“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
Wonderful Stories

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.

How to Use this Book

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:

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.

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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Class Discussion

- What is a chameleon? (a type of lizard which can change colour and which has eyes that can move independently of one another)
- How can eyes that move independently help chameleons? (spot predators and prey)
- Who has seen a chameleon? Where? Tell about it.

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. Plot (Prompts & Ideas)
   - The raft washes up on land next to a beach cottage owned by a family with young children. The family make a pet of the chameleon, treating it with love and care.
   - A child who is very ill in hospital sees a video of the chameleon and is intrigued by the way it can change its colour. Friends arrange to bring the chameleon to the hospital every week and the child develops a close bond with it. The friendship that follows between the two is credited with curing the child’s illness.

2. Characters (Prompts & Ideas)
   - any jungle animal (monkey, snake, bird, etc) or maybe even a human.
   - an insect such as a cricket or mantid, either of which might normally be the chameleon’s lunch (but this is a story and we know what can happen in stories!).
   - Students should be creative in their naming of these characters as well as giving a good degree of thought to their personalities.

3. Setting (Prompts & Ideas)
   - The setting could be (but need not be) a tree in a jungle (most chameleons’ natural habitat).
   - Other ideas are: zoo
   - pet shop
   - bottom of a waterfall
   - near a river
   - near a beach
   - etc
1. Suppose there was an unloved chameleon who drifted on a raft to a new land. Think up a plot to say how he became loved; tell briefly what happened.

Plot

2. Many chameleons live in tropical rainforests (jungles). They feed on insects such as crickets and mantids. Think up three characters who could be in a story about a chameleon. Give each character a name and say something about their personality.

Characters

1st Character

2nd Character

3rd Character

3. Think of an interesting setting for a story about a chameleon. Describe it.

Setting
The Chameleon that Nobody Loved

Quick Revision

Punctuation
Capital letters, Full stops, Question marks, Apostrophes, Quotation marks

Paragraphing
Remember to start a new paragraph for each new idea you bring into your story.

Focus: Plot, Setting, Characters

Writing the Story

Students should spend at least a few minutes (up to 10) thinking and planning their story. During this time ideas and key words should be jotted down. Also, the outline of the story should be arranged in paragraphs.

Example: The Chameleon that Nobody Loved

Para 1. Intro: describe setting –waterfall- rock- mushrooms-frog (neighbour)-chameleon lives in tree overhanging pond

Para 2. Body: chameleon feels unloved (other animals say she looks strange.....some are even afraid of her) –chameleon is moping on tree branch - chameleon sees that frog is wedged between two rocks as torrents of rushing water push against her-rescues frog- friendship develops with frog -chameleon is feted by other animals

Para 3. Conclusion: chameleon entertains other animals by changing colour and is soon known throughout the land for her exquisitely beautiful colourings.
The Chameleon that Nobody Loved

My Story

Name

Date

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
Class Discussion
What is meant by the word amazing?

How could a dog be amazing? We do know that dogs can hear high-pitched sounds that we can’t hear; they can leap off the ground and catch a falling stick in their mouth; they have an acute sense of smell; they are incredibly loyal; they can retrieve things that are thrown; they can perform many other tricks.

Are you able to think of other special things that dogs can do?

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 detailed pictures for your readers.

Activity 1
spotty
cute
lovable
playful
floppy-eared
goggle-eyed
short-bodied
etc

Activity 2
Possible adjectives:
- eager, happy, enthusiastic,
playful, fun-loving
- grumpy, snappy, hard-to-please,
disagreeable, surly

Activity 3
Possible adjectives:
- cosy
- huge
- tiny
- modern
- run-down
- weather-beaten
- beloved
etc

Activity 4
Possible adjectives:
- friendly
- proud
- patient
- impatient
- loving
- frustrated
- lucky
- grateful
etc
1. What are some words that might describe Fido’s appearance?

2. Write a sentence describing Fido’s personality.
   Then write another sentence about a dog with a totally different personality.

3. Write a descriptive sentence about Fido’s kennel.

4. Write a descriptive sentence about Fido’s owner.
Quick 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 (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 or One-Tooth Dawson.

Focus: Adjectives
Describing your characters and scenes paints detailed pictures for your readers.

Writing the Story
Firstly, decide in which way you would like Fido to be amazing and come up with an interesting plot, setting and characters. Then make a skeleton draft of your story, with key words and phrases arranged in paragraphs (one paragraph for each new ‘idea’)

Now write an entertaining story using at least 6 really good adjectives.

