Year 4 Narrative - Unit 1

Stories with historical settings
(3 weeks)

This is the first of a block of four narrative units in Year 4. It builds on children's experience and knowledge from Year 3 and introduces new areas of learning that will be developed during the year. The unit has three parts with oral or written outcomes and assessment opportunities at regular intervals. It can be linked with other curriculum subjects or themes.

Phase 1

Read several short stories set in the past and a longer story with a historical setting as a serial to run throughout the unit. Identify the details in the text that describe characters and setting. Select a character. Children discuss their own response to the character and way that an author achieves this. Write a character sketch using evidence from the text. Watch a short extract of a TV drama set in the past. Discuss how differences in time and place are represented.

Phase 2

Map the stages in stories read and discuss the passing of time. Relate this to the organisation of paragraphs and key phrases. Identify events that are skimmed and those told in more depth. Explore the use of powerful verbs.

Phase 3

Present an historical setting familiar to the children, for example linked with a period studied in history. Support children as they plan and tell a story. Children write their own short stories set in the past, using their oral stories to structure the written versions. Demonstrate and support as they add descriptive detail to make the setting more vivid for the reader.

Overview

- Read several short stories set in the past. Begin reading a longer story with historical setting as a serial to run throughout unit. Identify the details in the text that describe characters and setting and discuss the similarities to and differences from children's own experience.
• Select a character. Discuss own response to the character and way that author achieves this. Write a character sketch using evidence from the text.
• Watch a short extract of a TV drama set in the past. Discuss how differences in time and place are represented.
• Map the stages in stories read and discuss the passing of time. Relate to organisation of paragraphs and key phrases, for example 'The next moment...', 'Minutes ticked by...', 'Some weeks later...'. Identify events that are skinned and those told in more depth.
• Present a historical setting familiar to the children (e.g. linked with period studied in history). Support children as they plan and tell a story, for example first person account of a child caught up in a historical event.
• Children write own short stories set in the past, using their oral stories to structure the written versions. Demonstrate and support as they add descriptive detail to make the setting more vivid for the reader.

**1998 Framework objectives covered:**

Year 4, Term 1: T1 building character and setting from details; T2 identify main characteristics and predict actions; T3 mapping chronology; T10 plan a story; T11 write character sketches; T15 use paragraphs to organise and sequence narrative.
Year 4 Narrative - Unit 1 - Objectives

Most children learn to:

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

2. Listening and responding
   • Compare the different contributions of music, words and images in short extracts from TV programmes.

7. Understanding and interpreting texts
   • Deduce characters' reasons for behaviour from their actions and explain how ideas are developed in non-fiction texts.

8. Engaging with and responding to texts
   • Interrogate texts to deepen and clarify understanding and response.

9. Creating and shaping texts
   • Develop and refine ideas in writing using planning and problem-solving strategies.
   • Use settings and characterisation to engage reader's interest.

10. Text structure and organisation
    • Organise texts into paragraphs to distinguish between different information, events or processes.

See the Core Skills Page for objectives 6 and 11
Year 4 - Core skills

To ensure effective planning of literacy skills, teachers need to ensure they plan for the ongoing elements of literacy learning within each unit and across the year, using assessment for learning to ensure children make effective progress, ensuring they reach national expectations.

These are the relevant strand objectives to ensure effective planning for core skills.

Word structure and spelling - Year 4

- Use knowledge of phonics, morphology and etymology to spell new and unfamiliar words
- Distinguish the spelling and meaning of common homophones
- Know and apply common spelling rules
- Develop a range of personal strategies for learning new and irregular words

Sentence structure and punctuation - Year 4

- Clarify meaning and point of view by using varied sentence structure (phrases, clauses and adverbials)
- Use commas to mark clauses, and use the apostrophe for possession
Year 4 Narrative - Unit 1 - Key aspects of learning

For further information, see the booklet Progression in key aspects of learning (Ref: 0524-2004) from Learning and teaching in the primary years http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/learning_and_teaching/1041163/

Creative thinking

Children will be encouraged to use their historical knowledge and their imaginations to create a setting and a new story set in the past.

