

The Story Machine by Tom McLaughlin (Bloomsbury)

Elliott is a curious boy who finds a mysterious machine. He can't figure out what to do with it. Then one day he makes it work by accident and discovers that it is a story machine with letters that make words. However, Elliott finds letters hard to contend with until, the aid of his imagination and a magnifying glass, he notices a picture amongst them. This sets him off on the path to a world of his own storymaking. His enthusiasm means that the machine eventually 'malfunctions'. Initially made despondent by this, Elliott soon realises that he is the true creator of his stories not the machine. The Story Machine is never named in the text but the pictures make it clear that it is a typewriter. The font used mimics the typeface of a conventional typewriter in the days before computers allowed experimentation with these and this is also an integral part of the illustrations.

Overall aims of this teaching sequence

- To explore a high quality picture book which allows children to put themselves inside the story and empathise with characters and their issues and dilemmas.
- To engage with illustrations throughout a picture book to explore and recognise the added layers of meaning these can give to our interpretation of a text.
- To explore how to use drawing as an approach to enhance thinking for writing and developing vocabulary.
- To explore and follow the authentic process that an author/illustrator goes through when developing a picture book.
- To create a picture book based on children's own creative story ideas.

This teaching sequence is designed for a Year 3,4,5 or 6 class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is approximately 3 weeks long spread over 15 sessions. All of the Power of Pictures teaching sequences are aimed at developing an appreciation of art and picture books across age ranges. The sequence will have a strong emphasis on spending time exploring and responding to illustrations, drawing and illustrating as part of the writing process and will culminate in a bookmaking activity to exemplify the process of bookmaking and allow children to see themselves as authors. The work done in the sequence could be enhanced by having an author/illustrator work alongside children at some stage of the process.

Teaching Approaches

- Responding to illustration
- Shared writing
- Discussion and Debate
- Storymapping
- Bookmaking

Writing Outcomes

- Annotations to explore thinking around illustrations
- Annotated machine diagrams
- Villanelles
- Story maps
- Sketchbooks

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- Storyboards
- Own picture book

Links to other texts and resources.

Books about imagination:

Imaginary Fred by Eoin Colfer and Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins)

The Cloudspotter Tom McLaughlin (Bloomsbury)

Stanley's Stick by John Hegley and Neal Layton (Hodder)

The Imaginary by A F Harrold and Emily Gravett (Bloomsbury)

Books about machines, invention or Leonardo da Vinci

Alphabet Books, see <https://www.clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/booklists> for an annotated list of alphabet books particularly useful for KS2

Letter stamp sets (each child will need one letter so two will be enough)

Idea collectors for the children – we've suggested till rolls but they could be journals – they should feel different from their school literacy books though.

Range of different papers – squared, graph, lined etc

Newspapers or old novels

Texts written and/or illustrated by Tom McLaughlin:

The Cloudspotter (Bloomsbury)

The Accidental Prime Minister (Oxford University Press)

Old MacDonald Had a Zoo by Curtis Jobling (Egmont)

Catch That Rat! by Caryl Hart (Simon & Schuster)

My Alien and Me by Smitri Prasad-Halls (Oxford University Press)

Captain Buckleboots series by Mark Sperring (Barrons Educational)

The Diabolical Mr Tiddles (Simon & Schuster)

Chicken Nugget by Michelle Robinson (Puffin)

Useful web resources:

Tom McLaughlin's website: <http://tommclaughlin.co.uk/>

texter program for drawing with words: <http://tholman.com/texter/>

□ The Picturebook Makers blog gives lots of useful insights into the creative processes of a great number of author illustrators, including Power of Pictures partners, Chris Haughton, Viviane Schwarz, Alexis Deacon Benji Davies and Mini Grey: <http://blog.picturebookmakers.com/>

Teaching Sessions:

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Session 1: Responding to illustration and creating own torchlit pictures

The children's books featured on the Power of Pictures have been chosen because of the quality of the illustrations they contain and the ways in which the illustrations work with the text to create meaning for the reader. Children will need time and opportunities to enjoy and respond to the pictures and to talk together about what the illustrations contribute to their understanding of the text. Children can develop their responses to the book by drawing or painting in a similar style to the illustrations.