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.
Class Discussion
What is an alien? Do you think aliens exist? Do you believe in UFOs such as flying saucers? Where do UFOs come from? If aliens do exist would you say they are likely to be friendly or unfriendly? Would aliens be smarter than we are? Would you like to meet an alien? What might it be like on an alien planet?

Focus: Verbs
Avoid common, over-used verbs. You can think of better ones!

walked X  staggered ✓  said X  muttered ✓

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.

1 Some Ideas and Prompts
- **He shuffles** towards me and **raises** an arm.
- **He squirts** a liquid onto the ground and **gazes** at us all.

2 Some Ideas and Prompts
**Aliens might:**
- waddle, shuffle, tiptoe, lope, stride, saunter, stagger, limp, hop, jump, etc

3 Some Ideas and Prompts
The ship **shakes** violently and then **ascends** slowly to a height of about 100 metres. Then it **tilts** upward and, emitting a cloud of vapour, **soars** into the night sky.
1. Using at least two interesting verbs say what an alien does when he emerges from his space craft.

2. Aliens may not move as we do. Write some verbs that could describe the way an alien might move.

3. You’re watching as the alien ship is about to take off from Earth. Using at least four excellent verbs describe what you see.
Quick Revision

- Adjectives
- Plot-Setting-Characters

Focus: Verbs

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

Writing the Story

There should be lots of things happening in your story. This will give you the chance to use plenty of interesting verbs (action words). In the warm-up activities we concentrated mainly on moving verbs. However there are lots of other verb types: talking verbs (muttered), thinking verbs (wondered), looking verbs (peered), eating verbs (gulped), laughing verbs (giggled), etc.

See how many great verbs you can include in your Alien story. .....aim for 10.
Name

Date

The Little Alien
My Story

My Sketch

Not finished? Continue on another piece of paper.
Class Discussion
For many, Christmas is a time of gift-giving. If you could wish for any Christmas gift for yourself what would it be? What would be your Christmas wish for someone you know? What would be your Christmas wish to help solve a problem in society or the world?

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

1. Prompts/Ideas...
I wish for a wonderful peace throughout the world at Christmas time.
Sometimes my brother can be annoying but on Christmas day I want us to have no arguments.
I've never had a white Christmas but I hope to see beautiful snow flakes tumbling down when I visit Switzerland in December.

2. Prompts/Ideas...
My loving grandma gave me a fantastic set of Harry Potter books.
From my parents I received a shiny new bike and a colourful beach towel.
It would be great to get a super jigsaw puzzle with a thousand tricky pieces to fit together.

3. Prompts/Ideas...
Mum and I carefully placed the tree in the large pot in the corner of the lounge room.
Then I decorated the branches with glittery streamers and baubles as mum put the star in position at the top.
1. Make up an interesting ‘Christmas’ sentence for each of these verbs (which have slightly different meanings). Use an excellent adjective in each sentence.

wish

want

hope

2. Think of two gifts you have been given –or would like to be given- for Christmas. Then write a sentence, containing two adjectives, about each.

(i)

(ii)

3. Write two or three sentences about you and one of your parents putting up a Christmas tree. Use two very good verbs and two very good adjectives.
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

So, it’s time to merge together all the things we’ve been learning about so far. Once the ‘nuts and bolts’ of your story –the plot, setting and characters- have been decided upon, and the skeleton of the story has been set out in draft form (showing paragraphs and key words/phrases), it’s time to concentrate on the ‘enrichment’ (vocabulary) side of things.

Sprinkled throughout your story there should be various verb types (speaking verbs, action verbs, thinking verbs, etc) and a good number of adjectives (noun describers).

Now, if you use common verbs and adjectives you’ll end up with a ‘common’ or ordinary type of story. However if you put a lot of thought and effort into your work (such as taking the time to use a dictionary and/or thesaurus) the quality of your story will be raised to a level that not even you thought you could achieve!
My Winning Sandcastle

**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**

How many of you have made a sand castle at the beach?
What is a castle? (a fortress, often built upon a hill, to keep enemies at bay).
Who lived in castles? (the most important people in the land (often a king and queen) and their staff.
What are a castle’s parts? (surrounding wall, main building, drawbridge, towers, moat).

