How to Write Wonderful Stories

Junior Primary

WRITTEN BY RON SHAW

THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS BOOK ADDRESS MANY OUTCOMES IN THE SYLLABUS
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Intelligent Australia Productions
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This book is dedicated to:
Ruby

Intelligent Australia Productions is committed to raising standards in Literacy and Numeracy in Australian schools.
"Ever since I began writing, I kept a notebook in which I wrote down ideas! Good writing is hard to come by, and the only way to become a good writer is to practise, practise, practise! When you do get an idea, grab it, and immediately write it down; otherwise, you might forget it. Develop your ideas into stories, paragraphs, or poems. Never become discouraged if it takes a long time before you write something you really like!"

......Roald Dahl
The famous children’s author Roald Dahl once said that, of all tasks that are difficult, good writing is near the top of the list. “I couldn’t begin to tell you how slowly I write. It took me six long years to write ‘James and the Giant Peach.’”

This book has been written to make the task of writing easier, more enjoyable and more rewarding for your students.”

**About ‘How to Write Wonderful Stories’**

The book consists of 24 lessons which may be spread over two, three or four terms (depending on time needed for other aspects of the Literacy syllabus).

Two lessons are devoted to each story topic, the first for Warm-up Activities (the teaching lesson) and the second for the children to write their story. It is suggested that the two lessons are completed either in the same week or in consecutive weeks.

Lesson 1, the Warm-ups, involves teacher-class discussion where the new strategy/technique (say, Surprise Ending) is introduced. Lesson 2 begins with a quick oral review of the new technique (5 minutes) followed by a 5-10 minute oral revision of previously taught strategies. Students are then encouraged to write a story where the new technique is employed while previously learned strategies are incorporated to the extent that the particular topic allows.

‘How to Write Wonderful Stories’ will teach and encourage students to use skills and techniques of writing that will make their stories much more appealing to the reader.

As an example, you (the teacher) might ask your class to give the following sentence more colour, more impact:

*A big dog chased after a black cat.*

By giving the sentence an interesting beginning, adding some well-chosen adjectives and a better verb this could become:

*In the dimly-lit laneway a huge hairy dog bounded after a terrified scrawny black cat.*

You might ask your class to try to improve this sentence:

*One day an old man was walking to the market.*

By taking turns, and with a little extra being added each time, your students may well end up with:

*Once, on a cold and misty morning, a little old fellow was making his way to the bustling village market.*

There are three sets, each of four story writing topics, in this book. The fourth story topic in each set allows the student to employ all three techniques taught in the three preceding topics together with others that were covered in previous sets (see following page).

Note: there is a reproducible page at the back of the book for students who need more lines.

**9 Secrets of Wonderful Story Writing**

- **Describe**
  Appeal to your readers’ 5 senses by painting pictures of characters, objects and scenes.

- **Enrich**
  Liven up your story with ‘doing words’ (verbs) that add more ‘oomph’ than common, over-used ones.

- **Explain**
  Don’t stop at saying what happened... tell when, how and where it happened.

- **Capture**
  Capture your readers’ attention by using creative, high quality sentence beginnings.

- **Pause**
  Add impact by including one or two very short sentences in your story. For example: All went quiet.

- **Plan**
  Think up an interesting plot and build it around two things: well-described settings and colourful characters.

- **Enliven**
  By including some direct speech you’ll make your characters come alive and seem more real.

- **Compare**
  Accurate impressions can be conveyed by comparing characters, actions or objects with things known to the reader.

- **Surprise**
  Leave your readers in a state of wonder by giving your story an ending they didn’t expect.

With their attractive borders and illustrations the stories your students write will be perfect for displaying on classroom walls and they’ll look great in their portfolios.
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...has a different focus here

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An Adventure in My New Boat

Class Discussion
Look at the picture of the boat. What powers it? (wind - and oars/paddles when the wind stops)
How will you steer your boat? (oars/paddles)
What will you need to be careful of? (storms, reefs, getting lost, ...pirates?)
What might you discover? (someone drifting on a life raft, a deserted island, a pod of whales, ...?)

