

Doors

-the world of possibility



Day 6

Planning a portal story

Nearly all portal stories follow a similar pattern:

- Main character (MC) finds magical portal & enters new world
- Describe new world
- MC explores this new world & encounters a problem
- MC has to escape & return through the portal
- MC cannot find portal again
(sometimes brings back a memento of new world)

Once you have identified the pattern of the story, the possibilities are endless. Let your imagination run free. Brainstorm lots of ideas and then decide which captures your interest as a writer. Before you start, take a look at my top tips.

Top tips for story writing:

- **Start in a world/a setting that you know well** – it is far easier to describe something familiar to you, e.g. a garden, your school, your local town, etc.
- **Use a stimulus (e.g. picture) for the new world** – an image will help you focus in on the detail and describe what is there.
- **Let your ideas flow** – don't worry about spelling, handwriting or presentation ... you can go back and edit this later.

Here are a couple of ideas to open your mind to the world of possibility:

Underlying Pattern	Story idea 1	Story idea 2
Main character (MC) finds magical portal and enters new world	Elif is playing in her Grandmother's garden and notices a small fairy door. Touches door and shrinks/ enters.	Josh and Archie playing hide and seek in their house. Archie opens hatch in the roof and discovers new world.

Describe new world	Arrives in an underground world full of caves, giant toadstools and magical creatures.	Transported to life onboard an enormous sailing ship in Tudor England.
MC explores new world and encounters a problem	Elif explores new world and enters an area strictly forbidden. Picks magical flower.	Ship is thrown into battle.
MC has to escape and return through the portal	Alarms sound and Elif runs. She is chased through the magical world by unknown threat and escapes.	Archie desperately searches for portal and way back to own world.
MC cannot find portal again (sometimes has brought back a memento of new world)	Elif cannot find fairy door again, but the cut flower lives on forever reminding her of her journey.	Archie escapes with small pouch of gunpowder in his pocket.

★ Using this underlying pattern, plan a few portal stories of your own. You may like to draw upon your own personal experience as well as your wider reading and imagination. I have also included two pictures in case they help you.



Day 7

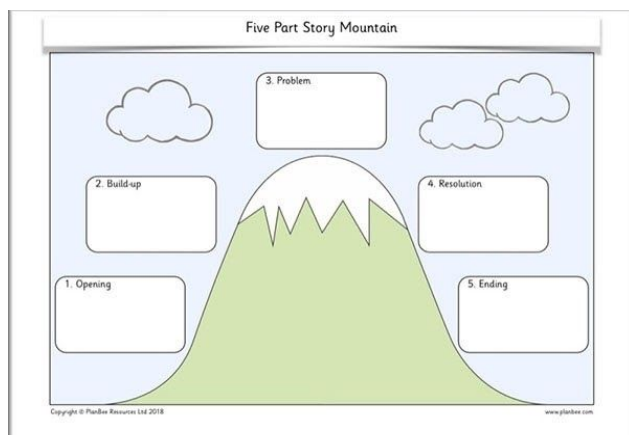
Writing your own story

You now have all of the tools required to write your own portal story. You may like to write about a more traditional portal that leads you to a magical world, or you may prefer to draw upon your personal experiences, as we have explored throughout this unit.

To recap on all the key points we've been learning:

- a. **Describe the portal in detail.** You may want to show the portal through the eyes of the main character.
- b. **Think about what lies on the other side of the door.** Allow yourself the opportunity to write about what interests you and what is important to you.
- c. **Great writers steal ideas ('maggie') from other great writers.** Reflect upon the portal stories that you have loved reading and consider what made these so engaging. Try to bring in some of these skills and techniques into your own work.
- d. **Enjoy it.** Writing is all about sharing a passion for words, stories and the world of possibility. If you love the story you are writing – so too will your reader.

Today, spend the time planning your story using what we have looked at so far and the key points above. You could plan in lots of different ways - we have included some structures below!



STORY PLANNER

MAIN CHARACTERS

--

SETTING

--

THE STORY PROBLEM

--

A STORY EVENT

--

HOW THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED

--

THE ENDING

--

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'RE READY TO PUT YOUR PLAN TOGETHER AND WRITE YOUR ENTIRE STORY!



Story Planning Grid

Who ?	Where?	What?
Problems / Threats	Setbacks	Help / Intervention
Resolution	Ending	

Day 8

Using your plan from yesterday, it's time to start writing your story! Remember that the start of your story should hook the reader and make them interested so that they read on. Think about all the different writing techniques you could use to make your writing exciting. Here are some examples of intriguing story starters you could use as inspiration for your own...

1. The air turned black all around me.
2. Icy fingers gripped my arm in the darkness.
3. A shrill cry echoed in the mist
4. My hair stood on end, a shiver raced down my spine and a lump came to my throat. It was him...
5. It was there and then it had gone; why would a rabbit be on my bathroom floor?
6. The lights flickered and then went off - then the sirens started. It was coming. We knew it wouldn't be the last time...
7. The clock stopped - 74 minutes past 18. It was time to get up.
8. Everything had stopped. People were stood like statues all around me: people in cars, men on bicycles, children on swings. All lifeless, frozen in time.
9. I had never seen a ghost. But like they say, there is a first time for everything.
10. Grey and foreboding, the castle stood atop the hill looking down across the small town. In the topmost window of the highest tower stood a small boy.

Enjoy beginning to write your story!

Day 9

Continue writing your story, making sure to continue referring back to your plan. How can you keep the excitement going? Remember that either today or tomorrow you are going to end your story - endings are

just as important as beginnings! Try some of these exciting ways to end a story:

Ready for a sequel

At the end of their long journey they sat down, at last, around the open fire of the camp where it had all begun. They sighed and told each other that their travelling days were over. But were they?

OR

At the end of their long journey they sat down, at last, around the open fire of the camp where it had all begun. They sighed and told each other that their travelling days were over, and at that moment they really believed it to be true.

Talking to the audience

e.g. The Silver Chair by CS Lewis

"If you ever have the luck to go to Narnia yourself, do not forget to have a look at those caves."

Unexpected/Shock endings

At last they were free from the evil that had been plaguing them for so long. The sky was blue, the sun shone and the birds sang in the trees. Jack walked across the field whistling and sometimes singing to himself. He hardly had a care in the world as the sun beat down upon him. For this reason he failed to see the rotting flesh of the hand that broke through the soil beneath him, snatching at his ankle and dragging him, screaming, under.

(For this type of ending you must have a contrast in the description. You have to lull the reader into a false sense of security, making them believe everything is going to be okay, before you shock them.)

One other way to write a story is to start with the ending and then in the story show what happened to lead up to that point.

The boys sat together thinking about the poor man. They were sorry that things had happened the way they had, and they still felt a little bit guilty -they hadn't meant for anything bad to happen. Jack sighed. He had learnt that it wasn't always a good idea to go with the crowd and he wouldn't be making the same mistake again.

...Three weeks earlier, Jack had been walking to the shop with a group of his friends. As they passed the old railway bridge, they had spotted what looked like a bundle of clothes next to a rusty, old dustbin. Jack stared at the rags intently, until, to his surprise he saw a pair of eyes blinking back at him. He hurried on, to catch up with his friends.

Day 10

We hope you have enjoyed writing your story! Use today to finish it off and check over it again for anything that doesn't flow or needs editing. When you are happy with it, please share your portal story with us! Email us your story on ARHYear6@aldermanrichardhallam.leicester.sch.uk - we can't wait to read them!