

Story-writing SCAFFOLDS

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Story-writing Scaffolds for Year 4

INTRODUCTION

Story-writing Scaffolds for Year 4 is intended for use in schools to help teach children how to write effective short stories in a variety of different genres. It improves children's 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 children assemble a portfolio of stories containing genre-specific vocabulary and writing features. The chosen text types correspond with those in the Framework's text-level objectives for each half-term.

Each unit also includes information and activities on at least one sentence-level objective. Thus the book also enhances the children's knowledge of grammar, their punctuation and style.

THE PROGRAMME CONTAINS:

a teachers' book comprising:

- notes for teachers on the genres
- copies of exemplar stories together with teaching notes
- guidance on how to develop grammar skills in children's writing
- guidance on how to help children write in the particular genre

a resource book of photocopiable material comprising:

- illustrated versions of the exemplar stories especially produced for children
- notes for the children on understanding the grammar (optional reference material)
- photocopiable activity sheets to reinforce the grammar (optional)
- notes and tips for the children on writing stories (optional reference material)
- differentiated story scaffolds which enable them to choose the course of the story they are about to write
- vocabulary banks for them to use and add to.

HOW TO USE THE PROGRAMME

1. After examining examples of stories in the target genre by established writers, read and discuss the exemplar story with the children, using the notes in the margin to highlight the examples of the unit's grammatical teaching point and writing feature. The children should follow the story using their own illustrated version from the Resource book.

2. Next read through and explain the 'Understanding the grammar and punctuation' section of the unit. The children can do the activities orally together or independently on paper.
3. Then explain the 'Helpful hints' and 'Writing features' sections of the unit to the children.
4. Read through the story scaffolds with the children. Then give them the differentiated word banks and ask them to record their own vocabulary suggestions in the space provided.

Give the children time to plan, write and edit their stories. Each child can then store the best copies of their stories in a writing folder.

NOTES FROM THE AUTHORS

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 children working collaboratively or individually.

The order of activities for each unit corresponds exactly with the sequence for the teaching of writing outlined in *Grammar for Writing* (DfEE 0107/2000). First the model story can be discussed and its grammatical and thematic features interrogated during shared reading. Next the grammar and punctuation activities can be undertaken to reinforce the children's understanding of the relevant sentence-level objectives. The helpful hints section, story scaffolds and vocabulary banks support the teacher and children in shared writing sessions and in subsequent guided and independent writing.

The method works well with children of all abilities and with bilingual pupils, as it offers the security of a detailed framework and a bank of appropriate vocabulary together with the challenge of a grammar and writing features component for each unit. As the grammar section contains examples from the story, all the children can access it at some level: it is not always necessary to understand the mechanics of the grammar in order to modify the examples for use in an individual story.

The units fulfil the text-level and sentence-level requirements of the NLS Framework for Year 4 and revise components from Year 3. The units may be used specifically in literacy lessons or they may be linked with work in other curriculum areas and used accordingly.

TERM 1

UNIT 1

Genre: historical stories

Grammar: verbs, verb tenses, powerful verbs (S2; S3)

Punctuation: commas (S5)

Writing feature: story settings; how the passage of time is presented (T1; T3)

UNIT 2

Genre: adventure stories

Grammar: adverbs (S4)

Punctuation: paragraphs (T15)

Writing features: narrative order (T4)

UNIT 3

Genre: playscripts

Grammar: sentences (S?)