Teaching Points
Before you begin any story you need to spend a few minutes thinking (and - even better - jotting down) words or phrases to remind yourself of key ideas and points.
What will my story be about? Where will it take place? Who will be 'in' the story?

Don't make your story like everybody else's: make it special by having a fascinating plot, an unusual setting and 'colourful' unforgettable characters.
If you really try hard to do this your stories will go from being just ordinary to very special.

Focus: Plot, Setting, Characters

1. Setting
Possible responses:
- Near a tropical island.
- At sea during a wild storm.
- Stranded on a reef.
- Washed up on a lonely beach.
- On a beautiful river.

2. Characters
Some things to consider:
- What type of sea creature was it?
- What did it do?
- What did you and your friends do?
- What happened then?
* mainly for discussion
...condense to a very brief written response

3. Characters
Some responses:
- Parrot on shoulder
- Patch over one eye
- Peg leg
- Clothes made of silk
- Sword/hook hand
- Scar on face

4. Plot
Some responses:
- You discover a ship that is sinking; you save the crew.
- You come across a mermaid.
- You befriend a dolphin.
- You discover 'Mystery Island'.
1. What would be an interesting setting for a story about a boat?

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2. Say how a certain sea creature almost capsized your boat after you and your friends encountered it.

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3. Imagine you came across a pirate ship. Describe the pirate leader (or his parrot).

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4. What might happen on one of your boating adventures?

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An Adventure in My New Boat

Quick Revision
Punctuation
Capital letters, Full stops, Question Marks, Apostrophes, Speech Marks
Paragraphing
Remember to start a new paragraph for each new idea you bring into your story.

Focus: Plot, Setting, Characters

Writing the Story

First you need to think up a plot... that means coming up with a story which features you having an adventure in your new boat.

Will your adventure be of a kind that your readers may be expecting or will it be a totally different sort of adventure? (maybe you construct ‘wings’ for your boat and go flying!).

Now... your boat. Is it just an ordinary kind of boat or is there something special about it? (perhaps it has special instruments and equipment).

So, there’s you and your boat. Does the plot you’re thinking up involve other characters (human or otherwise?). Are these characters your friends, enemies, both or neither? Do they have ‘colourful’ names and/or personalities/powers?

Where is your story set? Is it in an ordinary place or in a faraway land where strange and mysterious things can occur?
An Adventure in
My New Boat
My Story

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
**Class Discussion**
- What kind of animals are snakes? (reptiles)
- What are some other reptiles?
- Are baby reptiles born like us or do they hatch from eggs? (hatch)
- Are baby snakes alive inside the egg? (yes)
- What would be some good things about being a snake?
- What would be some bad things about being a snake?

Complete:
If I was a snake I’d.......  

**Teaching Points**
1. Avoid over-used adjectives such as big, little etc (you can do better than that!)
2. Do not use the same adjective more than once in a sentence (or even a paragraph).
3. Colours are adjectives and they are good to use. However, rather than say ‘green’ say ‘bright green’; rather than brown say ‘dirty brown’.
4. Make use of your dictionary (for spelling and to check meaning) and your thesaurus.

**Focus: Adjectives**
Describing your characters and scenes paints ‘mind’ pictures for your readers.

**Warm-up Activity 1**
Some possible responses:
*Look*
white-ish, oval-shaped, roundish
*Feel*
smooth, hard, cold, slippery

**Warm-up Activity 2**
Inside the egg it might be:
dark, black, cold (or warm) sticky, watery

**Warm-up Activity 3**
Snakes are:
slippery, slimy, scary, slithery, ‘hissy’, dangerous, venomous, poisonous, sleek, horrendous

**Warm-up Activity 4**
Samantha:
(some of the words in the previous activity)
plus
cute, friendly, shy, watchful
1. What are some words that describe how eggs look and feel?