Empathy

Exploring historical settings and events through narrative will help children to develop a sense of empathy with historical characters and an understanding of their way of life.

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.
Year 4 Narrative - Unit 1 - Building on previous learning

Check that children can already:

• Recognise typical characters, settings and events in adventure stories.
• Write an adventure story that has: a problem and resolution; paragraphs and/or chapters with connectives to signal time, sequence or place; descriptions of typical setting and characters; written dialogue that moves the plot on.
• Tell a story for an audience with events in sequence, change voice for different characters and include story language.

Year 4 Narrative - Unit 1 - Building assessment into teaching

For further information, see the booklet Assessment for learning, (Ref: 0521-2004), from Learning and teaching in the primary years http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/learning_and_teaching/1041163/.

Phase 1

Identify how historical settings are represented in stories and find evidence about a particular historical period (teacher observation, questions).

Phase 2

Recognise the stages in a story and the way that events are linked; identify powerful verbs in a text and talk about their function (teacher observation, questions).

Phase 3

Plan, tell and write stories set in the past. Include detail to evoke the historical setting; sequence events clearly and show how one event leads to another (self-assessment, marking and feedback using agreed criteria).
Year 4 Narrative - Unit 1 - Suggested teaching approaches

Phase 1: Reading and response (6 days)

Teaching content:

- Read several short stories set in the past. Select some examples of stories set in historical periods that children have learned about or are currently studying.
- Begin reading a longer story with a historical setting as a serial to run throughout the unit.
- Gather information about features of stories with historical settings, for example a distinctive setting, often an adventure but which can be another type of story; fictional characters, based on historical details, who sometimes encounter real people from history.
- Comment on what is familiar and unfamiliar to children and encourage them to raise questions about details they do not understand.
- Identify the vivid descriptive details that help to evoke another time and place and pick out expressive words or phrases.
- Encourage children to express their personal responses to stories to help them develop their personal reading preferences.
- Start reading a story without showing children the cover or illustrations. Ask questions to prompt discussion, for example, At what point did you know that this story takes place in the past? How do you know when it is set? What do you already know about this period?
- Select a character from one of the stories. Discuss children's response to the character and what the author does to make the reader feel either sympathy or dislike for a particular character. Discuss what characters say and what they do and consider whether they are trying to hide anything. Check whether their actions demonstrate the same thing as their words. Children write a character sketch using evidence from the text and from their own deductions about a character's feelings and motives.
- Watch a short extract from a TV drama set in the past. Look at all the different indications that the story takes place in a particular period of history. Discuss features that paper-based stories do not have, for example costumes, music and scenery.
Learning outcomes:

- Children can read stories with a historical setting and find evidence about the period when the story is set.
- Children write character sketches using evidence deduced from the text.

Phase 2: Analysis (3 days)

Teaching content:

- Explore narrative structure by reviewing the stories you have already read and mapping the stages in each one. Identify introduction, build-up, climax or conflict, resolution and map these on a hill shape or flow chart.

- Look at the way that the passing of time is represented and relate this to the organisation of paragraphs and key phrases, for example The next moment ... Minutes ticked by ... Some weeks later ... Identify events that are skimmed and those told in more depth (see also Grammar for writing, Ref: 0107/2000, Year 4 unit 25 http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/literacy/63317/).

- Explore the use of powerful verbs in a text. Look at examples in extracts and think about what they tell you about, for example, how a character is feeling. Invent a character and ask children to act out a brief scenario where the character expresses particular feelings, for example anger, happiness, fear. Demonstrate how to write an account and ask children to select verbs that show how the character feels (see also Grammar for writing, Year 4 unit 22 http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/literacy/63317/).