**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. **Sample response:**

   *I carefully packed a handful of wet sand on top of the castle’s tower and then quietly said to my brother, “You build up the other side.”*

2. **Sample responses:**

   - splashing **loudly**, excitedly
   - running **briskly**, awkwardly
   - swimming **happily**, gracefully
   - lying **peacefully**, quietly
   - bending **awkwardly**, carefully
   - laughing **loudly**, cheekily
   - eating ** hungrily**, greedily

3. **Solution:**

   - whispering softly
   - walking slowly
   - meditating quietly
   - playing happily
   - yelling loudly
   - sitting comfortably
   - reading intently

© Intelligent Australia Productions
My Winning Sandcastle
Warm-up Activities

1. Rewrite this sentence by inserting two adverbs which tell how the verbs (in bold) were carried out:
   I packed a handful of wet sand on top of the castle’s tower and then said to my brother, “You build up the other side.”

2. Write an adverb for each verb:
   splashing
   running
   swimming
   lying
   bending
   laughing
   eating

3. Rule lines linking the verbs and adverbs. Careful: some have more than one match!
   whispering                                happily
   walking                                    intently
   meditating                                 loudly
   playing                                     slowly
   yelling                                     softly
   sitting                                     quietly
   reading                                     comfortably
It looks like there’s a competition to see who can build the best sandcastle....and guess who wins!

Now, here’s a challenge....make your winning sandcastle story exciting....with a great plot!

How?? Well, could there be a mean person who plans to trample over your masterpiece when you’ve almost finished it? Or, another thought, did you look on the internet and stumble upon a fantastic site about castle building, only to find it’s taking much too long to download? (it’s nearly time to head off to the beach).

OK, the plot, setting and characters are in place, outlined as they are in the story’s draft ‘skeleton’ which also contains jottings of key words and phrases.

Verbs and adjectives have been practised previously, and revised.

Now it’s time to **really enrich** your story.

By including adverbs –wherever there are verbs- stories rise to new heights.

*Toby splashed some more water into the moat becomes Toby enthusiastically splashed some more water into the moat.*

and

*Jennifer checked to see how much time remained becomes Jennifer anxiously checked to see how much time remained.*
My Winning Sandcastle

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

What is a clown? Are all clowns men? Where do we see clowns?
What tricks and other funny things do clowns do?
What would be something good about being a clown?
Would there be anything about being a clown that would not be so nice?

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**Teaching Points**

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

- **Skilfully juggling the four balls Sempi....**
- **Slowly creeping up behind Bozo....**
- **Dangerously somersaulting the pony Sempi...**

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**Focus: Sentence beginnings**

‘Grab’ your readers from the start.

1. Discuss the meanings of *Big Top* and *skit*.

Example:

*With a devilish look on his face Sempi grabbed Bozo’s hat and flung it into the air while Bozo grabbed Sempi’s braces and pulled his britches down to his ankles.*

2. **Example:**

*Looking extremely terrified Bozo took a step forward. He stopped and then started swaying from side to side. Sempi rushed at Bozo and both clowns tumbled off the wire, falling onto the net below.*

3. **Example:**

*Incredibly, and with amazing skill, Sempi flings up his right arm and catches the oncoming ‘firey’ baton. Somehow the other two batons land safely in his left hand. Bozo then gets a big fright as Sempi waves all three flaming sticks behind the seat of Bozo’s pants.*
1. Two of your uncles (Bozo and Sempi) performed under the Big Top last night. Using an excellent sentence starter describe one of their hilarious skits.

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2. Bozo and Sempi are climbing up the wobbly ladder to walk along the circus high wire. In 2-3 sentences say what happens after they set off on their delicate walk. **Have an excellent beginning.**

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3. The circus audience is on edge as Sempi juggles two flaming batons. So far, so good, but what’s Bozo doing? Oh no, Bozo throws in another flaming baton! Write at least two sentences telling what follows and begin each sentence with an excellent phrase (consider ‘ly’ adverbs).

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With the outline of your story in place (ie the ‘skeleton’ draft) it’s now time to really get your story-writing thinking cap on.

Up to this point in your quest to write wonderful stories you’ve had the opportunity to practise lots of useful writing techniques and here’s your chance to include another...great sentence beginnings.

Consider how well your story may turn out if you include sentences such as these...

- Silly, ridiculous, hilarious, insane....my uncles are all of these things, and much much more!
- Do you know how embarrassing it is when I have friends over?....."Jamie, meet my uncle Bozo."