2. Before she broke through the shell Samantha was inside the egg. What must it have been like in there?

3. What are some words that describe snakes?

4. What are some words that describe Samantha?
Revision

Plot
Always spend a few minutes thinking up a good story line. Jot down important key words as you go, for example: frog-waterfall-boat-human etc.

Setting
Try to have a setting that your readers can relate to or will find interesting in some way (eg enchanted forest)

Characters
Readers love ‘colourful’ characters, including ones with unforgettable names like Brainy Betty, Tammy the Motormouth, Mrs Worry-Pot, Mr Pineapple Head, Freddy the Fisherman, One-Tooth Dawson.....etc.

Focus: Adjectives
Try not to use common adjectives when you can think of much better ones.
big X enormous ✓

Writing the story
Your story may be about any of the following:
• Samantha trying to, and finally succeeding in, breaking through the shell.
• Samantha’s thoughts as she surveys what’s before her (as in the picture).
• Samantha’s first moments after exiting the egg completely.

Now write an entertaining story using at least 4 really good adjectives. (include people or other animals in your story if you wish)

Caution:
When asked by their teachers to make good use of adjectives many students make the mistake of ‘going overboard’...they use too many! Use a maximum of three adjectives in front of a subject or object and then just one preceding any other nouns in that sentence. By all means use colours as adjectives but don’t overdo it.
Samantha the Baby Snake
*My Story*

My Sketch
Wonderful Stories

Warm-up Activities

Bobby and his Marvellous Train

Class Discussion
What might be marvellous about Bobby’s train?....
How might it look marvellous? Sound marvellous? Move marvellously?
Did Bobby –or someone else- build it? (if someone else, who?)
Perhaps Bobby found this little train. Where?
Could this be a talking train? A magic train?

Focus: Verbs
By choosing really ‘good’ verbs you
• can give your story more action
• make your story more interesting

Teaching Points
• Do not use the same verb more than once in a sentence, or even a paragraph.
• Use your dictionary and/or thesaurus to check spellings, meaning and synonyms.
If you can think of excellent verbs your teacher may award you with group, Faction or House points.

Activity 1 Possible responses:
moving, rattling, steaming, chuffing, chugging, struggling, powering, etc

Activity 2 Possible responses:
steering, controlling, etc

Activity 3 Possible responses:
Look good: paint, polish, clean, scrub, etc
Go fast: make, build, invent, create, etc
Passengers: build, join, add, lengthen, etc
Sound: give, make, hollow-out, attach, etc
Bobby and his Marvellous Train
Warm-up Activities

1. Look at the picture. The train is going up the hill. Write some better words than going.

2. Bobby is driving the train. Are there other words for driving?

3. Pretend that you are going to make your very own train. Say what you will do to make it a marvellous train. (Use good verbs).
   
   To make it look good I will
   
   To make it go fast I will
   
   To make it carry a lot of passengers I will
   
   To make it sound so that people can hear it coming I will
Bobby and his Marvellous Train

Quick Revision
- Adjectives
- Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: Verbs
Avoid common, over-used verbs.
You can think of better ones!
walked X  staggered ✔
said X  muttered ✔

Writing the Story
‘Bobby and his Marvellous Train’ should be an adventure story, with lots of things happening. This will give you the chance to use lots of interesting verbs (action words).

Maybe Bobby is trying to catch someone. Perhaps he is trying to escape...from a person, a group of people or a wild animal.

You might have a much better idea than these.
Bobby and his Marvellous Train

My Story

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
The Singing Witch

**Teaching Points**
- Whenever you use a noun try to think of a good adjective that could go with it.
- Whenever you’re about to use a verb try to use one that’s not common ....think of a much better one.

**Class Discussion**
What is a witch? (a lady who thinks she has special powers, can cure illnesses and perhaps even cast spells). She sometimes mixes up potions. Are there still witches? Are witches evil?

