

Story Cards

Fantasy

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Story Cards

I N T R O D U C T I O N

About the series

Story Cards is an exciting and innovative series of books and cards aimed at developing and enriching the storytelling and story-writing skills of children aged 5 to 12.

There are two books and card packs for teachers of children aged 5 to 7:

Traditional Tales

Fantasy

and four books and card packs for teachers of children aged 8 to 12:

Myths and Legends

Science Fiction

Fantasy

Traditional Tales

Each book and accompanying card pack aims to:

- support teachers by providing a wealth of interesting ideas for storytelling and story-writing lessons;
- reduce teachers' preparation time through the provision of differentiated activities and photocopiable resources;
- stimulate children's interest and enjoyment in storytelling and story-writing;
- develop children's speaking and writing skills through stimulating and purposeful activities that are fun to do.

About each book and card pack

There is one book and an accompanying pack of cards for each story genre (see above).

Each book contains:

- background information about the writing genre;
- detailed lesson plans for using the cards to develop storytelling and story-writing skills;
- exemplar stories that are differentiated;
- differentiated planning sheets;
- further activities – a wealth of further ideas for using the cards for additional writing tasks as well as speaking and listening games and activities.

Each lesson plan includes differentiated tasks to take into account children of differing ability levels – thereby enabling all the children to work towards the intended learning objectives.

For the 8 to 12 age range, the story cards are divided into six categories and these vary for each different story genre. For example, in the *Myths and Legends* pack they are:

- hero;
- quest;
- companion;
- item;
- setting;
- enemy.

Each category consists of six cards. For example, the enemy cards in the *Myths and Legends* pack feature a one-eyed giant, a many-headed beast, a troll, a huge serpent, a dragon and an evil knight.

Thus, by selecting just one card from each of the six categories, a complete story outline is created. By varying the cards used, a different outline can be created each time. The idea of giving the hero a companion and a special item to take on his or her quest is partly traditional but also, importantly, it allows the children to be more imaginative with their stories.

How to use the book and card pack

It is recommended that the teacher follows the lesson plans first, in order, from Lesson 1 to Lesson 5. This ensures that the cards are introduced to the children in a structured way and that the teacher achieves confidence in using them as a basis for lesson planning.

After the lessons have been carried out, the children will have gained valuable knowledge about the particular writing genre as well as greater confidence in storytelling and writing. To extend the life of the cards, the children can be encouraged to create their own cards to add to each category – or even make up their own complete set of cards to keep themselves.

The tasks in the further activities section can be used to extend and follow up the lessons. These activities are fun to do and will encourage the children to develop their speaking, listening and language skills.

About this book

This book forms part of the *Fantasy Story Cards* pack. It explains how to use the story cards for storytelling and story-writing activities. The book and card pack is intended for use with children aged 8 to 12. The lesson plans and activities contained in this book are adaptable enough to be used with children across the age range because suggestions for manageable differentiation are included.

The lesson plans

The book contains five lesson plans. It is suggested that the lessons are followed in order because their intention is to introduce the children to the fantasy genre and then encourage them to write their own.

Each lesson plan contains:

- **Learning objectives**
This outlines the learning objectives for the lesson.
- **Resources**
This lists the resources needed to carry out the lesson.
- **What to do**
This outlines the lesson in detail.
- **Ideas for differentiation**
This gives suggestions for how the teacher might differentiate the main task in the lesson.
- **Plenary**
This provides suggestions for the plenary session at the end of the lesson.

Exemplar texts

There are three exemplar stories provided in the book:

- Text 1 – The Book of Powers
- Text 2 – Dragon Rider
- Text 3 – Pipsqueak’s Quest

Texts 1 and 2 have been illustrated, making them suitable for the children to read and enjoy. These can be enlarged using an OHP or photocopied for individual use. Text 3 is an example of a ‘poor’ piece of writing that the children are encouraged to improve.

Comic strip versions of Texts 1 and 2 have also been included in order to provide differentiation. You can choose to use these in different ways:

- to support less able children by providing them with a version they can read themselves;
- to use in future lessons to encourage the children to write comic strip versions of their own or well-known stories;
- to demonstrate how stories can be shortened and still retain meaning;

- to use as a model for a playscript;
- to provide ideas for creating picture-book versions of the story.

Planning sheets and additional resources

At the back of the book there are three planning sheets that are used as part of the lessons. The sheets are differentiated.

Further activities

This section of the book contains lots of ideas for the teacher to use the story cards in different ways and to develop the lesson plans further.

It contains:

- ten-minute speaking and listening activities – a collection of exciting ideas for using the story cards in a variety of games and activities;
- notes about storytelling;
- notes about drama;
- art and craft ideas;
- extended writing activities.