Learning outcomes:

- Children can recognise the stages in a story and the way that events are linked.
- Children can identify powerful verbs in a text and can talk about their function.
Phase 3: Speaking and listening; writing (6 days)

Teaching content:

- Use a historical setting as a starting point for creating a new story. Consider starting with a visit to a historical building or site and taking photographs, or looking closely at a painting or photograph from the period of history that you are studying with the class.
- Ask children to imagine the scene, using all their senses and noting descriptive words and phrases. Ask them to think about the people who live or work in the setting and imagine a main character: select a name; decide what kind of person the character is, what they look like, how they speak, what they do and how they get on with the other characters. Make notes of the ideas that children suggest.
- Plan ideas for events that could take place in the setting and draw on children's previous experience of adventure stories, for example finding something that was lost, rescuing someone or travelling to a new place. Build in further historical detail about names and important or exciting events that could be part of the story.
- Demonstrate how to bring these ideas together as a story plan, making notes in boxes under the headings Introduction, Build-up, Climax or conflict, Resolution.
- Children work in pairs to tell their own version of the story using the story plan. Remind them to make links between each event, to include historical detail and to tell their stories effectively, for example using gestures or repetition.
- Demonstrate how to open the story in an interesting way, for example starting with dialogue or a surprising event. Refer to examples of vivid description and connecting words and phrases collected from reading. Remind children about choosing powerful verbs.
- Children continue writing their own version of the story based on the plan, using their oral stories to structure the written versions. They divide the story into paragraphs and use connectives to show changes in time or place and the sequence of events. Demonstrate and support as they add descriptive detail to make the setting more vivid for the reader.
• Children read their finished stories to a partner and give one another feedback on the links between events and on details to create the historical setting and characters.

**Learning outcomes:**

• Children can plan a story with a clear structure including a build-up, climax or conflict, and resolution.
• Children can use connectives to show changes in time or place and the sequence of events.
• Children can write a complete narrative with their ideas organised into paragraphs.
Year 4 Narrative - Unit 1 - Resources

The following resources are to support the learning and teaching of Literacy

- Short extract from a TV drama set in the past
- *Grammar for writing*, Ref: 0107/2000, Year 4 units 22 and 25

Click here for information on different file formats and their usage.

Aspects of narrative: adventures, mysteries, historical tales, sci-fi, fantasy and stories with issues

PDF 222KB

Writing flier 1 - Improving writing and 2 - Writing narrative, (Ref: 0532/2001)

PDF 63.2KB Word 193KB

Quality texts: The butterfly lion

PDF 71.4KB
OBJECTIVES
S3 identify the use of powerful verbs, eg hobbled instead of went, eg through cloze procedure;

Principles and explanation
A ‘powerful’ verb is one which conveys not just the bald or basic action but elements of character, atmosphere and mood. We tend to think of adjectives and adverbs as the ‘describing words’ in texts, but verbs are often vividly descriptive words. When trying to improve a dull text, substituting powerful verbs for weak ones can be more effective than lacing it with adjectives and adverbs.

Sentence level activities
Cloze (page 157)
Choose a shared text with many powerful verbs, eg The Village of Round and Square Houses by Ann Gripalconi (Macmillan), The Sand Horse by Ann Turnbull and Michael Foreman (Red Fox), and cover them with Post-it® or masking tape on which you substitute dull verbs. Discuss what the powerful verbs add in terms of character, atmosphere, mood.

Improve (page 161)
Gravella looked out of the window. She had never heard such a racket. From the parson’s meadow the bull made a sound, while the piglet made a sound as if a thousand hot skewers had been put into her side. Without stopping to see any more, Gravella put on her clothes and went downstairs. By the back door she went by Arthy doing his knives, sparks going as the grinding wheel spun. Jem’s duster went as she did the pans till they looked good. But Gravella went past. She could get the high pitched shriek of an over excited pig.

“Just fancy,” muttered Jem. “That was our Gravella, and not a good morning went on her lips.” Arthy did his head. And the two of them went on, grim-faced, while the pots and pans looked good in the sunlight and the sound of squealing piglet was in the morning’s peace.

Changing verbs
Provide a series of sentences with weak verbs, eg The king went across the room. Discuss what the verb can tell you about the king’s character and mood. Decide on a character/mood and ask one pupil to role-play how the king ‘went’. Ask for suitable powerful verbs to convey his going, eg stormed, clattered. Suggested sentences: She got into the car. Billy ran down the road. He looked out of the window.

Collect
● Collect powerful alternatives for common verbs, eg eat, look, say, and discuss when and why you might use the alternatives.
● Spot powerful verbs in stories and poems and discuss why the author chose them. Can you think of any alternatives?