**Focus**: Verbs, Adjectives, Plot-Setting-Characters
Think hard on these to make a rich and powerful story.

1. **Possibilities:**
   - ear-splitting
   - cackling
   - croaky
   - dreadful
   - terrible

2. **Perhaps...**
   - screech
   - shout
   - yell
   - bellow
   - croak

3. **Possibilities:**
   - forest clearing
   - mountain
   - witch’s cottage
   - cave
   - haunted house
1. Using some really good **adjectives** write two sentences about the singing witch.

2. Using some really good **verbs** write two sentences about the singing witch.

3. What might be the setting for a really spooky witch story? Describe it well.
The Singing Witch

Quick Revision
Verbs     Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: Verbs, Adjectives, Plot-Setting-Characters
Think hard on these to make a rich and powerful story.

Writing the Story
A singing witch...she must be happy. Why is she happy? Is she always singing or does she only sing at certain times? Which times? Is she an evil witch or a friendly witch? What kind of story will you need to write if you're going to use excellent adjectives and verbs?

- Plot-Setting-Characters: spend a few minutes thinking up a great story. Try to have an unusual or interesting setting, with memorable characters.
- Adjectives: people & things to describe with words that your readers will like.
- Verbs: use really good words to say what your characters (and objects) do.
Name................................................................. Date

The Singing Witch
My Story

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
Warm-up Activities

Jess, the Mischievous Giraffe

Teaching Points

- Tell your readers **how** (carefully), **when** (yesterday) and/or **where** (behind) the actions are carried out.
- Use your dictionary and/or thesaurus to check spellings, meanings and synonyms.

If you can think of excellent adverbs your teacher may award you with group, Faction or House points.

Class Discussion

Giraffes are our tallest creatures. What are the advantages of being this tall? Disadvantages? Could someone (something) so tall use their height to be mischievous?

Perhaps Jess might stand on one side of a wall and pour water from her bottle over passers-by on the other side!

In what other ways could Jess be mischievous?

Focus: **Adverbs**

If, instead of saying, “She walked out of the room” you say, “She walked angrily out of the room” your readers will see you really do know how to write well.

1. Some possibilities:
   i) quickly, noisily, slowly, rapidly, silently, ‘slurpingly’, thirstily, gratefully, sloppily, lazily, happily, carefully, carelessly
   ii) noisily, greedily, hungrily, slowly, hurriedly, happily, messily, carefully, ‘crunchingly’, carefully, carelessly

2. Some possibilities:
   walk
   gracefully, carefully, lumberingly, quickly, slowly
   eat
   noisily, greedily, hungrily, slowly, hurriedly, happily, carefully, ‘crunchingly’, carefully, carelessly, messily
   swim
   awkwardly, skilfully, carefully, carelessly, ‘splashingly’, dangerously, happily

3. **Encourage students to be original and creative.**

Some possible adverbs:
   cunningly, wickedly, naughtily, deliberately, quickly, mischievously, unwisely, dangerously
1. Here are two sentences about Jess. Write them again but include an adverb in each sentence.
i) Jess drank from her bottle.
ii) Jess chewed on some branches.

2. Under each verb write an adverb to say how Jess might do these things.....

walk

eat

swim

3. We know that Jess is mischievous. Say how she tricked an elephant. *(use 2 or 3 adverbs).*
Quick Revision

- Verbs
- Adjectives
- Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: Adverbs

Which sounds better?
“Oh, alright,” muttered Sam. OR
“Oh, alright,” muttered Sam sulkingly.

Writing the Story

In writing ‘Jess the Mischievous Giraffe’ students will need to have quite a bit of action occurring because without verbs we can’t have adverbs.

How could Jess be mischievous?....spying (looking down upon others or looking through high windows); distracting people (or other animals) by swaying her long neck back and forth; lying behind a bush & exposing just her spots, pretending to be a leopard....?

