The Atom Learning
Young Author Award

Note for Teachers

This presentation can be used to…

- present TEN fun **classroom activities** (printable activity pack <u>here</u>)
- teach lessons on key areas of **creative writing**:
    - characters
    - setting
    - structure
    - vocabulary
    - proofreading
- introduce the **theme**, **rules** and **prizes** in the Atom Learning Young Author Award to students
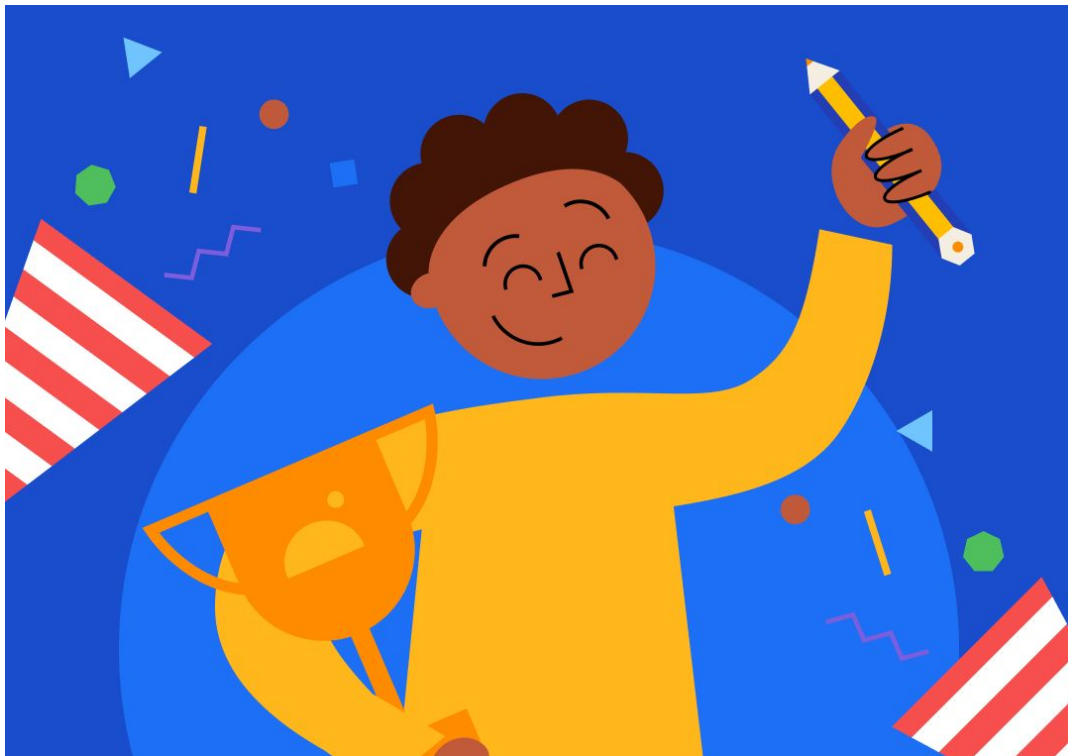
CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION

The Atom Learning Young Author Award

Write a story inspired by the theme 'a day that changed the world'.

Stories should be no longer than 500 words.

The Prizes

1. Trip to Disneyland + £2,500 for your school + illustrated book cover

2. London Zoo stay + £1,000 for your school

3. £250 experience + £500 for your school

THEME:
A Day that Changed the World

THEME

Perhaps you or your main character...

- Saved an endangered species?
- Found a magical doorway to a better world or alternative reality?
- Switched off the internet?
- Discovered a solution to the climate crisis at the bottom of the sea?
- Concocted a potion that made people fart embarrassingly loudly whenever they were angry?
- Spoke to all of the world's leaders to end world hunger and bring about world peace?

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Enter your stories here!

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Printable activity pack here

Characters

Every story needs a memorable **protagonist**, or main character.

Some famous examples include *Harry Potter*, *Matilda* and *Sherlock Holmes* - **can you think of any more?**

Characters

The following activities are designed to help you create your **protagonist** and bring them to life.

Your protagonist can be **any race, gender or age** - they don't even need to be human!

All that matters is your protagonist is **interesting** and **exciting** to the reader.

Create a character profile

A **character profile** can help you decide important parts of your character's appearance, personality and opinions.

Write down **key words and phrases** in each of the boxes to start building up your protagonist!