- Share the first page of the book with the class, looking closely at the way the image has been put together. Cover the text so that children can focus solely on the illustration.
- Allow time to look at the illustration in depth and pose questions or thoughts about the image. Draw attention to the whole illustration; what the torch light is drawing attention to, and what is hidden beneath the shadows. Look at facial expression, body position to give clues about the character and other elements that give context – e.g. the spider web and dangling spider, the pigeon hiding.
- Discuss the image - you might want to layer the discussion as suggested here or if the children are well practised at exploring illustration ask the children to annotate copies of the picture with post-it notes and then develop the discussion starting with the children's ideas.
- Starting with the picture as a whole and then zooming in on the detail you might want to consider:
 - Location: Do we know where we are? What clues have we been given? Is it a fantastical setting?
 - What impact does the single beam of light have?
 - Point of view: What point of view have we been given? What information does that give us? If this was a film what point of view would the next shot be from?
 - Focus: What are we focussed on? How is our focus pulled in a particular direction in the picture? Is it different from what the text suggests? Are there any questions you have about the space or objects in this focussed space?
- Move on to a discussion about Elliott – how do they think he's feeling? How can you tell? (consider not only his facial expressions but his placement on the page and where the light is shining) What do you think he's most interested in? What's his next move going to be?
- Explain that the children are going to create their own pictures of Elliott's next move (within the same room). They will use Tom McLaughlin's torchlight motif to achieve the focus in their image and they'll need to consider point of view - where are we going to be viewing the image from, how will we know what Elliott is feeling? Encourage the children not to leap too far ahead and just to consider the next place in the room Elliott might visit with his torch.
- Model how to draw the character of Elliot, talking through the shapes, sizes and types of lines you are using on a flipchart, or ideally, under a visualiser. Start by drawing the chalk of the torch beam; consider which angle they want to view the scene from and to pick a focus for the light. Give the children another piece of paper and, drawing alongside you, have a few goes at drawing the character until they find a version they are comfortable with. Use appropriate materials (pastels, crayons) to colour this illustration, black fine liners to add detail then cut around this illustration and work on recreating the attic scene on a black piece of sugar paper, using brown paper to collage the boxes, drawings to cut out and fill the boxes and chalk to

- show the torch beam.
- Once the children have completed their pictures they could write the next sentence in the torchlight, after practising on whiteboards or rough paper – consider starting with ellipsis and talk about using third person and maintaining tense agreement with the story.
- Display these images.

Sessions 2-4: Investigating Machines, diagrams and their purpose

In the best picture books illustration and text work closely together to create meanings. Children are naturally drawn to the illustrations in a book and are frequently far more observant than an adult reader. Children's interest in images and their ability to read them can be developed through carefully planned interventions with an emphasis on talk. Discussions of this kind can include all children and help to make a written text more accessible. Time spent focusing on illustration can contribute to children's ability to read for meaning, express their ideas and respond to the texts they encounter.

These sessions will give the children an opportunity to investigate the difference between a picture book illustration, a painting and a diagram using Leonardo da Vinci as inspiration.

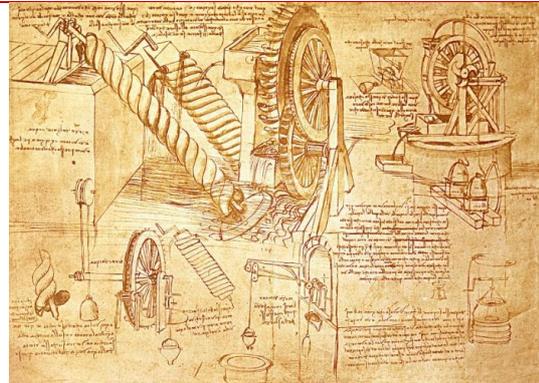
Session 2

- Share the story from the beginning to “What did it do?” If you are using the book with the children you will need to cover the second half of the spread.
- Ask the children to consider machines that they use every day and collect examples – pick a few examples. Discuss how those tasks would have been done without the machine.
- Give each table trays of very simple machines or pictures of them– using levers, pulleys, screws and wedges (e.g. scissors, toy cars)
- From here ask the children to come up with a definition of a machine – in upper KS2 you might want them to apply their science terminology about needing a reduced force to complete a task. In lower
- KS2 you might expect something more along the lines of making jobs easier.
- Explain or expand upon the idea that machines are designed to solve problems. You might want to round off this session with an amazing machines video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUJfyhZII1o> – asking the children to identify which problems are being solved with the machines. Alternatively you might want to show them a typewriter and investigate how it works.