Your students might have much better ideas than these...
Jess, the Mischievous Giraffe

My Story

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
Teaching Points

Some of the best sentences begin with adverbs or adverbial phrases that tell how, when or where.

*Carefully placing the little box on the table....
*On a cold April morning....
*Skilfully dribbling the ball forward....

Class Discussion

What could make a fish a super fish? (size, strength, speed, intelligence).
Are whales fish? (no) How about sharks? (yes)
Who has been fishing? Where? What did you catch?
What equipment do fishermen/women need?

Focus: Sentence beginnings

‘Grab’ your readers from the start.

1. Starter ideas and prompts (sentence beginning only)
   - We watched as the incredible beast...
   - Startled by the noise....
   - Encircling the boat...
   - Thrashing about in the choppy sea...
   - Wrenching the meat off the line...

2. Note:
Here, students are given the sentence starters and asked to finish the sentence.

Possible responses...
1. Lurching out of the sea
2. Pulling violently on the line
3. In a flash the huge animal

Ask: What other sentence starters could have been used?
Super Fish!
Warm-up Activities

1. Make up an excellent beginning to complete the sentence below:

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and then it swam away swiftly toward the island.

2. Make up your own endings to complete these three sentences.

Leaping out of the water..................................................................................................................................................................................................
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Tugging furiously on the line..................................................................................................................................................................................................
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Suddenly the mighty fish..................................................................................................................................................................................................
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Quick Revision
Adverbs Verbs Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: **Sentence beginnings**
‘Grab’ your readers from the start.

**Writing the Story**
When you have thought up a plot it’s time to write your story.

Capture your readers’ attention with an excellent beginning, perhaps like one of these:
- *On a stormy day last June*...
- *Feeling like an adventure I*.....
- *You won’t believe this but....*
- *One cool and cloudy morning*....
(you might think up an even better story beginning)

Now you’re on your way!
Try to use some of the *How to Write Wonderful Stories* techniques you’ve been practising up to this point.
Super Fish!
My Story

Name
Date

My Story
**Teaching Points**

The surprise ending should come right at the end of your story...maybe even in the last sentence. Depending on the plot and the outcome it will leave your readers wondering, guessing or perhaps even amazed.

Throughout your story you build up certain expectations in the reader. When you ‘drop in’ the surprise ending readers undergo an instant (subconscious) replay of the story in their minds, trying to see how everything comes together in the conclusion that it does. It really gets them thinking!

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**Class Discussion**

Is this Mr Scary in the picture really scary or is he just trying to be scary? Who might he be?...perhaps your brother, uncle, neighbour or somebody you don't know at all. Why do you think he wants to be scary? Do you think he scares everyone or only some people?

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**Focus: Surprise Ending**

Leave your readers wondering.

- it gives your readers something to think about
- it makes your story ‘different’
- look scary
- sound scary
- act or behave scarily
- he gives all the money away
- he throws all the money in the fire
- his best friend steals all his winnings
- he becomes very mean

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1. Why is it sometimes good to have a surprise ending?

2. In what ways could someone be scary?

3. Suppose someone writes a story about a very poor man who wins first prize in Lotto. What surprise ending could this story have?
Writing the Story

How could you give your Mr Scary story a surprise ending?

- Mr Scary’s identity is a mystery but people might think they know who is hidden beneath the scary costume….are they in for a surprise?
- Could your story end with Mr Scary himself being scared?
- Perhaps when Mr Scary holds up his arms in that menacing, scary way he then says, in a little voice, “I want to be your friend.”
- Could it be that people find out that Mr Scary is actually a Mrs Scary?

Maybe you can think up a surprise ending that is even more surprising than any of these.
**Warm-up Activities**

**Goo, the Lonely Monster**

**Teaching Points**

Try to use:
- two excellent adjectives
- two excellent verbs
- two excellent adverbs
- two excellent sentence beginnings in every story you write.

