Year 4 Narrative Unit 2 – Stories set in imaginary worlds

Stories set in imaginary worlds (4 weeks)

This is the second of four narrative units in Year 4. In this unit children will develop their use of different settings in narrative from Year 3 and build on the work from Unit 1 to organise texts into paragraphs. The unit has three phases which have oral and written outcomes including a quest or adventure narrative in the fantasy or science fiction genre. To support children's writing, photo-editing software is used to create fantasy landscapes. The images are used to plan stories and develop the use of language to create atmosphere. The unit can be linked to other curriculum subjects or themes.

Phase 1

Read, compare and contrast a range of texts with fantasy settings. Identify common features and themes from the narratives. Discuss how settings influence the reactions of characters. Express opinions about the mood and atmospheres created by different authors of narratives with fantasy settings.

Phase 2

Create fantasy settings using photo-editing software. Use images to discuss character responses to settings. Construct a narrative using the images, and drawing on common features and themes of stories set in fantasy settings. Organise the story into paragraphs and identify how cohesion is created within and across paragraphs.

Phase 3

Demonstrate how to organise the narrative into paragraphs using cohesive devices to connect ideas. Children write their own narratives arranged into paragraphs, ensuring that ideas are linked within and across paragraphs.

Overview

- Begin reading a serial story aloud (and continue through the unit), for example the first in a series of books set in the same imaginary world. Provide others in the series for children to read independently throughout the unit. Collect together information from the text about the setting to build up a picture of the imagined world. Note examples of descriptive language and talk about the type of mood or atmosphere they create. Children to present evidence in another form, for example as map or illustration.
- Read a short story set in another imaginary world. Focus on particular characters and discuss what they do in that setting: is their behaviour what the children would expect or has it been affected by the setting in some way? Children express own opinions using evidence from text and listen to views of others.
- Discuss the way that authors develop imaginary worlds over a series of books, for example revealing more detail, introducing new characters. Encourage examples based on children's independent reading.
- Improvise what would happen if new characters were introduced to an imagined world. Use freeze-frame to explore thoughts of different characters.
- Children work collaboratively to plan and write a longer story, organised into chapters, about an adventure in an imagined world. Discuss ways to use language to create atmosphere or suspense and demonstrate how to use figurative or expressive language in short passages.
1998 Framework objectives covered:

Year 4, Term 2: T1 how writers create imaginary worlds; T2 how settings influence events, incidents, characters’ behaviour; T3 compare settings; T4 use of expressive, descriptive language; T8 review range of stories; T10 develop use of settings in own writing; T12 collaborate to write stories in chapters; T13 write own examples of expressive, descriptive language.

Objectives

To ensure effective planning of literacy teachers need to ensure they plan for all elements of literacy effectively across the year ensuring that assessment for learning is used to plan and amend teaching. It is essential that core skills such as phonic strategies, spelling, and handwriting are incorporated into these exemplar units to ensure effective learning.

Most children learn to:

(The following list comprises only the strands, numbered 1 through 12, that are relevant to this particular unit. Where there are relevant Steps in Learning for an objective, a link has been included.)

1. Speaking
   - Tell stories effectively and convey detailed information coherently for listeners

7. Understanding and interpreting texts
   - Explain how writers use figurative and expressive language to create images and atmosphere

8. Engaging with and responding to texts
   - Read extensively favourite authors or genres and experiment with other types of text

9. Creating and shaping texts
   - Develop and refine ideas in writing using planning and problem-solving strategies
   - Use settings and characterisation to engage readers’ interest
   - Show imagination through language used to create emphasis, humour, atmosphere or suspense

10. Text structure and organisation
    - Organise texts into paragraphs to distinguish between different information, events or processes
    - Use adverbs and conjunctions to establish cohesion within paragraphs

11. Sentence structure and punctuation
    - Clarify meaning and point of view by using varied sentence structure (phrases, clauses and adverbials)
Check that children can already:

- Identify a range of settings used by authors when discussing stories they have read.
- Use simple connectives to connect ideas in using simple or compound sentences.

**Teaching sequence phase 1**

Note: Children working significantly above or below age-related expectations will need differentiated support, which may include tracking forward or back in terms of learning objectives. EAL learners should be expected to work within the overall expectations for their year group. For further advice see the progression strands and hyperlinks to useful sources of practical support.

