

Story writing

SCAFFOLDS

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Story-writing Scaffolds for Year 3

INTRODUCTION

Story-writing scaffolds year 3 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 corresponds 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 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 AUTHOR

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.

I find that 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.

This is the sequence of units for Year 3. The story-type and grammatical information and activities for each unit reflect and fulfil the sentence- and text-level requirements of the NLS Framework for each term.

TERM 1

UNIT 1

Genre: stories with familiar settings – family life stories

Grammar and punctuation component: verbs (S3, S5), verb tenses (S4); devices for presenting texts (S9)

Writing feature: story beginnings (T11)

UNIT 2

Genre: stories with familiar settings – school life stories

Grammar and punctuation component: question marks and exclamation marks (S6); speech punctuation (S7, S8); paragraphs (T15)

Writing feature: vocabulary for introducing and concluding dialogue (W19)

UNIT 3

Genre: playscripts

Grammar and punctuation component: taking account of grammar and punctuation when reading aloud (S2); devices for presenting text (S9)

Writing feature: writing a simple playscript (T14)

UNIT 4

Genre: animal stories

Grammar and punctuation component: verbs (S3, S5), verb tenses (S4); using commas to separate items in a list (S13)

Writing feature: story settings (T11)

TERM 2

UNIT 5

Genre: Egyptian myths

Grammar and punctuation component: adjectives (S2); capital letters (S8)

Writing feature: typical story themes (T2)

UNIT 6

Genre: fables

Grammar and punctuation component: plurals (S4, S5); commas (S6, S7)

Writing feature: elements of fables

UNIT 7

Genre: traditional fairytales

Grammar and punctuation component: collective nouns (S4); capital letters and full stops (revision of Term 1 S10, S11, S12)

Writing feature: styles and voices of traditional story language (T1); story endings

TERM 3

UNIT 8

Genre: adventure stories

Grammar and punctuation component: conjunctions (S5); dialogue punctuation (S4)

Writing feature: creating credibility of events (T4), characters' feelings and behaviour (T5)

UNIT 9

Genre: mystery stories

Grammar and punctuation component: pronouns (S2); commas (S7)

Writing feature: creating a sense of mystery and building tension (T2)

UNIT 10

Genre: humorous stories

Grammar and punctuation component: grammatical agreement between pronouns and nouns (S3); using words and phrases that signal time sequences (S6)

Writing feature: adding humour to a story (T6)

It's not fair!

Paula slammed the front door, threw her bag on the hall floor and stomped up the stairs. She kicked open her bedroom door and banged it shut. Then she threw herself on her bed and started sobbing. She was so ANGRY!

"Paula, is that you?" her mum shouted up the stairs.
"What on earth's the matter?"

Paula didn't reply, she was too upset. She could hear her mother coming up the stairs, so she hastily wiped away her tears and sat up on the bed.

"What's wrong?" Paula's mum asked as she entered the room.
"Why are you so late? Where've you been?"



"Mr Jacobs asked me to stay behind after practice. He said he wanted to explain why I wasn't in the team. He said Julia was in it because she's older. He said I'll have to wait a few more years. It's not fair, Mum, it's just not fair. I'm a much better player than Julia ever was at my age and just because she's older *she* gets picked. In fact, I'm sick to death of hearing about Julia at school. You know what, Mum, some people only know me as 'Julia's little sister'. 'Oh, so you're *Julia's* sister?' they say. They never even ask what *MY* name is. She's **ALWAYS** chosen for every school team; she's **ALWAYS** getting certificates and she's **ALWAYS** the lead in the school play. It's not fair. It's just NOT FAIR!" and with that Paula burst into tears again.

Paula's mum let out a big sigh. As long as she could remember Paula had been jealous of Julia. She had thought that once the girls had gone to the junior school things would be different. But, in fact, things had got steadily worse. Julia was immediately very popular and did very well in everything she did but Paula found it much more difficult to make friends and always felt in the shadow of her big sister.

It was the same at home. Whatever Julia did, Paula wanted to do too. She could never accept that sometimes Julia wanted to do things on her own and have her own friends.



Understanding the grammar and punctuation

Verbs

Verbs are 'doing' or 'being' words.