**Class Discussion**

Do monsters exist? If so are they all scary? What do monsters look like? Are they all big? What do they do?

**Focus:** Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Plot-Setting-Characters, Sentence Beginnings, Surprise Ending

1. **Encourage originality.**
   Before writing their response students could consider:
   *What kind of creature is Goo?* *What does he 'do'?* *What does he eat?* *Who are his friends and enemies?* *Is he able to talk?*

2. **Possibilities:**
   cave, mountain, any 'gooey' place somewhere, under the ground, in the sea, in a tree, in a forest, in a swamp, etc

3. **Encourage originality.**
   Before writing their response students could consider:
   *How did Goo know that the child was in danger?* *What was the danger?* *How was the rescue carried out?*
1. Write an excellent sentence about Goo. Include a really good adjective, verb and adverb.

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2. Give a good description of the place where Goo might live.

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3. Say how Goo rescued a child who was in danger.

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...................................................................................................................................................................
Spend a few minutes thinking up an interesting plot for your story, which might take place in an unusual setting. If you would like to have characters apart from Goo make them ‘colourful’ (for example Ned the Nanny Goat; Forgetful Cassie). Now that you have the basic elements for your story use all the ‘tricks and techniques’ of wonderful writing you have learned so far. Embellish your story with fantastic adjectives, verbs and adverbs. Great sentence beginnings, and maybe a surprise ending will be the ‘icing on the cake’.
Goo, the Lonely Monster

My Story

Name

Date

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
Teaching Points
Direct speech can be very powerful; it can add ‘punch’ to your story because it makes your character(s) come alive. However as with some of the other techniques discussed in this book, don’t over-use it.

Class Discussion
Is it possible to eat too many apples? (probably not, as long as you eat other foods as well).
Why might Toby love eating apples? (taste, health benefits).
From where does Toby get his apples? (his tree, neighbour’s tree, fruit shop....).

Focus: Direct Speech
Make your characters ‘come alive’ by letting your readers hear what they actually say.

1. Tell the children why this does not need speech marks (because it’s a dialogue).
   Encourage originality of answers.
   Some prompts: vitamins, healthy, Superboy, crunchy, apple cores (etc)

2. “I love eating apples,” said Toby, “today I’ve had ten.”

3. An example could be:
   Toby runs to the apple stand and says, “I’ll have six please.”
   Or another:
   Toby’s mother looks at Toby and says, “I’ll buy you some apples later Toby, you’ve already had twelve today.”

4. “Climb down from the apple tree, Toby,” said his mother.
   (or something very similar)
1. Toby just loves eating apples. What does he say when his friend Tommy asks him why. 
Try to be creative with your answer!

**Tommy:** Why are you always eating apples Toby?

**Toby:** ...........................................................


2. Write this out again, this time with speech marks and an extra comma:

I love eating apples said Toby, today I’ve had ten.
(You’ll may have to write small)

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3. While shopping with his mother at the fruit and vegetable market Toby sees the apple stand. 
Say what happens next. *Use a little bit of direct speech.*

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4. Look at this sentence:

   *A boy named Toby said that apples are the tastiest fruit.*

If we rewrite that using direct speech we get:

   “Apples are the tastiest fruit,” said a boy named Toby.

Rewrite this sentence using direct speech:

   **Toby’s mother told him to climb down from the apple tree.**

.................................................................
Quick Revision
Surprise Ending  Sentence Beginnings  Adverbs  Verbs  Adjectives  Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: Direct Speech
Make your characters ‘come alive’ by letting your readers hear what they actually say.

Writing the Story
To be able to use direct speech in a story you don’t need to have more than one character. Direct speech may be used for thoughts.
Example:

Toby reached out for the apple and thought, "I wonder if this is one of the crunchy kind that I really like?"

If your story does have more than character make sure they interact with one another so that your opportunities for including direct speech are greater.