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Character Profile

For fun, my character likes to...

The most important people in my character's life are...

Draw you character here!

My character's name is ....

My character could talk for hours about...

My character's biggest secret is that...

Write a diary entry

Put yourself in the shoes of your protagonist and **imagine what they might be thinking and feeling**. Think carefully about your protagonist's voice - what words are they likely to use? What are they likely to be doing? How would they react in a given situation?

Write two paragraphs of a diary entry from **the day before the world changed**. Try to make your protagonist's voice as real as possible!

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Setting

The setting of a story is **when** and **where** it takes place.

Writers use **descriptive language** and **adjectives** to transport their readers into the world they have created.

Use the following activities to help you create a **sensational setting**!

Amazing Adjectives

Read through the adjectives. Circle any words that describe the world before the change in **one colour**, and circle the words that describe the world after the change **in a different colour**.

Feel free to add more adjectives!

Circle any words that describe the world <u>before</u> the change in one colour, and circle the words that describe the world <u>after</u> the change in a different colour.

dazzling	ancient	luxurious
pleasant peaceful	spotless	exotic
tranquil	disgusting	crowded
bustling horrendous	empty	damp
clean	polluted	smoky
noisy fresh	gloomy	serene
unkempt calm	sweltering	filthy
miserable raucous	quiet	wonderful

Set Design

Your story is going to be turned into a film! Write a **description for the set designer** who will build the 'before' and 'after' sets for your story, then add an **illustration** to show how your world will look.

Remember to think about the **five senses** - what can you see and hear? What can you smell and taste? What can you touch?

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Before

After

Illustration:

Structure

Stories usually follow a very specific structure:

1. opening
2. build-up
3. dilemma
4. resolution
5. closing

These activities will help you plot a dramatic and thrilling storyline using this structure.

Structure of a story

1. **Opening** - Introduce the setting and main character(s). Make sure to include a thrilling opening sentence!

2. **Build-Up** - Plant clues for the reader that something bad is about to happen.

3. **Dilemma** - Oh no! Something has gone wrong! What is the problem?

4. **Resolution** - How is the problem solved?

5. **Ending** - How has the world changed? What lessons have been learned?

Opening Sentences

The opening sentence of your story should **hook the reader in** and make them want to keep reading.

Here are four examples. Match the **opening sentences** with the technique that has been used in them.

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Techniques

Action ◯

Speech/Dialogue ◯

Character description ◯

Setting description ◯

Opening Sentences

◯ "Where do you think you're going?" snarled the troll.

◯ An icy wind howled through the manor, its empty door frames and paneless windows offering no protection.

◯ The cloak hung lazily off Zhang's shoulders as he sauntered towards the throne.

◯ I didn't hear her coming until it was too late.

Opening Sentences

Now try writing your own **opening sentences**!

Experiment with starting your story in the middle of some **action**, start your story with some **speech**, or begin by describing your **character** or **setting**.

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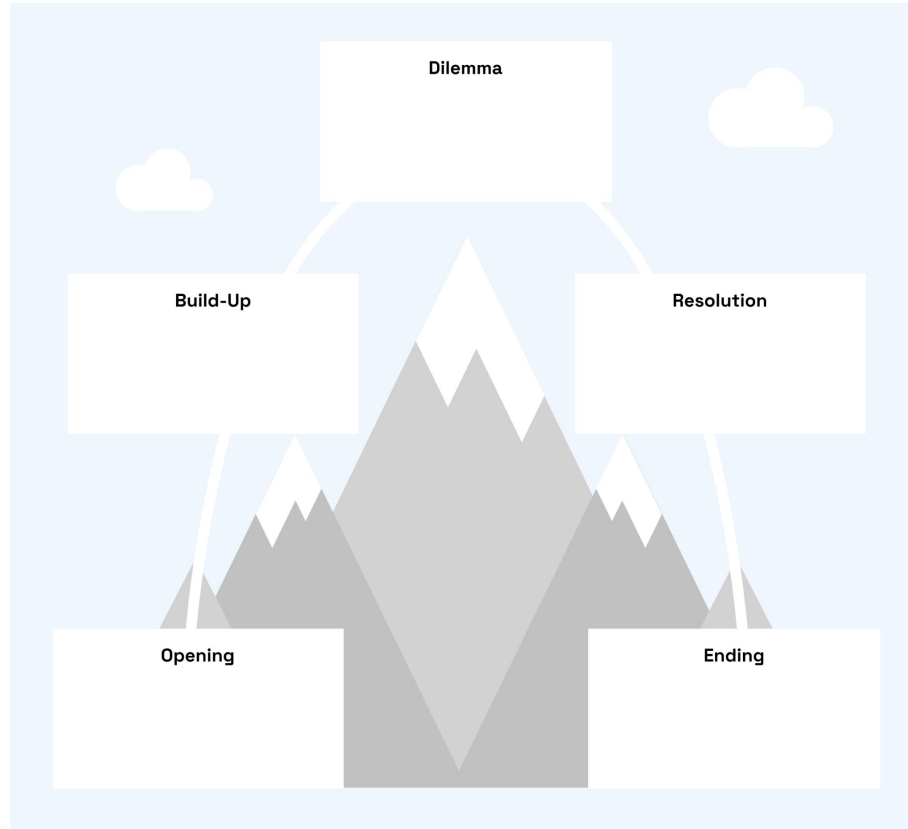
Story Mountains