They tell you what a person or thing is doing.

All sentences have verbs.

Paula sat up again and looked round at her mum.

Paula raced upstairs again and slammed her bedroom door.

Verbs in stories

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

Paula slammed the front door, threw her bag on the hall floor and stomped up the stairs.
(past)

Verb tenses

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

Paula slams the door. (present)

Paula slammed the door. (past)

Paula will slam the door.
(future)

Ways of presenting text in stories

When writing stories the author sometimes wants some words to stand out more than others.

This helps the reader to understand the story better.

"She's **ALWAYS** chosen for every school team; she's **ALWAYS** getting certificates and she's **ALWAYS** the lead in the school play. It's not fair. It's just **NOT FAIR!**"

(Use of capital letters to show that the character is stressing these words more loudly than the others.)

"**Oh, so you're Julia's sister?**" (Use of italics to stress the word.)

Verbs

Read these sentences. Circle the verbs.

1. *She kicked open her bedroom door and banged it shut.*
2. *She could hear her mother coming up the stairs.*
3. *Mr Jacobs asked me to stay behind.*
4. *Paula burst into tears again.*
5. *Paula sat up again and looked around at her mum.*
6. *Have you shown this to Julia?*
7. *Paula made her way to the town hall.*
8. *The boy looked really sorry.*
9. *Her dad came in and asked her to come downstairs.*
10. *I saw what Steven did to you.*



Choose a verb from the box to complete these sentences.

snatched	gave	lived	drew	fought
saw	won	went		

1. *Paula and her sister, Julia, _____ near the town hall.*
2. *Paula and Julia often _____ with each other.*
3. *One day Paula's dad _____ an ad for a competition.*
4. *Paula and Julia both _____ a picture of a bike.*
5. *A boy _____ Paula's drawing from her.*
6. *Paula _____ home very upset.*
7. *Julia _____ the bike and _____ it to Paula.*

Helpful hints for writing a family life story

- ◆ Start your story with a good beginning to make the reader want to read on.

Paula slammed the front door, threw her bag on the hall floor and stomped up the stairs. She kicked open her bedroom door and banged it shut. Then she threw herself on her bed and started sobbing. She was so ANGRY!

- ◆ Write your story in the past tense.

After tea her dad came and sat with her on the sofa.

- ◆ Family life stories can be about all different kinds of families. Some stories are about single-parent families; some stories have lots of brothers and sisters in them and some stories have aunties, uncles and grandparents in them.

Write about the kind of family you know best.



- ◆ Some family stories have pets in them.



- ◆ Many family stories are written about problems that lots of families face, such as:
 - brothers and sisters who fight all the time;
 - parents who don't want their children to do a certain thing;
 - pets that make lots of mess;
 - family holidays that go wrong;
 - a family member who is always in trouble.

Think of a problem that the family might face.



- ◆ Think of a way for the problem to be solved. Does someone else in the family help?
- ◆ Family stories usually have a happy ending. Think of a good way to end the story.

"Perhaps sisters aren't so bad after all," she thought.

Family life story Scaffold 1

You are going to write a family 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.

- a) Mum, Dad and a brother and sister
- b) Dad and a daughter

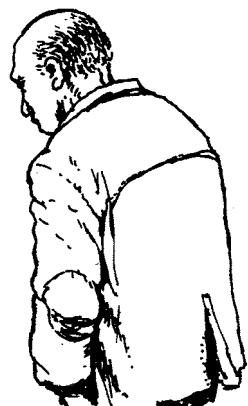
The characters were expecting a visit from Grandfather.



Stage Two

Start your story with a good beginning.

- a) Everyone in the Herbert family was really looking forward to seeing Grandfather Albert again. He was always such good fun and always took the children to exciting places. What they didn't know, however, was that this visit was going to be a nightmare for everyone.



- b) Dad and Grace were dreading Grandpa's visit. He was always tired and grumpy and Grace knew that he and her dad would end up arguing as usual.

Stage Three

Set the scene for the story.

Grandfather arrived by train. They went to meet him at the station.

- a) He was carrying a huge box.
- b) He arrived with a woman they had never seen before.