Remember to start a new line when a different person speaks.
"I’ll fill this bucket with apples and you fill the brown bag," said Toby. "OK" replied Ben, "I’ll squeeze in as many as I can."
Toby the Apple Boy

My Story

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
**Class Discussion**

Look carefully at the picture....what do you notice? Yes, the bird has 4 legs! (it’s a mutant). What is a mutant? Might this strange creature be an eagle, a condor or some previously-unseen bird of prey? It’s up to you to decide which!

**Teaching Points**

Similes come in two kinds: 1) comparing things using **like**  2) comparing things using **as**. Similes help us to make our point, to ‘drive home’ the image we’re trying to convey.
Consider these examples:

- **The snail withdrew into its shell like** a frightened child.
- **Maryanne’s face was as red as** Santa’s suit.

**Focus: Similes**

Appeal to your readers’ senses by comparing objects, characters etc to things they’re familiar with.

1. Possible responses and/or prompts:
   - **...a huge jumbo jet**
   - **...a flag in the wind**
   - **...giant cutting machine**

2. Possible responses and/or prompts:
   - **...a champion weightlifter**
   - **...large glowing saucers**
   - **...a hundred steam trains**

3. Possible responses and/or prompts:
   - **...a warrior going into battle**
   - **...a piercing siren**
   - **...brand new razors**

4. These similes may be about anything at all, not just a giant bird. Students must include the subject in their responses, eg **the butterfly drifted like a feather**
1. Complete these:
The bird was as big as

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Its wings flapped like

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Its beak was like a

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2. Finish these:
The bird was as strong as

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Its eyes were like

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It swooped with the force of

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3. Complete:
The bird looked as fierce as

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It shrieked like

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Its claws were as sharp as

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4. Make up a simile using as and another one using like:
as .............................................................................................................

like .............................................................................................................

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A story about a gigantic bird provides a perfect opportunity for you to practise similes. Try to include one of each kind of simile in your story..... a like one and an as one.

An excellent sentence beginning here and there would add a lot to your story and if you can think up a surprise ending as well that would be even better.

And remember, Direct Speech needn’t be restricted to humans. Here’s an example:

Letting out an ear-splitting, “Squark” the huge creature flapped off into the air.
The Gigantic Bird
My Story

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
**Calbah the Camel**

**Warm-up Activities**

**Teacher’s Notes**

**Class Discussion**

Why are camels sometimes called *Ships of the Desert*?
Do you know some countries where camels live?
Have you seen a camel kneel down? How do they do it?
Have you ever ridden a camel? What was it like?

**Teaching Points**

*A short sentence is used to best effect when it follows several longer ones....*

*Example*

Even though it was very hot Kate and Bobby were enjoying their ride on Calbah’s back. Suddenly they saw a huge sand dune in front of them, about 30m high. Calbah stopped and made a kind of snorting noise. Then it happened!...

**Focus: The Short Sentence**

A short sentence, especially when ‘dropped in’ after a long-ish passage, has the effect of making your readers ‘sit up’ and take notice.

1. Possible responses and/or prompts:
   - Struggling with the load
   - Calbah trudged slowly toward the oasis.
   - Oh, no!...
   - With lots of energy
   - Calbah headed off toward the oasis.
   - He stopped suddenly.

2. Points to note:
   - Retain all the important points but use your own wording.
   - The short sentence may be either in the middle or at the end.

3. Example:

Two children are enjoying a ride on Calbah’s back. The boy should be hanging on tight. He isn’t.
1. Write two sentences about Calbah walking toward an oasis. Make your 2\textsuperscript{nd} sentence short.

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2. Calbah and his master, after travelling all day under the desert sun, have rested for an hour. Now they head off again, over the sand dunes. \textbf{Retell this in your own words; include one short sentence.}

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3. Say what is happening in the picture above. Use one short sentence.

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Writing the Story

Having decided upon the plot, setting and which characters will ‘star’ in your story it’s time to start writing.

