

## Creative Writing - Separate the steps

To quieten concerns about inaccurate writing, and about the children forgetting their hard-learned spelling and grammar rules in the excitement of concentrating on new ideas, keep the areas separate.

1. Get excited and think of ideas
2. Get some basic structure and order - make a story plan / explosion diagram / think plan ...
3. Create a draft (individually or in pairs/groups)
4. Check and correct grammar
5. Check and correct spelling
6. Write and decorate in presentable format - for wall display, or little book, or class compilation, or PowerPoint display, or dramatize, or ... (many possibilities)
7. Children share with other children (display stories)
8. Children enjoy each other's stories and give good feedback and get excited about their next story.

***OK, let's look at each of these steps ...***

### **Step 1. Get excited and think of ideas**

There are so many possible stimuli to get children started with thinking about and getting excited about a topic.

- All of the topics in the **Listening and Speaking** and **Reading** modules can lead to a good creative writing 'spark'.
- The text book topics especially give good ideas (and vocabulary) for the 'characters' and the 'setting' for their stories.

But obviously it is likely to take a little more than that. So ...

Give the children **experiences** that they will be eager to share about. Involve their **senses**.

*For example:*

- Watch a movie
- Listen to some music
- Look at photo's / pictures from the Internet
- Taste / eat some food
- Tell them a story / read them a story
- Play a physical game
- Play a guessing game with things they can feel but not see inside a bag
- Play a guessing game with smells
- Play a 'what if...?' game
- Let them think about their wishes, dreams

**It is educationally sound to encourage children to fantasize – it improves their development.**

The teacher (and/or parents) may have a moral or religious objection to children exploring topics such as ghosts, as some believe these to be both real and evil (and you don't want the children going home frightened). However, without getting into that particular area, children can imagine all sorts of supernatural possibilities. Wishes that come true, super powers, amazing creatures, impossibilities that become possible ... and if it is too disturbing, it can all turn out to be a dream at the end.

**There is no limit on imagination! Here are some starting ideas:**

**Starting with an image**

Give the children a printed picture – there are lots of possible images available on Google Images.

- Ask the children to add to the picture – draw in character(s) real or imaginary.
- Make a story about the picture.
- Tell other children about their picture story.

For an example see the pictures below.

**Starting with a story**

'*Fractured Fairy Tales*' are a popular way to grow children's thinking and imagination. Basically you start with a well-known fairy tale or traditional story and say 'What if ...?'

- what if there was something different about the character(s)
- what if it took place in a different setting
- what if there was a different ending

The teacher should tell and retell the story, and the creative activity could also start with a picture.

(There are lots of ideas and example of *Fractured Fairy Tales* on the Internet.)

**Starting with some food**

Imagine what the food could do – make you bigger, stronger, smarter, able to fly, able to hear people's thoughts ...

Imagine how the food was made, where did it come from, was this something from another planet and it fell into the kitchen ...

Come on! So many possibilities!

**Starting with a guessing game**

Put something gross inside a (not see-through) bag. For example, create some 'slime' using cornflour (yes, look it up on the Internet!).

Children put in their hands and feel it, and guess what impossible thing it could be ...