Then dear uncle extends a huge fake hand in Jamie’s direction!
My Uncles are Clowns

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

**My Dinosaur Dream**

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**Class Discussion**

What are dinosaurs? (ancient reptiles)
When did they live on Earth? (220-65 million years ago)
Were all dinosaurs large? (no, some were the size of a chicken)
How do we know that dinosaurs existed? (fossils and footprints)
What made dinosaurs go extinct? (it’s not certain; the most popular theory is an asteroid collision with Earth)
Is it true that birds evolved from dinosaurs? (scientists do believe this)
What do we call scientists who study dinosaurs? (palaeontologists)
How many different dinosaurs can you name?

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**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!

**Focus: Surprise Ending**

*Leave your readers wondering.*

1. Sample response:
   “A dinosaur egg...how fantastic! We were going to have an omelette for dinner this evening; now it can be a dinosaur omelette.”

2. Sample response:
   Although a T-Rex in every physical sense of the word (18cm razor sharp teeth, huge claws, etc) the creature turns out to be extremely friendly. It becomes a tourist attraction and children are given rides on its back, neck and tail around the city’s new “21st Century Dino Park”.

3. Sample response:
   “Congratulations...you have discovered a new dinosaur species. Just before our chief palaeontologist died last year he announced that anyone who made such a discovery will receive an amount of $1 million from his estate.”
1. Write a surprise ending to this passage (use at least 15 words):

Excited by their discovery of a large dinosaur egg the children raced home to tell their parents. When they told their father, Mr Collins (a palaeontologist at the city museum) he said, "

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2. Say how a story about a scientist who creates a Tyrannosaurus Rex in a laboratory has a surprise ending.

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3. Write a surprise ending:

One day two friends discovered large animal bones in a dried-up creek bed. There were tail bones, enormous leg bones, a huge skull and many other bones and bone fragments. The friends put all the bones into bags and arranged for them to be taken to the museum for identification. A few weeks later the Head of the Museum telephoned the friends and this is what they were told...

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You have developed the plot for your story but are wondering how to give it a special ending......well, there’s nothing like the element of surprise.

Why is it sometimes good to have a surprise ending?
You probably like surprises....and so do most people (as long as they’re not scary ones!)

The surprise ending technique has been used by famous writers for centuries. It’s often used in mystery stories where the villain turns out to be the last person you’d expect.
However, there’s no rule to say that you can’t use a surprise ending in any story.
Try it and see. Your friends will be impressed!
My Dinosaur Dream

Name

Date

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
Bumble bees nest in loose earth, under compost heaps or under garden sheds. Queen and worker bumble bees can sting, but the sting is not barbed like that of the honey bee, so they can sting more than once.

What does bumbling mean? (clumsy, blundering)
How could a bee be bumbling? (feeding on nectar, collecting pollen, stinging, flying, straying from the swarm)

1. Sample response:
With wings flapping furiously Bertie kept encircling the nest, letting out a buzz that was loud enough to awaken every ant in the colony.

2. Answers:
Adjectives
colourful  stripy
mischievous  cheeky
clumsy

Verbs
flapping  pollinate
circling  flying

Adverbs
swiftly  noisily  carelessly
curiously  dangerously

3. Answers:
bumbling (adjective)
impatiently (adverb)
gathered (verb)
spindly (adjective)
delicious (adjective)
carefully (adverb)
climb (verb)
slippery (adjective)
Bertie, the Bumbling Bumble Bee
Warm-up Activities

1. Write a sentence—with an excellent beginning—about Bertie buzzing around an ants’ nest.

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2. Here are some words that could be used in a story about Bertie. Place each word under the correct heading: **colourful swiftly stripy noisily mischievous carelessly flapping curiously pollinate circling cheeky flying dangerously clumsy**

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3. Write down each underlined word and alongside it (in brackets) say whether it’s a verb, adverb or adjective.

Bernie the bumbling bumble bee impatiently gathered up nectar and pollen. On the way to his nest, he met his spindly friend, Walter the Preying Mantis. “Hey Walter,” said Bernie, “would you like some of this delicious nectar?” “Oh, yes please,” replied Walter, “it’ll give me enough energy to carefully climb up the slippery stems of those swamp plants.”
Quick Revision

Surprise Ending
Sentence Beginnings
Adverbs Verbs Adjectives
Plot-Setting-Characters

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

Writing the Story

The time has arrived to put into practise all that you’ve
learned so far.....and you’ve learnt  a lot!