You may be wondering when is the best time to use the short sentence. Well, a short sentence can be used at any place in your story: at the beginning, in the middle or at the end. As a general rule, the more sentences that precede it (in the paragraph) the better.

All of the following would be suitable short sentences in a story entitled ‘Calbah the Camel’....

- Calbah lurched forward.
- All went quiet.
- Nothing happened.
- The desert sun burned.
- We finally arrived.
- Josh rode on.
- Calbah was hungry.
- They didn’t move.
- Slowly, Calbah rose.
Calbah the Camel

My Story

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
**Warm-up Activities**

**The Great Rocket Ride**

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**Class Discussion**

People who travel in space craft are called...? *(astronauts)*

When you’re travelling through Space how much do you weigh? *(nothing...you are weightless)*.

Why does a rocket need so much power to lift off from Earth? *(to overcome the downward pull of Earth’s gravity)*.

How many planets revolve around the Sun? *(8, incl’ Earth)*.

Do you think there might be people in other galaxies?

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**Note to Teachers**

The setting for this story is Space (and the rocket). Students decide on their plot and then choose the characters to feature in their story. Their task in this piece of writing is to incorporate every one of the techniques they’ve been learning about *(see exploding star below)*.

While *surprise ending* can occur only once there is no restriction on any of the others. A story featuring excellent sentence beginnings, *similes*, *direct speech*, a *short sentence* or two and plenty of *well-chosen adjectives*, verbs and *adverbs* will show that the art of *writing* wonderful stories has been mastered.

**Focus:** Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Plot-Setting-Characters, Sentence Beginnings, Surprise Ending, Direct Speech, Similes, the Short Sentence

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1. Possible responses or prompts.
   a) supersonic; modern; sleek intergalactic
   b) The ultra-modern air force rocket flashed across the sky at the speed of lightning.

2. Possible responses or prompts.
   ….a bullet whizzing toward its target.
   ….a dazzling sphere surrounded by beautiful rings and many tiny moons.
   ….a road that’s just been covered with tar.

3. Thoughts
   - Are the characters human?
   - Is one the leader/captain?
   - Do any have names that reflect their appearance? *(eg Robbie Blue Nose)*
   - What is their job (role) on the craft?*
   - Do any have a quirky personality?
The Great Rocket Ride
Warm-up Activities

1. a) Write two excellent adjectives to describe the rocket:

...........................................................................................................................

a) Re-write this sentence to make it more interesting: The rocket travelled across the sky. (you may need to write small)

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2. Complete these: (use several words for each)

The rocket ship was as fast as ............................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

Planet Saturn was like ........................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

The sky was as black as ......................................................................................
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3. Make up three interesting characters who could be in a story about a rocket trip to Mars. Say what their names are and tell a little bit about each one. Make your characters as ‘colourful’ as you can.

1st character ........................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................

2nd character ......................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................

3rd character ......................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................

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The Great Rocket Ride

My Story

Quick Revision
The Short Sentence
Similes   Direct Speech
Surprise Ending
Sentence Beginnings
Adverbs   Verbs   Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Plot-Setting-Characters, Sentence Beginnings, Surprise Ending, Direct Speech, Similes, the Short Sentence

Writing the Story

Remind students that every story needs a brief introductory paragraph (in this case a sentence or two will suffice), a 'body' (usually two or more paragraphs) and a (brief) concluding paragraph.

For this Rocket story students should be able to come up with lots of excellent.. adjectives – brilliant blackness eerie frightening exciting verbs – zooming floating blasting hurtling wondering adverbs – strangely curiously dangerously excitedly mysteriously

The topic lends itself well to:
similes: - as black as night    like a floating feather

Sentence beginnings like these could be used:
Peering through my space goggles... Without warning....

Some direct speech could be:
"Wow, I never knew Saturn had so many moons!" exclaimed Jess.
The Great Rocket Ride

My Story

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.