Story cards

The story cards consist of:

Main character

boy
girl
wizard
traveller
adventurer
archer

Enemy

dark lord
goblin leader
wicked queen
fiendish thief
evil king
sorceress

Power/object

orb of fire
ring
sleeping potion
book
flute
silver darts

Quest

discover reversing spell
find sword of light
return crown
repel invader
avenge evil deed
find antidote for poison

Portal/land

standing stones (portal)
ancient tree (portal)
cave (portal)
land of ice and fire (land)
whispering woodlands (land)
mysterious mountains (land)

Creature

dragon
unicorn
griffin
phoenix
centaur
winged serpent

Fantasy – Background information

The fantasy genre contains highly imaginative stories in which reality is completely suspended. Incredible creatures such as dragons and unicorns exist as well as talking and flying animals. Magic and sorcery often play a key role in fantasy stories and the plot usually involves the main character or group of characters undertaking a quest.

Sometimes the main characters embark on a lengthy journey in order to attempt the quest, visiting many lands that are quite different from traditional settings to fulfil their goal. Others, as in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, travel to a different land by using a portal (gateway) to move instantly from one place to another. Everyday items often provide the means of entry to the other world, such as doors, mirrors or rabbit holes. Often the character is unable to control when they travel from one world to the next and this can become a key element of the story.

When characters pass from the real world into a fantasy world, they often acquire new skills or powers. These powers are usually needed to help the inhabitants of the imaginary world solve a problem. Characters usually triumph over the forces of evil and are themselves strengthened and improved in the process.

While the real world and the imaginary world coexist, the passage of time may differ in the two locations. This can enable the characters to spend weeks or even years in the imaginary world while no time at all has passed in the real world.

The characters in fantasy stories are not necessarily always human – dwarves, elves, wizards and many other strange creatures are often included.

Fantasy stories tend to be lengthy tomes, often borrowing themes from ancient myths and traditional epics. They are usually very descriptive in style and as a result the author is able to create and populate fictional worlds that have little or no bearing on reality. These stories tend to lend themselves to being written in a series. A fantasy writer will often produce a series of stories to do with a particular world.

With vivid imagination, fantasy authors create their own reality, making anything become possible. However, as fanciful as stories in this genre are, they must become real in their own created, believable world. For a fantasy story to succeed, even if its world is totally imaginary, it must have its own integrity and consistency to be convincing and credible to its readers.

Lesson 1

Learning objectives

- To identify the key features of fantasy stories.
- To identify descriptive and expressive language.

Resources

- Enlarged copy of either Text 1 or Text 2 (pages 18 to 28)
- The 'Fantasy Story Cards' pack

What to do

- Tell the children that over the next few lessons they are going to learn about fantasy stories in order to write their own. Ask them if they already know any fantasy stories. List them on the board. They will probably be familiar with some of the classic stories such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C S Lewis and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. Contemporary stories include the 'Harry Potter' series by J K Rowling and the 'His Dark Materials' series by Philip Pullman.
- Share the enlarged copy of the fantasy story with the children, pausing every so often to discuss events and key features. For example, ask them if these sound like 'ordinary' people; are their actions the kind of everyday things that people usually do? Can they easily identify who the main character in the story will be? Do they think the quest will be successful?
- Finish reading the story and, after discussion, ask the children to tell you what they think makes a fantasy story different from other stories. Discuss how the story often involves visiting a different land, sometimes by travelling on an epic journey (for example, 'The Lord of the Rings' trilogy by J R R Tolkien) or sometimes by magically passing a certain point or entering a portal (for example, Station nine and three-quarters in the 'Harry Potter' series or Alice entering the rabbit hole in *Alice in Wonderland*). Share the children's ideas and list the key features of fantasy stories; for example, the main character has to complete a challenging quest, the story is centred around a different kind of land, unexpected or magical things happen and there are unusual and/or fantastic creatures.
- Look at the descriptive passages in the story. Ask the children why they think it is necessary to include these detailed descriptions. Discuss their ideas and agree that because these are imaginary places, people or creatures, it is important to create a clear visual image for the reader.

- Introduce the story cards to the children. Explain how they represent each of the story components (character, power/object, creature, enemy, quest, portal/land). Show them some of the cards; for example, look at the quest cards. Explain that most of the quest cards are about searching for something. Ask them for ideas about how each of the quests could be successfully completed and what kind of complications could arise.
- Divide the children into groups and give each group one of the enemy cards. Ask them to share their ideas about the character and be prepared to explain their ideas to the rest of the class.

Ideas for differentiation

Ability group 1

Ask these children to think of as many different ways as they can in which their person could attack the main character. Can they think of several? Can they think of special powers or qualities their enemy might have and how they could be used?

Ability group 2

Ask these children to think of as many ways as they can to describe their enemy, including his powers and how he or she would attack. In addition, does he or she have any allies who would help if attacked or is he powerful enough to defeat any adversary?

