

Where and when:

Date: Wednesday, 27 September 2023

Time: 11:00

Duration: 30 minutes

Location: bbc.co.uk/livelessons

This programme is available to view from home or school, and no sign-up is required.

Simply visit the website on the day and follow the instructions on the page to watch.



Curriculum links:

KS2 English / KS2 Language and Literacy / Literacy and English 2nd Level / Language, literacy and communication, progression step 2.

- Think about the audience and purpose of their writing.
- Understand, enjoy, and create stories.
- Create and compare settings, characters, themes, and plot.
- Use language, dialogue, and structure in their writing to engage and influence their readers.
- Discuss and plan their ideas for writing before beginning.

Setup:

This Live Lesson will broadcast live on the CBBC channel and simultaneously on the BBC Teach website at 11:00 on Wednesday, 27 September 2023. It will remain online afterwards to be used as a teaching resource whenever you need it.

We will be running a live commentary page on BBC Teach during the live broadcast to share contributions from children watching from home and school.

How much space and equipment is needed?

The lesson can be viewed in a classroom or at home with a device (computer, tablet or mobile phone) linked to a reliable broadband connection or watched on a television on the CBBC channel. We will ask children to get involved in activities throughout the lesson and have provided downloadable [activity sheets](#) to help guide them through this.

You may wish to hand these out in advance, along with stationery such as pens and pencils. Pupils will still be able to follow the activities if they don't have printed activity sheets to hand.

Lesson content:

This programme supports work around creative writing. It is designed to engage primary learners from ages 7- 11. It covers learning objectives across:

- Key Stage 2 English (national curriculum, England);
- Key Stage 2 (P3 to P6), language and literacy (national curriculum, Northern Ireland);
- Literacy and English, 1st level and 2nd level (Scotland curriculum for excellence);
- Language, literacy and communication, progression step 2 (curriculum for Wales)

This lesson is designed to support the launch of the 500 Words competition which will run from Tuesday 26 September to Friday 10 November 2023. Over the past 12 years, the competition has inspired over a million children across the UK to write their own short stories, generating over 500 million words!

Find out all you need to know, including terms and conditions, [here](#). The competition is open to 5-11 year olds. This Live Lesson is most suitable for 7-11 year olds, but you will find resources to inspire younger children with their entries [here](#).

Section 1- Introduction:

The presenters will introduce this special Live Lesson at The Story Museum in Oxford, celebrating the launch of the 500 Words competition for 2023. They will begin by revealing our mission for this Live Lesson: to put our creative brains together and come up with an idea for a 500 Words story we would all love to read.

To help them with this mission, our hosts enlist the help of a local group of children and special guests, 500 Words judges; Charlie Higson, Frank Cottrell-Boyce and Francesca Simon.

Section 2 - Characterisation:

This section begins with a short video featuring a number of famous authors in which they tell us their own ideas for a 500 Words story. Our young storytellers then head out to explore The Story Museum for inspiration for stories of their own. Once these have been collected they create their own main character to star in our 500 Words story.

The team then carry out a fun character game, in which they interview the chosen main character to find out more about them - asking questions tailored to find out about their background, motivation and experiences. This will introduce activity 1, in which the audience has one minute to create their own questions for our main character. Pupils may also wish to use this activity sheet after the lesson to help them develop their own original character.

Download activity sheet 1 [here](#).

Section 3 - Plot:

The presenters recap their challenge - to come up with an idea for an entertaining and original 500 Words story that everyone can enjoy. We then see a short video from author and 500 Words judge Malorie Blackman who explains the key elements of creating a captivating and original plot that will keep readers hooked and invested in the narrative.

Our presenters, judges and young storytellers then develop plot ideas for our 500 Words story - thinking about what they would like to read. They discuss techniques writers employ to develop plot, such as creating obstacles, actions and resolutions.

The presenters introduce activity 2. On a worksheet designed like an obstacle course, students are guided in mapping out their own alternative plot for our 500 Words story; they are encouraged to think about the obstacle that the central character may face, the action they take to overcome this obstacle, and the resolution to the plot (in other words, how the main character overcomes the obstacle in front of them.) Children might want to continue working on this after the programme or use the activity sheet to help them develop their own original 500 Words story plot.

Download activity sheet 2 [here](#).

Section 4 - Exciting endings:

In this section we will work on the ending of our 500 Words story.

A special guest will explore the different types of endings we might use when writing a story - giving our presenters, and children watching at home and in classrooms lots of inspiration for fun and original endings.

The presenters will then link to activity 3, in which children have one minute to match up a collection of quotes with their corresponding type of ending.

Download activity sheet 3 [here](#).

Section 5 - Author Q&A:

In the final part of the programme our 500 Words Judges; Charlie Higson, Frank Cottrell-Boyce and Francesca Simon answer questions sent in by the audience.

If you're watching live you can email your questions to live.lessons@bbc.co.uk with 500 Words as the subject.

Useful links:

- 500 Words: [Characters](#)
- 500 Words: [Wonderful words and fantastic phrases](#)
- 500 Words: [Building a plot](#)
- 500 Words: [Finishing with a flourish](#)
- 500 Words: [Edit and read aloud](#)
- BBC Bitesize: [How is a story structured?](#)
- BBC Bitesize: [How to invent a new character](#)
- BBC Bitesize: [What is a setting?](#)
- BBC Bitesize: [How to plan your story](#)
- BBC Teach: [500 Words 2020](#)

Follow-up activities:

- **Sequel Stories.** Have students choose a story they've written for the competition and imagine what happens next. They can create a new book cover and write a short blurb for a sequel, continuing the adventures of their characters.
- **Literary Trivia Challenge.** Ask children to create their own book quiz with questions about a book they adore. They can challenge their classmates to test their knowledge and share interesting facts about their chosen book.
- **Character Interviews.** Organise a hot-seating activity where students embody characters from different stories. Other students can interview them, asking questions that the characters would answer based on their personalities and experiences.
- **Memorable Moments.** Invite students to select a favourite page or excerpt from a book and memorise it. They can then perform it for the class, focusing on expressive reading and bringing the words to life, much like Michael Rosen's performances.
- **Personalised Recommendations.** Have children curate a list of "good reads" based on different interests. They can tailor their book recommendations for a friend or family member and explain why each book would be a great choice.
- **Rewriting Endings.** Encourage students to rewrite the ending of a book they enjoyed. This can provide an opportunity for them to explore alternative resolutions and showcase their creativity.
- **Character Swap.** Ask students to take characters from two different stories and swap them. They can write a short scene or story that imagines how these characters would interact in each other's worlds.
- **Book Review Podcasts.** Have children create mini podcasts where they review their favourite books. They can discuss the plot, characters, and what they loved most about the story.
- **Storytelling Spin-offs.** Provide students with a classic story or fairy tale, and challenge them to write a modern or futuristic version of it. This can encourage them to think creatively and put their own unique twist on familiar tales.
- **Story Chain Writing.** Begin a story with a single sentence and have students take turns adding sentences to continue the narrative. This collaborative activity can lead to surprising and imaginative stories.
- **Literary Doodles.** After reading a story, ask students to illustrate a scene from it. Then, have them write a short paragraph describing the moment they've drawn.