**Shared reading and familiarisation with the text-type (4 days)**

**Teaching content:**

Prior to teaching the unit, whole-class collections of fantasy or science fiction texts should be established to support independent reading for pleasure. Texts could include films, comics, picture books, TV programmes and written texts. One particular text could be chosen as the whole-class novel, for children to experience how a narrative builds over a period of time.

- As a whole class, read, share and discuss different fantasy or science fiction texts. Investigate the themes of the narratives and identify the key elements of the narrative structure using IWB to create a framework for a story skeleton plan. The framework can be printed out as a template plan for children later in the unit.
- Compare and contrast settings from the texts. Display the text using the IWB and use the IWB tools to highlight how the author created mood and atmosphere. Note the findings on the IWB setting and atmosphere comparison grid.
- Children read descriptions of other fantasy settings to identify and discuss the atmosphere evoked. Children should compare the settings to find common techniques for creating different atmospheres and should highlight evidence in the text.
- During the plenary, collate children's findings on the IWB grid to decide which atmospheres are most commonly associated with which settings.
- In shared reading, return to the IWB comparison grid. Explain that, for children's writing to be successful, the atmosphere of the setting should influence the characters' reactions. Different characters may react in various ways. Revisit the texts from previous sessions and model how to highlight evidence that illustrates how the author has communicated to the reader the thinking and feelings of different characters, for example descriptions of their facial expressions, body posture, speech and behaviour.
- Divide children into groups. Each group should focus on one of the texts used in the previous sessions. Ask each child in a group to focus on one particular character, for example the main character or the main character's best friend. Children locate and highlight evidence in the texts that demonstrates how the author has shown what a character is thinking and feeling in response to a setting.
- During the plenary, explore the range of responses displayed by characters, using the emotional response scale on the IWB. Identify the range of reactions displayed by characters in response to a setting and record the findings on the comparison grid.

**Learning outcome:**

- Children can express opinions about an author's intended impact on a reader.

**Teaching sequence phase 2**
Capturing ideas and planning (7 days)

Teaching content:

A range of photographs is needed to create children's fantasy settings using photo editing software. Children could source the images on the Internet or take their own digital photographs using the local environment.

- Remind children about the need to have settings that create a particular atmosphere. Explain that children are going to use the filters and cutting tool in photo editing software to create their own fantasy settings to support their writing. Model how to add filters to a photograph of a landscape. Experiment with the filters and discuss how, for example, changing the colour saturation can make the image appear warm and welcoming or cold and hostile. Save the different examples of enhanced images in a central folder for children to access later.
- Arrange children into pairs. Ask them to take four of the images they have sourced and alter the images using the software program. Children should keep notes of the filters or effects they have used to create particular atmospheres so that the process can be repeated at a later date or shared with peers. Ask children to save the images in a central folder using an appropriate word to describe the atmosphere of the image.
- During the plenary, ask each group to choose one image to share with the rest of the class. From their notes the group should state which filters were used and what atmosphere these are intended to communicate to a reader. Other members of the class should provide feedback on the effectiveness of the filters used. Time will be needed to enable children to make adjustments to their images in response to the feedback.
- In the shared session, project one of the images made in the previous session onto the IWB. Ask children to refer back to the notes made during reading about characters' responses to settings. Discuss how the image could make the characters feel and decide on appropriate facial gestures and body postures to reflect their inner thoughts. Freeze-frame children in front of the images showing various responses to the settings. Take digital photographs of the freeze-frames to record the ideas and for later use to support children's writing.
- During the shared session, return to the story skeleton plan on the IWB created in phase 1. Insert onto the page the four altered images of fantasy settings made in phase 2 and discuss which of the four settings would be most suitable at different stages in the story. Experiment with the order of the images, alternating threatening environments with calmer places of safety. Explain to children how alternating the setting in this way gives the reader a period of rest and increases the impact of the next dramatic encounter.
- Each group repeats the ordering process with their own images. Encourage children to copy and paste the images into different orders so that the different alternatives can be kept for future reference and to enable discussion and comparison.
- During the plenary, children should critically reflect on the different order of their images to assess which sequence of settings would have the most impact on a reader, creating the feeling of tension followed by a breathing space.
- Use modelled and shared teaching approaches to demonstrate how to use the planner and the image sequences as a support for telling an oral version of a fantasy narrative. Small-world role-play figures could be used to provide a stimulus for the main characters. Remind children that each box on the story planner will be equivalent to one paragraph of their final narrative.
- Children follow the example set in the shared session and work in pairs or small groups to retell their narratives. Children should be encouraged to use appropriate language to describe the characters' reactions to the settings and to develop the narrative in paragraphs using the boxes as a support to structure their ideas.
- During the plenary, ask children to add brief notes to their paragraph planner to remind them of ideas gained from the oral storytelling.
- To extend the use of adverbs and conjunctions within paragraphs, use the original text examples and identify key words and phrases used by the authors. Use the IWB to create a word bank. Drag and drop words onto the planner and model how to include the words in a second oral draft of the narrative. Keep the word bank on display to support children in adding appropriate adverbs and conjunctions to their own plans. Children then perform their second oral draft with their peer, making sure that they have included the cohesive words and phrases.
- During the plenary children should add notes of the vocabulary used in the session onto their planner.
Learning outcome:

- Children can tell a story orally based on their role-play using the organisational and language features of the text-type.

### Teaching sequence phase 3

#### Writing (7-9 days)

**Teaching content:**

- Use modelled, shared and supported composition to write a first draft of the narrative. Refer back to the word bank, plans and oral versions of the narrative to model, drawing on a range of sources to support the writing process. Make explicit reference to organising the ideas from each box on the paragraph planner into written paragraphs. Using supported composition, children should suggest different options for connecting the ideas within a paragraph using their oral storytelling and the word bank created in previous sessions.
- Extend the writing process over an appropriate number of days to suit the pace and confidence of the children. Assess the progress of the writing against the success criteria of the text-type at appropriate intervals in the writing process. Provide time for children to revise and adapt their drafts based on the assessments against the success criteria.
- Refer to examples in Grammar for Writing: Year 4 teaching units, unit 32 to review the use of adverbs and conjunctions to create cohesion within a paragraph. Use supported composition to re-draft the whole-class narrative on the IWB ensuring that the ideas flow naturally for the reader.
- Ask children, working in pairs in the shared session, to review their work and revise the cohesive devices that link the ideas together within and across the paragraphs.
- During the plenary, ask children to identify three successful cohesive devices they have used and one area of the narrative that needs a stronger link between ideas. Share the top three ideas from children as a class and provide time for children to use the ideas to alter the area they identified as a possible weakness.
- Publish the work in an appropriate format. Children's narratives could be word processed with the images created as part of the planning inserted as illustrations. Additional illustrations of the main characters could be created and added by scanning in children's drawings or using photo editing software.

#### Learning outcome:

Children can write a narrative using paragraphs to organise ideas maintaining cohesion within and between paragraphs

### Complete teaching sequence

**Note:** Children working significantly above or below age-related expectations will need differentiated support, which may include tracking forward or back in terms of learning objectives. EAL learners should be expected to work within the overall expectations for their year group. For further advice see the progression strands and hyperlinks to useful sources of practical support.

#### Phase 1: Shared reading and familiarisation with the text-type (4 days)

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As a whole class, read, share and discuss different fantasy or science fiction texts. Investigate the themes of the narratives and identify the key elements of the narrative structure using IWB to create a framework for a story skeleton plan. The framework can be printed out as a template plan for children later in the unit.

Compare and contrast settings from the texts. Display the text using the IWB and use the IWB tools to highlight how the author created mood and atmosphere. Note the findings on the IWB setting and atmosphere comparison grid.

Children read descriptions of other fantasy settings to identify and discuss the atmosphere evoked. Children should compare the settings to find common techniques for creating different atmospheres and should highlight evidence in the text.

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In shared reading, return to the IWB comparison grid. Explain that, for children's writing to be successful, the atmosphere of the setting should influence the characters' reactions. Different characters may react in various ways. Revisit the texts from previous sessions and model how to highlight evidence that illustrates how the author has communicated to the reader the thinking and feelings of different characters, for example descriptions of their facial expressions, body posture, speech and behaviour.