Story Mountains can help you plan out the main events of your story.

Fill in the boxes with important details that you want to include in each section (**opening, build-up, dilemma, resolution, closing**). Use the prompts to help you.

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Dilemma

Build-Up

Resolution

Opening

Ending

Vocabulary

One of the key ways you can keep your reader interested is by using **exciting words** and **descriptions**.

These exercises are designed to **boost your vocabulary** and help you describe your character's feelings and actions in an **original and compelling way**.

Alphabet Challenge

Can you come up with an **adjective** for every letter of the alphabet?

Remember, **adjectives** are words that describe a noun. Try to choose words that can describe your character, setting or maybe an important object.

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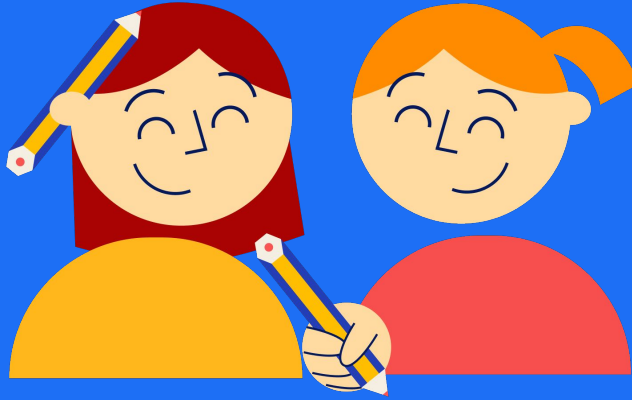A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Show Don't Tell

We want our readers to **care about our characters**. One way to do this is by showing how they are feeling.

However, instead of **telling** the reader how a character feels, great writers **show** how a character is feeling by describing their character's **facial expressions**, **body language** and **voice**.

Example

Tell
They were happy.

facial expressions   body language

Show
With twinkling eyes and beaming cheeks, the girls nestled close to each other, their excited chattering echoing around the room.

voice

Change each 'Tell' sentence into a 'Show' sentence by using a character's facial expressions, body language and voice to show how they are feeling.

Tell: She was ecstatic.
Show:

Tell: She felt calm.
Show:

Tell: He was devastated.
Show:

Tell: He was disappointed.
Show:

Tell: She was feeling lazy.
Show:

Synonyms

We don't want our writing to become boring and repetitive.

Rewrite the sentences below and **replace the words in bold** with a more exciting alternative.

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"You should not have done that," **said** Moira.	
Harry **walked** towards the front of the room.	
Jemima looked out at the **stunning** scenery.	
This soup is **delicious**!	
After a long day outside, Bertie was feeling **hungry**.	

Proofreading

Once you've finished writing your story, it's important to go back and **check for any mistakes**.

This can include spelling mistakes, missing punctuation and unfinished sentences.

Proofreading

Read through the text below and see if you can spot the **eight mistakes** in the text!

The ship had been their for some time. that much was clear from the rotting wood and torn sales. Nobody quite knew when it had appeared, not even Finellas parents.

To finella, it had always just *been*, as much a part of the lands gape as the glittering sands and jagged cliffs, for ever in the background of their beachside picknicks.

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To **F**inella, it had always just *been*, as much a part of the **landscape** as the glittering sands and jagged cliffs, **forever** in the background of their beachside **picnics**.