Session 3

- Share with the children that people have been inventing machines to solve problems for a really long time. One of the greatest inventors was Leonardo da Vinci – share background video <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p011fm33>. You might want to stop after the inventions or continue through the video which goes on to discuss emotion and focus which is a recap of the work the children did in the first session.
- Look more closely at one of Leonardo's invention drawings – talk about the way it is drawn, annotated, and discuss purpose for this drawing – compare to the twelve disciples painting: what's the difference? How would Leonardo have wanted his invention pictures to be used?

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- Extend this discussion further by comparing it to the page where Elliott finds the machine. Consider the features of the painting (emotion, focus and story) and text combine in the picture book. You might even want to consider the difference between a painting and a wordless picture book, building the idea that the narrative in a picture book develops using a sequence of images and text.
- Ask the children to consider a problem in their day to day lives – it might be putting on their socks or reaching the biscuit tin or needing to be taller. Share these ideas as a class discussion.
- Explain that they are going to invent a machine to solve that problem – you might want to break down the functions of a machine needing to match the human function – for the biscuit tin example the machine will need to take hold of the tin like your hands do.
- Ask the children to sketch their ideas. Draw alongside the children, adding details to your machine and talking about how it works to solve your problem.

Session 4

- You might want to start this session with some teaching around annotation – show the children the sketch for your invention.
- Re draw the sketch showing the parts blown apart (as with the Leonardo pictures)
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- Ask the children if they were going to make your invention what would they want to know? You might get responses such as material used, how things move, how big things are etc.
- Annotate your drawing with the answers. You could show other examples at this point for example Haynes Manuals (their Amazon listings have spread images and they now do Thomas the Tank Engine and Wallace and Gromit editions), or Usborne The Way Things Work spreads:
 - <http://www.usborne.com/catalogue/book/1~SI~SIMS~3864/see-inside-how-things-work.aspx> .
- Ask the children to do the same for their drawings and collate together at the end as a book of machines for Elliott.

Session 5: Creating a Villanelle using the machine and working as an illustrator for an author's text

Shared writing is one of the most important ways a teacher can show children how writing and illustration work and what it's like to be a writer. Acting as scribe, the teacher works with a small or large group of children to create a text together, enabling them to concentrate on their ideas and composition. In this

sequence with a focus on image the villanelle offers an opportunity for developing an image through text.

- Share the story to ‘He did his best but he kept getting them all jumbled up.’
- Explore the words in the image that the machine has created, can they create patterns from those words?
- Show the children the pattern below that has come from the story machine.
- Explain that we can make sense of things in all sorts of ways and that this pattern makes a poem called a villanelle. A villanelle is a 19 line poem comprising of 4 tercets (3 line stanzas) and a closing quatrain (a four line stanza). It also includes a repeating refrain of two lines which come together at the end of the quatrain to make a closing couplet.
- Where the symbol repeats the line repeats too which means that you’ve written a lot of the poem when you’ve written the first and the third line. The rhyme scheme is also marked. The key to success with a villanelle is choosing an easy word string to end your lines with. Once they’ve got started children respond well to the structure and rules of a villanelle so once they have a refrain that works they will be able to follow the rules to complete the poem.
- Depending on the level of your writers you might want to either write the refrain together (an example is shown below) or provide them with one as a starting point. Your more experienced writers might want to work out the refrain on their own. All the writers either individually or all together should create a rhyme string of words to build a word bank and check that their refrain offers enough options. You could provide rhyming dictionaries for those children who need additional support with this activity.
- Following that, they might work collaboratively to create stanzas in groups or pairs before coming together to order and complete the final stanza all together.
- More experienced writers might be able to complete the rest of the poem on their own. A full villanelle is below for your reference
- Once the children have completed their villanelles ask them to share with a partner. The partner will draw the key images that are in the poem. Once each child has read they can work these sketches up into an illustration for the poem. You might want to encourage them to use the punctuation marks to form this illustration using the next spread of the book as inspiration or to return to the mixed media of the torchlit picture from session1.
- You might want to display a class poem or create a book of villanelles for your reading corner. There are examples of villanelles in *The Works*, chosen by Paul Cookson (Macmillan) if you would like to follow up or start with more examples

