Creative Writing Tips: How to Write A Story



What is a story?

A story is an account of a set of events – real or imaginary. A good story will entertain the reader.

Inspiration

What should the story be about? It can be about absolutely anything, so it can be difficult to narrow it down.

Think about the types of stories you like to read – if you enjoy what you're writing and you're familiar with the theme, you'll write a better story!

A mind map is a great way to jot down loads of ideas and see which ones give you that spark of inspiration.

Planning

1. Main character and plot

Most stories are about someone who wants something, but can't get it for some reason. So the first step is to decide

? Who your main character is
? What they want
? What stops them getting it

E.g.

- A pirate
- Wants to find treasure
- A sea monster is guarding the island

2. Other Characters

Who else is in your story? Think about what other characters will help your main character or get in their way.

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3. Setting

Where does your story take place? Your character may help you decide – an astronaut is likely to be going to space, but sometimes it can be interesting to take characters into new settings.

E.g. What happens if the astronaut crashes his rocket on a deserted island?

★ Top Tip: Drawing a map can help you to plan events and keep track of your characters' movements in your story.

4. Plot

The plot is what happens in a story. Here is another great place for a mind map to come up with loads of ideas, then you can decide which ones to use.

Plot events should move the story or character forward – they should have an impact that forces something new to happen.

The best stories are like a chain reaction – everything is connected and how your character reacts to events will lead to the next part of the story.

Look at these two examples:

A. The pirate stops at a port and buys a parrot
The parrot ends up flying off with the map!
The pirate gets lost and ends up on a different island...

Or...

B. The pirate stops at a port
He has some food at an inn
Then he gets back on his boat and sets off again.

Can you see how in plot B having the pirate stop at the port hasn't affected the story at all? If an event doesn't change anything, consider leaving it out.

5. Structure

Now you've got some characters and events for your story it's time to put it all together. You will know that stories need: a beginning, a middle and an end.

Beginning:

Introduce your characters and setting, then include an event which throws their normal day off course – this is the inciting incident and is what starts the chain of events of the whole story.

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Middle:

This is where most of the story happens...

❓How does your character deal with the problems they face?

❓What does that lead to next?

❓Does it create more problems for them to solve?

Ending:

How does your character finally resolve their problem? Do they get what they want or do they miss out?

Now you're ready to write your story!

Why not take a classic tale and add your own twist to it, or write what happens after the ending we already know.

E.g. Cinderella marries the prince, but her stepsisters try to poison him in revenge for not picking them!

Write about the best day you've ever had to practice writing a story. Then add crazy or incredible events that you wished had happened to practice using your imagination.

E.g. A trip to the zoo but the animals escape and you end up riding a giraffe to herd all the animals back to safety.

Top Tips for Story Writing:

⭐ Improve your writing – use more ambitious vocabulary and make sure you're being as original as possible.

⭐ Challenge yourself – start with two main characters with separate plots who end up affecting each other's storylines.

E.g. A girl is training to be a lifeguard on a very quiet beach where nothing ever happens, and across the water a boy with strange powers lives on a tiny island that he is forbidden to leave.

What changes in their lives so they end up meeting, and what happens when they do?

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