the telephone when there's lightning about, secure unfixed objects as a cyclone approaches, etc*)



Note to Teachers

Students decide on their plot and then choose the characters to feature in their story. Their task in this piece of writing is to incorporate every one of the techniques they've been learning about (see exploding star below). While *surprise ending* can occur only once there is no restriction on any of the others. A story featuring *excellent sentence beginnings, similes, direct speech, a short sentence or two and plenty of well-chosen adjectives, verbs and adverbs* will show that the art of writing wonderful stories has been mastered.

Focus: *Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Plot-Setting-Characters, Sentence Beginnings, Surprise Ending, Direct Speech, Similes, the Short Sentence*

1. Sample response:

Our tiny boat was being tossed about like a cork in a washing machine.

As the wind howled fiercely the walls and roof shuddered as if an army of giants was approaching.

2. Sample response:

*I was at my granddad's farm when it struck.
I had wondered why the dogs had began barking as I lay trying to sleep around midnight. Now I knew.
The wind increased in intensity from a dull moan to an eerie howl as the windows started to rattle in their frames.
Great flashes of light filled my room, accompanied by deafening, thunderous claps.
Five seconds later, the same.
And again. And again.
Hailstones pounded upon the roof and thudded onto the ground outside.
It was like being trapped in a war zone.*

3. Sample responses:

Plot:

Four children - in a small rubber tube- set off to navigate a river flowing through a dangerous gorge. Mid-journey a violent wind storm upturns their craft and they hang on desperately until help arrives. Their rescuer is an escaped criminal who, for his act of bravery, receives a court pardon.

Setting:

A remote gorge in the Australian outback.

Characters:

*Jesse (age 11, always joking around)
Tom (age 12, wears glasses, known as Prof)
Rhiannon (age 12, a tomboy)
Jodi (age 11, Tom's sister, scared of cats, hates boys) and Clarry (age 34, convicted thief, abandoned at birth, never married, has no trust in adults but trusts kids)*

Name Date

The Storm

Warm-up Activities



2. Write an excellent passage telling about a real or imaginary time that you experienced a storm. Use thoughtful, high-quality verbs, adverbs and adjectives.

1. Write two excellent 'storm' sentences, one with a **like** simile and one with an **as** simile.

3. Think up an exciting plot, an unusual setting and some interesting characters for a story involving a storm. Write your ideas below.

Plot (brief outline)

Setting (brief description)

Characters (brief description)

The Storm



Quick Revision

The Short Sentence
Similes Direct Speech
Surprise Ending
Sentence Beginnings
Adverbs Verbs Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: *Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Plot-Setting-Characters,
Sentence Beginnings, Surprise Ending,
Direct Speech, Similes, the Short Sentence*

Writing the Story

Remind students that every story needs a brief introductory paragraph (in this case a sentence or two will suffice), a 'body' (usually two or more paragraphs) and a (brief) concluding paragraph.

For this Storm story students should be able to come up with lots of excellent...
adjectives – ***furious blinding frightening penetrating fierce***
verbs – ***crashing flashing tumbling roaring whistling***
adverbs – ***dangerously wildly eerily deafeningly menacingly***

The topic lends itself well to similes...

-as bright as the sun like a vengeful predator

Sentence beginnings like these could be used:

Like an exploding cannon... Illuminating the night sky...

Some direct speech could be:

With the wind howling furiously Tim bashed frantically on the door screaming, "Open up, it's me....Tim!"

Name Date

The Storm



Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.