----- A Found in a box in the attic, dark as night

..... B At first lifeless,

!!!!!!!!!!!!!! A The magical story machine begins to write

"""""""""" A Jumbled, out pour the words, a fantastical landscape and a big brave knight

ffffffffffff B I can't control this machine

..... A Found in a box in the attic, dark as night

%%%%%%%%%% A I'm fascinated by its randomness fishes are chased by a kite

^^^^^^^^^^ B My head is full of pictures

!!!!!!!!!!!!!! A The magical story machine begins to write

&&&&&& A I can't believe this machine I found by torchlight

***** B As it writes I remember its beginnings, middles and endings

----- A Found in a box in the attic, dark as night

(((((A I can't understand it try as I might

))))))))) B The words coil around me, filling the room

!!!!!!!!!!!!!! A The magical story machine begins to write

+++++++ A As the pictures gather together stories come, tales of joy and plight

===== B Stories of love and laughter all,

..... A Found in a box in the attic, dark as night

!!!!!!!!!!!!!! A The magical story machine begins to write

Sessions 6 and 7: Creating pictures out of print and concrete poetry

Opportunities to draw, both before and during writing, increase children's motivation to write, and can help them to think. Drawing can help all writers to plan their writing, develop their ideas and use vivid description.

- Re-read the story to 'So Elliott began to make pictures and once he started he just couldn't stop.'
- Look back at 'Then Elliott noticed something among the letters – a picture!' Explore what this picture is with the children. What does it represent? How do they know? Why do they think Tom McLaughlin chose to make a smiley face for Elliott to find?
- Think about how the children could create other facial expressions using letters and symbols on the keyboard. You might start with something like:

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><    or    _
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      U      O
  
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and ask the children what emotion they think they represent.

- On mini whiteboards challenge the children to create as many different emojis using letters and punctuation marks as they can – collect these images into groups representing the same emotion and display.
- Look in more detail at some of the pictures that Elliott creates – what do the children notice about them? How are the letters used to form the pictures?
- Explain that each child is going to be responsible for a letter of the alphabet- there will be some replication in a class of 30.
- Give the children an opportunity to explore alphabet books and get some ideas for their letter and create a list of nouns that begin with their letter. Once they have a list they can select their favourite.
- Using their letter – either handwritten or using stamping sets challenge the children to draw the outline of their chosen noun – they might want to add details such as faces using the other letters that make up the word.
- You could extend this activity by asking the children to create concrete poems (poems written in the shape of what is being written about) or short stories for their completed objects. If you wanted to explore another different type of poetry you might want to ask the children to write Kennings giving clues about their chosen noun without stating what it is. Alternatively you could use Oliver Jeffers' *Once Upon an Alphabet* as inspiration for short stories featuring multiple instances of their letter.

- Photocopying their illustrations will provide them opportunities to practice.
- Just as in the book you might want to photocopy their work on different types of paper and ask them to choose a favourite. The children can then merge their print illustration and concrete poem in a finished piece with one on the back of the other. The finished pieces can then be hung as a display. You might want to introduce the tree that features a little further on in the book as the centre of the display at this point or string across the classroom.

Session 8: Where do ideas come from? and idea collectors

You could combine or swap this session with the next one depending on whether you want to scaffold the children's ideas for the discussion or whether you want to run the discussion first to find out what their thoughts are.