Punctuation: revision of capitals, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks (from Year 3)

Writing features: conventions of playscripts (T13)

TERM 2

UNIT 4

Genre: family stories

Grammar: revision of types of sentences – statement, question, exclamation

Punctuation: revision of speech punctuation

Writing features: collaborative writing and using plans; stories in chapters (T12)

UNIT 5

Genre: fantasy stories

Grammar: adjectives (S1)

Punctuation: contraction; apostrophe (S2)

Writing: expressive and descriptive language (T10; T13)

UNIT 6

Genre: science fiction

Grammar: word order (S3)

Punctuation: possession; apostrophe (S2)

Writing features: develop the use of story settings (T10)

UNIT 7

Genre: horror stories

Grammar: adverbs (S1)

Punctuation: how commas join and separate clauses (S4)

Writing features: creating a sense of fear and uncertainty

TERM 3

UNIT 8

Genre: stories that raise issues

Grammar: plurals (S1)

Punctuation: commas in adverbial phrases and clauses (S4)

Writing features: how issues affect characters (T11)

UNIT 9

Genre: story from another culture – Bahamian story

Grammar: sentence construction (S2; S3)

Punctuation: speech marks (S2)

Writing features: features of Bahamian stories (T2)

UNIT 10

Genre: story from another culture – Maori legend

Grammar: connectives (S4)

Punctuation: colons and semi-colons; parenthetical commas, dashes and brackets (S2)

Writing features: features of Maori stories (T2)

Longboat stowaways

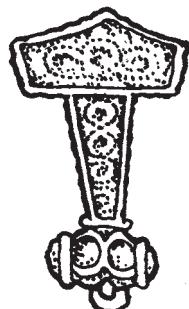
The shadows from the flickering flames played across the weathered lines of the old skald's face; his voice stole into every corner of the longhouse and mesmerised the listeners as they picked at the left-overs from the banquet scattered across the wooden table. In this Viking settlement of Oseberg, Norway, the storytelling was the highlight of Jolablot, the midwinter feast. Tales of the god Odin and his wars against the Frost Giants of Utgard; the rainbow bridge, Bifrost, that stretched from earthly Midgard to the home of the gods at Asgard; these were the characters and places that made up the very fabric of Viking life over a thousand years ago.



Gunneva, the chieftain's daughter was startled from her poetic trance by the cold, clammy nose of her dog, demanding its share of the feast. As she secretly flicked a morsel from a wooden platter, the dull glint of gold winked at her from the rush strewn floor. In the time that she took to pat her dog, the find was secreted in the woad folds of her tunic.

Later, by the dim light of the glowing hearth, she studied her new-found treasure. The lucky charm – the hammer of Thor – lay heavily in her palm. She knew to whom it belonged – her father. She felt sure that he wouldn't miss it; he was a great warrior and trader who had

returned from trips to Miklagard bearing silver, silks and exotic spices. He would never miss this small trinket! A sudden snoring from the sleeping platform made her start guiltily and she tied the charm around her neck with a piece of thread and burrowed into her bed of furs.



At last, winter slowly gave way to spring and, as the days lengthened, preparations were underway for the first of the overseas raids. The settlement was expanding and her father had decided that more slaves were needed to work in the fields. Gunneva was accustomed to slaves doing the really heavy and dirty work around the farm and she had never really given much thought to

where they had come from.

One day Gunneva, bored with her task of spinning, ran off to find her best friend Eirik. He was practising his fighting moves with his scramasax and she watched him for a while as he thrust and parried with the single-edged knife.

'Come and see the longboat with me,' begged Gunneva. 'It is almost ready to sail!'

"Willingly!" gasped the exhausted Eirik. 'This shield is so heavy.'



Understanding the grammar and punctuation

Verb tenses

A verb is an action word.

The tense of the verb tells us when something is happening.

Here are the different tenses of the verb 'see'.

I saw, I have seen (past)

(something has already happened)

I see, I am seeing, I do see (present)

(something is happening now)

I will see, I will be seeing (future)

(something that will or may happen)

Commas

Commas are used to separate parts of a sentence. They tell the reader when to pause in their reading.

'Quick, we have to save the boat!'

They separate items in a list.

The Viking warriors carried spears, daggers, axes and shields.

They are used to separate any extra information within the sentence.

Gunneva, the chieftain's daughter, was startled from her poetic trance.