When writing a story featuring something as small as an
insect (Bertie) it can be a good idea to avoid using human
characters (humans and insects don’t go together as well
as humans and, say, dogs or horses).

So, what other characters (that’s if you want others in
your story) could you consider?

Some possibilities....other bumble bees, ants, flies, preying
mantises, scorpions, butterflies, wasps, spiders, frogs,......
Bertie, the Bumling Bumble Bee

My Story

My Sketch

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

What is a bookworm?
Do you know any bookworms?
What’s good about being a bookworm?
What’s not good about being a bookworm?
What’s better.....reading books or reading on your computer?
What’s the best book or story you’ve ever read?

**Teaching Points**

- The quotation marks at the end of the speaking part always follow the full stop/question mark/exclamation mark.
- If the speaking part of your sentence comes first, follow it with a comma. If it comes at the end of the sentence it should be preceded by a comma.
- Each time a different person speaks take a new line.
- 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 you’ve been learning about, don’t over-use it.

**Focus: Direct Speech**

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

1. Sample response:
Miss Patience looked at Brian and said, “Brian, are you sure you can read all those books in one week?”
“Yes,” replied Brian, “I might even read some of them twice.”

2. Sample response:
Brian’s mother asked, “What’s *Mountain Top Mystery* about Brian?”
“It’s about strange beams of light coming from a mountain top,” replied Brian.
“Did they find out what caused these light beams?” asked Brian’s mother.
Brian answered, “Yes, it was a group of scientists testing a new type of laser and the tests were top secret.”

3. Solution:
Jenny said, “Dad, may I use the computer now?”
“Sure,” replied Dad, “but make sure you log off when you’re finished.”
1. There’s Brian with his trolley and his weekly library book haul. (see picture) Miss Patience, the librarian, has just stamped all the books with their due date-of-return. Use direct speech to say what might have been said between the two.

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2. Brian has just finished reading a book entitled, “Mountain Top Mystery” and his mother wants to know what it is about. Use direct speech to say how their conversation went (make sure Brian and his mother each speak at least twice).

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3. Re-write this passage, putting in the quotation marks.
Jenny said, Dad, may I use the computer now?
Sure, replied Dad, but make sure you log off when you’re finished.
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:

*Brian flipped over the page excitedly and thought, “It’s probably the monster in disguise.”*

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.

*“Mum, have you seen my book about the Giant Squid?” asked Brian.*

*“No,” replied Brian’s mother, “Have you checked in your school bag?”*
My Camping Adventure

Class Discussion
- Have you ever been camping?
- What’s the best thing about camping?
- Where do people usually go camping? (caravan park, next to a river, in the bush, etc).
- What things should you remember to take if you go camping? (torch, compass, drinking water, map, first aid kit, food supply, etc)

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 your readers are familiar with.

1. Sample response:
   **I’m gazing up at the stars which look like a million diamonds shimmering in the vast blackness of the night.**

2. Sample responses:
   - The songs of the birds were like pretty melodies coming from strings of harps.
   - The river wound past our camp like a slow-moving snake.
   - Down came the rain, in huge belting drops, battering the tent like a torrent of bullets.

3. Sample responses:
   - Three young rabbits, **as** small as squirrels, were hopping this way and that.
   - The sun was **as** hot **as** a raging fire.
   - When I arrived back at the tent I was **as** tired **as** a runner at the end of a marathon race.
1. Imagine you are camping out at night. You look into the clear black sky and see countless stars glistening above. Write a sentence containing a simile that tells what the stars look like.

2. Make up ‘like’ similes for these things, experienced while camping.
   *W*rite *w*hole *s*entences.

   **singing birds**

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   **nearby river**

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   **rain on the tent**

   ________________________________________________________________

3. Make up ‘as’ similes for these things, experienced while camping:
   *W*rite *w*hole *s*entences.

   **rabbits**

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   **hot sun**

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   **tired from hiking**

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________
A story about a camping adventure 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.

A little bit of Direct Speech would be good too....and remember, it needn’t be restricted to humans.

Here’s an example:
As I lay in my sleeping bag I could hear an owl in a nearby tree.
My Camping Adventure

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

Have you ever seen a turtle?
What kind of animals are turtles? (reptiles)
Where do turtles live? (freshwater, oceans or swamps)
Would it be good to have a pet turtle...
why/why not?
A tortoise is a type of turtle...
Do you know the famous story, 'The Hare and the Tortoise'? What is it about?