- Read the story to the end – explore the idea of who/what was the story machine?
- You might also want to share Tom McLaughlin's picture book *The Cloudspotter*.
- Explain that the children are going to investigate where ideas come from.
- In their table groups ask them to come up with suggestions writing each new suggestion on a post-it note
- Return to the carpet with post-its and group similar ideas
- Discuss themes that emerge and facilitate discussion – you might want to use the following supplementary questions:
 - Do all ideas come the same way?
 - Where do you get most of your ideas from?
- At the end of the discussion give the children a roll of paper (a till roll would be perfect and they are available inexpensively) or a journal. Explain that until the next session they are going to be idea collectors and every time they have an idea for a story, a solution to a problem, a new game to play, they are going to jot it down.
- You might want to show them the Laureate Log <http://www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/chrisriddell/laureate-log/> and explain Chris Riddell's drawing every day principle. Or show how other author/illustrators use a sketchbook to collect their ideas for characters and stories, such as:
 - Alex T Smith: <http://alexsmith.blogspot.co.uk/p/sketchbook.html> Oliver Jeffers:
<http://www.oliverjeffers.com/illustrations/sketch-book-2>
<http://www.oliverjeffers.com/illustrations/sketch-book-1>
 - Catherine Rayner: <http://www.catherinerayner.co.uk/sketchbook>
- Explain that these idea collectors will be looked at but not marked by you so they can make their notes however they like. Ideally the children will be able to take the collectors out for break/lunch time and also home overnight.
- You might want to have an idea collector of your own that you can use to model selection and idea development.

Session 8: Ideas lab

Ask children to picture or visualise their ideas is a powerful way of encouraging them to move into a fictional world. Children can be asked to picture the scene in their mind's eye or walk round it in their imaginations. Finally they can bring it to life recreating it in drawing or painting.

- Explain that the classroom has been set up as an ideas lab. The children are going to test what gives them the best ideas.
- You can set up as many zones as you like – here are a few suggestions:
 - Visual zone – pictures, magazine cut outs, famous art works, some examples of the children’s artwork
 - Audio zone – range of music to listen to on headphones
 - Touch zone – lots of different textures
 - Smell zone – smell pots
 - Memory zone – prompts for memories – earliest, happiest, saddest, most proud etc
 - Taste zone – paper plates with prompts for tastes – favourite meal, most memorable meal, nastiest thing you’ve ever eaten
 - Construction zone – objects (Lego etc) to build things with
- As the children visit each zone ask them to collect ideas they have for stories/characters/settings etc and note in their idea collectors as sketches (some children will want to annotate these).
- Once they have finished feedback on where they had the most ideas and their favourite. You could make a chart/record of these
- You might want to share examples of authors/artists/musicians and how they collect their ideas. The Picturebook Makers blog gives lots of useful insights into the creative processes of a great number of author/illustrators, including Power of Pictures partners, Chris Haughton, Viviane Schwarz, Alexis Deacon, Benji Davies and Mini Grey: <http://blog.picturebookmakers.com/>
- Ask the children to continue with their idea collectors for another day – some ideas come more quickly than others.
- As an additional home learning task you might want to ask the children to write themselves a letter of advice for when they have writer’s block and can’t think of ideas.

Sessions 8-9: Idea choice and Book sculpture

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- Ask the children to spend some time reviewing their ideas and circling their favourites.
- Explain they are going to be choosing a character for their own picture books.
- Once they have chosen, give them some time to sketch out different versions of their character until they’re happy – you might want to show them examples of other illustrators doing this – Judith Kerr has sketches published on the Seven Stories website:
 - <http://www.sevenstories.org.uk/collection/collection-highlights/judith-kerr>.
- Explain they are going to make a book sculpture of their character. Show them this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ln1ff5-u1uE>. The children will use pipe cleaners rather than wrapping wire with cotton wool to create their shapes.

- Once they are happy with their character give them pipe cleaners to create an off the page line sketch with. This will enable them to see their characters in the round and get them to think of posture etc.
- Once these pipe cleaner sketches are complete provide the children with strips of newspaper or books that you no longer use to wrap their character with.
- Once complete the sculptures can have an accompanying pen portrait or piece of dialogue to give more insight. Ask the children to consider what are the most important things we need to know. You could use Tom McLaughlin as inspiration for this; he says he always imagines his character completing one action as his starting point. For Elliott it was him playing the Story Machine as a piano, for Franklin in *The Cloudspotter* it was Franklin on his back staring at the clouds. Ask the children to consider their character's defining action and to write a brief description.
- Depending on how you want to display them these pieces of writing can either be written on labels – as exhibits the story machine has created or as leaves for the tree display, on different types of paper to create a class 3D large scale idea collector.