Divide children into groups. Each group should focus on one of the texts used in the previous sessions. Ask each child in a group to focus on one particular character, for example the main character or the main character's best friend. Children locate and highlight evidence in the texts that demonstrates how the author has shown what a character is thinking and feeling in response to a setting.

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Phase 2: Capturing ideas and planning (7 days)

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- Extend the writing process over an appropriate number of days to suit the pace and confidence of the children. Assess the progress of the writing against the success criteria of the text-type at appropriate intervals in the writing process. Provide time for children to revise and adapt their drafts based on the assessments against the success criteria.
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- Children can write a narrative using paragraphs to organise ideas maintaining cohesion within and between paragraphs

Assessment

Assessing Pupils' Progress

In this exemplified unit we have identified the main assessment focuses (AFs) for reading and writing. However, it is important to remember that teachers should interpret and adapt the teaching sequence to meet the needs of particular classes, and this may affect the choice of AFs against which you wish to gather a range of evidence.

In order for a judgement to be made against writing AFs 1 and 2 it is important that children are given space and time to develop their own ideas and define their own purposes for writing. Opportunities to plan for this will arise throughout the literacy curriculum as well as through the application of skills across the curriculum.

The suggested outcome for this unit is a narrative that uses paragraphs to organise ideas, maintaining cohesion within and between the paragraphs. The teaching of this unit should support the collection of evidence against reading AF5 (explain and comment on writers’ use of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level), writing AF1 (write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts) and writing AF4 (construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs).

Evidence against a variety of AFs will be collected at many points during the teaching sequence. Independence and opportunities to make decisions are integral to children's development in reading and writing. Therefore, as well as using assessment opportunities within the structure of the unit (as exemplified below) it will also be important to collect evidence of achievement against the AFs from occasions where children can demonstrate independence and choice.

Suggestions for the collection of assessment information against a range of AFs are found below.

Opportunities for assessment

The following are examples selected from the teaching content for this unit of work that will support planning for effective assessment as an integrated part of the teaching and learning process. Evidence gathered during this ongoing work will contribute to the periodic assessment of children's progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Example of teaching content and assessment opportunities</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Approach to assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children can tell a story orally based on their role-play using the organisational and language features of the text-type.</td>
<td>Four images have been sequenced. Through drama and small world play children have developed a story outline. During the shared part of the lesson the teacher demonstrates how to use the images and ideas gathered to tell the narrative orally, modelling how to add notes and appropriate language to the planner for use when writing. In pairs or small groups, children use sequenced images to plan and rehearse their story, refining them orally to take account of word choice. They make notes on their planners to act as prompts for oral retelling and writing.</td>
<td>Children's discussion, Children's planners, Recordings of oral drafts</td>
<td>Teacher observation, Teacher questioning, Oral feedback and discussion</td>
</tr>
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<td>Children can write a narrative using paragraphs to organise ideas, maintaining cohesion within and between paragraphs.</td>
<td>Success criteria for the narrative have been established with the class. Teacher demonstration focuses on transferring ideas from narrative planners into written paragraphs in order to organise narrative into paragraphs. During a supported composition session, children suggest options for connecting ideas between paragraphs. They work on whiteboards to draft ideas for the class story, considering how the story will flow. These ideas are shared and re-drafted before being added to planners for future use. Guided writing sessions take place to support specific groups and specific needs.</td>
<td>Children's writing (on mini-whiteboards) Children's planners Children's writing at each stage of the process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key aspects of learning

**Reasoning**

Children will discuss the influence of settings on characters, using evidence from the text to justify their opinions and referring to wider evidence from their own knowledge and experience.

**Evaluation**

Children will discuss the success criteria they have devised to evaluate their own written work and give feedback to others.

**Self-awareness**

Children will discuss and reflect on their personal responses to the texts.

**Communication**

Children will often work collaboratively in pairs and groups. They will communicate outcomes orally, in writing and using other modes and media where appropriate.

**Context**

This is a 4-week unit to write a quest or adventure narrative in the fantasy or science fiction genre. To support children's writing, photo-editing software is used to create fantasy landscapes. The images are used to plan stories and develop the use of language to create atmosphere.

For further information, see the booklet Progression in key aspects of learning (Ref: 0524-2004) from [Learning and teaching in the primary years: Professional development resources](Ref: 0518-2004G).