Teaching Points

A short sentence is used to best effect when it follows several longer ones....
Example
Tammy emerged from the water and made her way slowly up the beach, looking for a place to make a nest.
Suddenly she sensed danger and out of the corner of one eye she spotted a large snake on the top of a nearby sand dune.
What should she do.....continue on and hope that the snake doesn't attack her or turn and head back to the safety of the water?
She turned.

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. Sample response:
   Tammy, feeling threatened, knew it was too late to withdraw into her shell. Just as the snake was about to seize her in its fangs a gunshot was heard and the snake reared back. It was dead.

2. Sample response:
   Then along came Tina (Tammy’s turtle friend) who said, “Tammy, there’s a frog just back there and I think he’s coming to steal your eggs!”
   Tammy looked up at the large eagle perched on a high tree branch above and yelled, “Eleanor... .another frog for you!”
   Whoo-oosh! No more frog.

3. Sample response:
   The excited friends placed Tammy in a bucket and made their way home as quickly as they could. These were nice children (unlike others she’d met) and Tammy hoped that their parents would let them keep her as a pet.
   Imagine Tammy’s delight when she knew she’d be looked after forever by such a good family. What luck!
1. Tammy has just swum from one side of the river to the bank on the other side. As she begins her slow walk towards a resting place near some reeds she sees a snake slithering toward her. Say how Tammy survives this encounter; include a short sentence. NB Snakes prey on turtles.

2. Make up an ending to complete this passage. Include a short sentence. Tammy had just laid her eggs and began looking for some twigs to cover the nest.

3. Write a passage about Tammy being discovered by some children down at the creek. End with the sentence, What luck!
Quick Revision

Similes    Direct Speech    Surprise Ending
Sentence Beginnings    Adverbs Verbs
Adjectives    Plot-Setting-Characters

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.

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 about Tammy the turtle.

*Tammy slept.*          *That was close.*          *She swam on.*
*Finally it hatched.*    *Tammy gasped.*         *Oh, no!*
*Tammy thought awhile.*  *Yes...good idea.*    *No-one moved.*
My Story about
Tammy

My Sketch

Unfinished? Continue on another piece of paper.
Wonderful Stories

Warm-up Activities

My New Rollerblades

Class Discussion

- Have you ever been rollerblading? How is rollerblading different from riding on a skateboard? Which would you say is more fun?
- How are rollerblades different from roller skates?
- Who rollerblades more... girls or boys? Where are the best places to go 'blading'? (paths, empty car parks).
- What protective gear should be worn while blading? (helmet, elbow pads, knee pads). How much do rollerblades cost?

Note to Teachers

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

1. Sample response:
   After I had carefully adjusted my shiny new rollerblades I went zooming along the path towards the beach.

2. Sample response:
   Plot:
   Cindy's new rollerblades go missing. She and her friends search everywhere and eventually find them hidden in a cave.
   Setting:
   A quiet little town between a river and some hills.
   Characters:
   Cindy (a 9 year old with flaming red hair), Beau and Danni (twins, age 10), Jolly Joe (the town gardener) and Wicked Wendy (never to be trusted).

3. Sample responses:
   I scooted off on my blades, as swiftly as a fox chasing a rabbit.
   We hurriedly put on our blades, like soldiers preparing for battle.

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1. Write a sentence telling about a real or imaginary time that you went rollerblading. Use an excellent adjective, an excellent verb and an excellent adverb.

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2. Think up an exciting plot, an unusual setting and some interesting characters for a story involving rollerblades. Write your ideas below.

**Plot** (brief outline)
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**Setting** (brief description)
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**Characters** (brief description)
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3. Use an excellent *as* or *like* simile in a sentence about rollerblading.
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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 Rollerblades story students should be able to come up with lots of excellent... adjectives – brilliant shiny sleek streamlined exciting
verbs – zooming speeding gliding hurtling striding
adverbs – skilfully carefully nervously dangerously excitedly

The topic lends itself well to:
similes: - as fast as a bullet like an Olympic ice skater
Sentence beginnings like these could be used:
With the wind rushing past... Crouching forward....

Some direct speech could be:
“Hey, this is more fun than I ever imagined!” exclaimed Sam excitedly.
My New Rollerblades

My Sketch

Not finished yet? Continue on another piece of paper.
My story (continued)

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