Session 10 – Story Sequencing using Story Mapping

Making a story map is a way of retelling the story. It is a graphic means of breaking the story down into episodes and sequencing events. This kind of graphic representation helps children to hold on to the shape of the story more confidently so that they can retell it orally prior to writing. Children can also make story maps as a form of planning, to prepare for their own writing.

Explain that the children are going to be creating their own picture books using their characters. They have got a starting point with their character and their defining action.

- Show the children the last page of the book where Elliott has mapped out his story. Explain that this is what they are going to do. You might want to give the children an opportunity to orally retell Elliott's story using these pictures to support them.
- Starting with their defining action they are going to sketch out the possible events in their story.
- Initially this won't be about order and the children can choose to sketch, sketch and annotate or, as Tom McLaughlin does, describe the picture and note the text. Encourage the children to be prolific in this first phase.
- Towards the end of the session encourage the class to pick the event they want at the beginning, middle and end of their story and if their defining action is not one of these where this will happen. If they have changed settings ask them to review and pick setting selection that makes sense – most picture books have no more than two settings.
- Again it might be helpful for you to have been working alongside the children and to model this selection process. You could go on to create a pile which are good ideas but that there won't be room for in your story and a pile of ideas that didn't quite work.
- Collate the chosen images ready to use as the basis for the next stage. You might want to spend time discussing the choices with each child in writing conferences or before they start the next session. Explain that this is what publishers do with authors, even famous ones, to ensure that their stories make sense.

Session 11 – Preparing for bookmaking

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Publishing their work for an audience helps children to write more purposefully. Bookmaking provides a motivating context within which children can bring together their developing understanding of what written language is like; making written language meaningful as they construct their own texts. The decisions that all writers have to take and the processes of redrafting, editing and punctuation can be demonstrated and discussed as teachers and children write together in shared writing.

The rest of the sessions are devoted to the children creating their own picture books. How much time this takes will depend on your children and also on how much time is given to final drafts.

- Re-read the story.
- Provide the children with a spread from the book, ask them to annotate using post-its and then present on the questions from Session 1 but also to think about the text:
- What is the position of the text in relation to the picture?
- Does the text give you more information? Does it leave anything out?
- What type of sentences are they? Statements/commands/exclamations?
- Move through the book with each group presenting.
- You might also want to spend some time looking at the spreads with the three key emotion changes in the story – the finding of the machine, it breaking and Elliott’s realisation that he is the machine.
- Reflect on the emotions that were drawn before – how are the emotions portrayed – on Elliott’s face, in the rest of the picture (use of colour, positioning of character and other objects, light and shadow etc) and text content.
- Ask the children to draw emojis of 3 emotions that will feature in their story and to place them in the order they appear amongst their previous sketches.
- Share a book drafting process with the children you might want to show them this short film with Oliver Jeffers explaining his process <https://vimeo.com/57472271>. If your children particularly enjoyed the machine activities you might also want to share book production with them from printing presses to distribution – this film explains the process for the Twilight series (the content of the book is not discussed just its manufacture)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRKsW-oVcHg>