Ability group 3

Ask these children to think of accurate descriptions of their enemy as for the previous group, but to include more details, such as how he has achieved his power. In addition, does he have a weakness? Can the children think how he or she could be defeated?

Allow enough time for the groups to share their ideas – they do not have to agree on one choice of description; the more ideas for each card the better, as this will ultimately allow the children to produce more individual stories.

Invite each group to share their thoughts with the rest of the class, perhaps acting out the character from their card. Make a class list of good descriptive words and phrases that come out of this session so the children can refer to them later.

Plenary

- Ask the children what makes a fantasy story different from other types of story. Ask them if they can remember the key features that make up this kind of story. Why is it important to describe such things as the creatures and lands in detail in a fantasy story?

The Book of Powers

Daylight was just beginning to lighten the night sky as Edik stood at the gateway to the city. A few twinkling stars remained but would soon disappear into the golden dawn of morning. Satra, his beautiful winged horse, nuzzled his shoulder. He rubbed her forehead. 'As soon as the Powers are restored, I promise you will be able to fly again,' he whispered and climbed onto Satra's back.

A tall, dark figure approached and Edik bowed. 'I must be gone, my Lord,' Edik said, wrapping his cloak tightly around his shoulders.

Lord Thral nodded. 'Yes, young Edik. It is daybreak. Those who use the night to work their evil spells should at last be seeking shelter. Will you not take what remains of my army to protect you?'

'I'll go alone, Sire. So many have already died. To take the last warriors would leave the city unguarded. Travelling alone, I can slip unnoticed into Kraytok's lair and thus retrieve the Book of Powers,' Edik replied.

'You have the jewel safe?' Lord Thral asked.

Edik tapped his pocket and nodded in reply.

'Take care, brave magician,' Lord Thral urged. 'Perhaps, where armies have failed, magic will succeed.'

Edik bowed low. 'I'll do my best, Sire.'

'You must enter the thundering mists. The crystal sphere has shown that Kraytok and his followers are hiding there, while they gain more power,' said Lord Thral.

'The thundering mists?' asked Edik.

'Go through the forest, and in the distance you will see where your path lies. May your good magic protect you,' Lord Thral said, glancing at the rising sun.

'Farewell, Sire. I'll not return without the book,' Edik said, eager to be off.

Emerging from the safety of the city wall Edik urged Satra on across the open plain. The creature flapped her wings. 'Soon, Satra, I promise. Soon you'll fly again but for now we must walk.'

Before long they reached the edge of the forest and quickly entered the cool darkness. There was no time to lose; Edik must complete the task and return before the sun set again and the weavers of evil once more came





out to gather the unwary in the blackness of the night. Hurrying deeper into the forest, the light faded as the trees pushed in on all sides. Usually Edik loved the forest; the fresh, sharp scent of the pine trees and the soft carpet of needles to cushion his steps. But, today, he felt the menace that lay ahead; the trees became sinister sentinels, watching, guarding. A slight breeze rustled the very top branches and Edik heard their whisper of his presence pass between them. He checked his pocket again, then continued.

Soon he could see daylight filtering more brightly ahead. As he emerged from the forest, the flatness of the grasslands lay before him. He felt glad to have the forest behind him but this landscape might have its own dangers. In recent days Kraytok's followers had increased and their powers had strengthened. No matter how dangerous the task, Edik knew he must find the book and return it to its rightful master, Lord Thral. The sun was beginning to warm the morning sky. He had no time to waste. Scanning the area, Edik urged Satra on. The horse galloped swiftly and silently, wings folded tightly against her sides.

On the far side of the grassland the river wound through scattered rocks, hissing and spitting as it dropped and tumbled. A fine mist rose, swirling into the air, so that the whole course of the river was wreathed in clouds. Edik shivered. Not only was the cool air chilling his skin, the hovering mist looked ominous, like lost souls haunting this forsaken place. The ground was now too rocky for Satra to continue with her master; her hooves clattered on the loose stones. He climbed down and stroked her head. 'Stay, Satra,' Edik commanded and she whinnied softly as he left her behind.

He thrust his hand into his pocket and the jewel's smoothness and weight reassured him. He must follow the river's winding path until it reached the precipice. Once there he must find the secret portal, the gateway into Kraytok's kingdom. Stumbling across the uneven rocks he hurried on. The sun was climbing higher in the sky.

Edik heard the gigantic waterfall before it was within sight. He looked ahead and saw a series of rainbows arching through the billowing clouds of mist. The splashing, gurgling of the river intensified until a thunderous roar made the ground tremble. This must be it – the thundering mists – the entrance to Kraytok's lair. Edik pulled his cloak around his shoulders as the moist air soaked his clothes. He crouched down and peered over the edge. Far below he could hear the water pounding as it hit the pool at