Powerful verbs

Powerful verbs give extra meaning to your writing.

They make your writing more exciting.

'Willingly!' said the exhausted Eirik.

'Willingly!' gasped the exhausted Eirik.

The villagers tried to hold off the invaders.

The villagers attempted to repel the invaders.

You can use a thesaurus to find examples of powerful verbs.

Verb tenses

Change the underlined verbs in each of these sentences to the tense in the brackets.
Rewrite each sentence

1. *The boat sailed on around the coast. (present)*

2. *The children were alone on the vessel. (future)*

3. *The stowaways lost track of time. (present)*

4. *Odin and Thor both smile on the deeds of men today. (past)*

Powerful verbs

Read the following passage. Circle the powerful verbs.

Crouching in the boat, Gunneva and Eirik watched as the warriors forced their way in and then captured the monks and the surrounding villagers. There was a lot of screaming and shouting and the clash of weapons as the villagers attempted to repel the invaders.

Gunneva saw her father wielding his mighty axe and encouraging his men.

Find some powerful verbs to replace the ones in the boxes below.

said

walk

look

go

Helpful hints for writing an historical story

- ◆ Mention the time when the events of the story take place early on in your story so that the reader understands the historical setting right from the beginning.
- ◆ When you describe the settings of your story, include details of landscape, buildings and objects that are typical of the historical period in which your story takes place. Weave them into the plot. You are not writing an information text but giving an account of life in the past.
- ◆ Use a third person narrator to tell your story. Otherwise, if you choose a first person narrator, you will have to use old-fashioned language throughout.
- ◆ Give your characters names that are suitable for the period in history that the story takes place.
- ◆ Give the male and female characters in your story roles that are appropriate for the period in history when your story is set.

For example, it would be the Viking men who went on the trading expeditions while the women remained at home. The son would follow the father's trade and the daughter would help her mother in the house.
- ◆ A good way of showing that your characters are very much 'of their time' is to give them beliefs that were commonly held at the time in which they lived but have since proved to be false. For example, Viking warriors believed that if they died in bed they would be taken to a place in the depths of the Earth in a boat made from toe-nail clippings.
- ◆ Include historical words and sayings in the dialogue between your characters, but make sure that the expressions you use would have been used in the period you are describing. Use your characters' discussions to give historical information to the reader.
- ◆ In most historical stories, key figures of the time are mentioned in passing but do not play a central role in the story.
- ◆ In many cases, the plot of an historical story is already known. Your challenge is to bring events to life by describing the emotions of the characters through their speech, actions and description.
- ◆ Be careful to avoid historically inaccurate details. For example, it would be wrong to say that Gunneva had buttons or zips on her clothes. Viking garments were fastened with brooches.

Historical story Scaffold 1

You are going to write an historical story.

To help plan your story, use the framework below.

Choose one option from each stage.

Stage One

Choose the characters for your story.

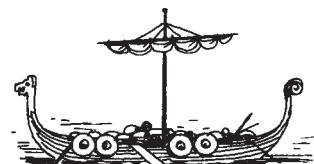
- a) An orphan, whose parents were killed by Viking raiders.
He/she now lives in a monastery under the care of the monks.
- b) A child whose father was taken as a slave by Viking raiders.
He/she has to care for the rest of the family.



Stage Two

Start your story with a good beginning.

- a) Legs trembling with exertion, the child (make up a suitable name) clambered back to the top of the cliff, the seagull eggs carefully stowed in a bag on his/her back. It was then that the tiny sail on the horizon caught his/her attention – a Viking longboat!
- b) The red speck on the horizon was getting closer – it was a boat! This was the moment they had been dreading – the Viking raiders had returned.



Stage Three

Set the scene for the story.

The child (name) ran as fast as he/she could to sound the warning.

- a) Everybody thought he/she was playing a joke and told the child (name) to get on with his/her chores.
- b) The news caused chaos as people panicked and tried to flee.