Sessions 12 and 13: Building own picture narratives

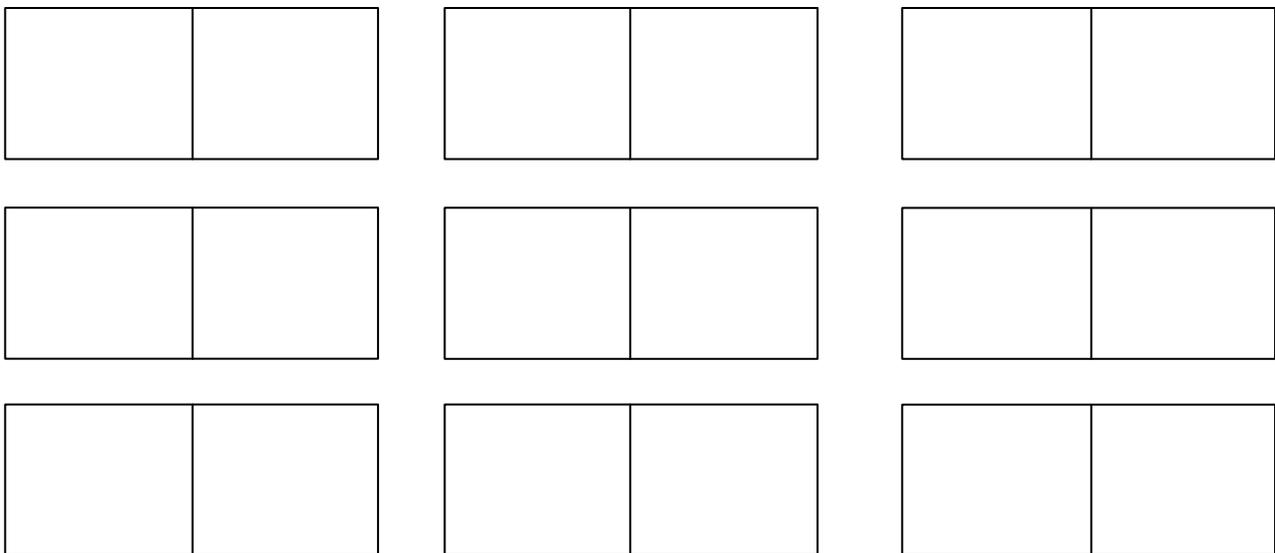
A storyboard is another way of helping to map out key scenes in a picture book through drawing and annotation. Used by author/illustrators as part of their planning process, it is particularly useful for marking out the key spreads in a story within a given number of pages, usually 32 pages or 16 spreads. Less experienced writers might want to work with fewer spreads to help begin to structure their story.

Shared writing is one of the most important ways a teacher can show children how writing and illustration work and what it’s like to be a writer. Acting as scribe, the teacher works with a small or large group of children to create a text together, enabling them to concentrate on their ideas and composition. In working with picture books, it is important to focus on how the text and illustration work together on the page to both complement and extend the focus for the reader. Teacher and children work as active partners, talking together to share ideas, while the teacher guides the children through all the decisions that writers and illustrators need to make and help them to shape their thoughts on paper. Shared writing gives children a model for their own independent writing and can introduce them to unfamiliar genres or styles of writing.

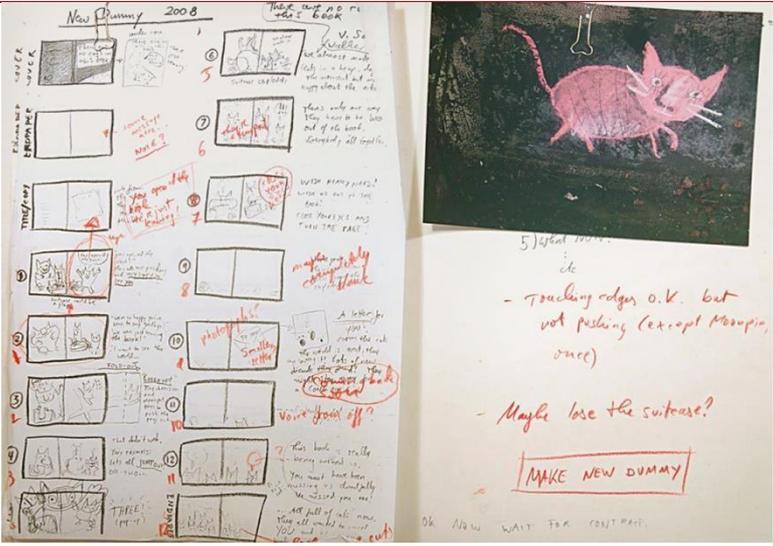
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- Lots of author/illustrators will work using a storyboard on a single sheet of paper, representing the whole book in small thumbnail sized squares. Within the squares, they can plan the basic design of each page, plan how the story unfolds over the pages, see how the words and illustrations work together, and consider how the illustrations work together.
- Go back to the original book and look at the way the images are used across the book. Some are double page spreads, with an image working across both pages and some are single page images. Encourage the children to think about which events might work in this way in their stories.
- Have a storyboard with a maximum of sixteen spreads (this is the usual number for a published picture book) marked out on a flipchart or IWB for you to model marking out a story, like this:



- Show the children how to work with the spread diagram to develop one of the stories in your own sketchbook. Look at how to mark out the rough illustrations swiftly like in this example by Viviane Schwarz, which can be found at:
<http://blog.picturebookmakers.com/post/116986873251/vivianeschwarz>



- Model and demonstrate carefully how to transform your story ideas onto the spreads, talking through each step of the thinking involved – what the pictures will look like on the page, what words will accompany the pictures and where the best place for the words will be. Also consider where you will place your defining moment for your character and what will shift the emotions in the story.
- More able storytellers might also consider where their page turns are – we have to turn a page in *The Story Machine* to find out what Elliott finds and what the machine does but we are left feeling that there might not be any hope with Elliott feeling blue.
- For more verbose writers the economy of the text in a picture book can be challenging. Spend some time modelling the thinking about what will be said in the image and what will be said in the picture – will they give the same message? (one emphasising the other), will they be a literal representation of each other? (this is unusual in a published picture book), will they show the same thing but from a different point of view? For an explicit example of this you might want to show the children *Come Away from the Water, Shirley* by John Burningham.

Session 14: Responding to writing

It is important that you build up a community of writers who see writing as an ongoing process and to strengthen children's awareness of the importance of response to writing as a reader and to developing a reflective metalanguage with children to talk about themselves as writers, enable them to voice their views, listen to others and develop new knowledge and understanding.

- Use your own writing or negotiate with a child to share their writing, under a visualiser if you have one, to model a process for responding to writing. Look at what we were aiming to do – create our own picture book story. Read the storyboard plan aloud and have the children respond to what has been read. You might use key questions to target their thinking, such as: What were you thinking, feeling or seeing as you heard the story? What was it that the writer did that made you think/feel/see this?
- Consider revisions that could be made and why. You may ask questions like: What might develop the story? Are there any other words, phrases or types of sentence you can use or anything you could add to the illustrations that would help the person reading or make them more engaged? What emotions have been put in? What do you think is the defining moment for their character?
- Give children time to look at and review their draft ideas. Share these with a response partner to evaluate the effectiveness of their writing for another reader. Allow time to make changes or enhancements. By looking back at Vivianne Schwarz's process work, children can see how she makes changes and additions with a different colour over her storyboard.
- Finally you might want the children to consider the use of background colour as a way of supporting emotional content. You might want to show them Robert Plutchik's colour wheel which many Marvel comics use consciously in their character and story development. Look once more at the moments in the story that reflect emotional change and explore whether the background colour adds to this mood.

on the front. Explore the features of the sentence – summary of content and expression of opinion. Again consider economy of language and the purpose here which is to sell more copies of the book. Allow the readers time to consider the book they are given before writing their reviews on a post-it. You could either ask 3 or 4 children to read each book to create a bank of ideas or alternatively if a child feels that the sentence they receive back doesn't sell their book they can request another review. Once each child has a review they are happy with they can place it on their front cover.

- Display the finished books in the class book corner or in a prominent area in the school to celebrate the children as authors and for others to enjoy.

Other ideas to use across the curriculum:

Science

- Lower KS2 could explore light and shadow in relation to finding the box in the attic and in their own pictures.
 - recognise that they need light in order to see things and that dark is the absence of light
 - notice that light is reflected from surfaces
 - recognise that shadows are formed when the light from a light source is blocked by an opaque object
 - find patterns in the way that the size of shadows change
- Upper KS2 could further explore machines. ○ recognise that some mechanisms, including levers, pulleys and gears, allow a smaller force to have a greater effect

History

- Challenge the class to create a timeline of how words and ideas have been communicated from prehistory to the present day – you might start with cave paintings and move through the printing press to personal computers and mobile phones. Once the children are considering these tools ask them to think about the different types of writing and image that are communicated using them – instagram, text, twitter, emoji etc

Design and Technology

- The design and creation of new machines
- The design and creation of the origami books

Art

- The sequence as a whole supports the curriculum objectives:
to create sketch books to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials [for example, pencil, charcoal, paint, clay] about great artists, architects and designers in history.