Ensure children apply this sentence level learning in their writing.
Shared writing

**Related text level objectives:** Y4 Term 1 T1, T11, T12, T14

Choose a character, give her or him a name and decide what sort of person she or he is. Decide with the class how the character is feeling and what has just happened that led to this. Decide a brief scenario involving the character, and ask pupils to act it out, given that the character is feeling angry, sad, happy, etc. Write an account, using verbs to show the reader how the character feels. For instance, if she is angry she might ‘storm’ through a room, whereas if she is miserable she might ‘slouch’.

Marcie charged into the room ... That’s exactly how she came in, isn’t it? ‘Charged’ is the right word to use because we want to show the reader that she is feeling angry. Now, how did she look at Mr Patel? and she glowered at Mr Patel. I don’t need that she, do I? It’d sound better without it. Marcie charged into the room and glowered ... Yes. Right, what was Mr Patel doing? I’ve said his name so I can just say ‘He’: He was staring out of the window, but he heard her and turned round. Turned is a bit dull. Show us how you did it again, Bruce. Spun round – good!
Y4 Term 1 T15

OBJECTIVES

T15 to use paragraphs in story writing to organise and sequence the narrative;

Related text level objectives:

- Y4 Term 1 T4 to explore narrative order: identify and map out the main stages of the story: introductions ➞ build ups ➞ climaxes or conflicts ➞ resolutions;
- Y4 Term 1 T10 to plan a story identifying the stages of its telling;
- Y4 Term 3 T3 to understand how paragraphs or chapters are used to collect, order and build up ideas;

Principles and explanation

- Refer to Teaching Unit 8.
- Year 4 pupils need to begin to understand how to organise more extended chronological narratives into several basic paragraph units which relate to story structure. They also need to be increasingly aware of, and be able to use, appropriate ways of introducing and/or connecting paragraphs in chronological narratives.

Shared writing

- Collect and classify (page 156)
  Using a variety of texts which provide chronological narratives written in paragraphs, identify the paragraph connectives which relate to time or narrative sequence. These may be words or phrases, and some may be more obvious than others, eg The next day ..., Later ..., No sooner had he ... than ..., Meanwhile ....
  Sort and classify them. Discuss their use. Ask why they are there, whether all paragraphs include them and whether they are always right at the beginning.
  Map some narratives against a time line, then ‘box’ them using these temporal connectives as labels for the boxes: In the beginning, Many weeks later, Straight after that, etc.
  Reconstruct the stories using the temporal connectives as ‘paragraph prompts’.
- Select a text with a strong, interesting story structure. It can be advantageous to choose something in picture book format which isn’t, as it stands, written out as a straight paragraphed narrative text. The example used here is Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak (Collins Picture Lions). Amongst many others, Gorilla by Anthony Browne (Walker) also works well at all the same levels.
  Through interactivity and discussion, ‘box’ the story in order to identify the main stages of the narrative, eg:

Max was naughty and was sent to his room.

A forest grew in his room.

An ocean appeared and he sailed across it.

He reached the island, tamed the wild things, and became king.

He got homesick and returned to his room.
Possibly, expand these boxes with notes about the principal ‘events’ within each.
Try mapping the boxes onto a timeline, exploring how long each took (or perhaps how long its seemed to Max that each took).
Discuss and add temporal connectives (or paragraph prompts) to each box, which can introduce each paragraph, eg:

One night …
(Max was naughty and was sent to his room.)

Later that night …
(a forest grew in his room.)

Quite suddenly …
(an ocean appeared and he sailed across it.)

After sailing for days, weeks, months and years …
(he reached an island, tamed the wild things, and became king.)

A lifetime later, or so it seemed to Max …
(he got homesick and returned to his room.)

● Using the **one box per paragraph** principle, base a piece of whole class composition on this. The outcome can be a ‘straight’ retelling of the narrative in different words, an elaboration, or one which provokes more originality by altering, say, the characters or setting. Whichever of these, it is however essential to retain the box/paragraph structure derived from the original.

● After appropriate interactive discussion and engagement with the original text, the level of such activity can be further significantly developed by using the ‘boxes’ to move from the superficial narrative to a more sub-textual level. You can then use this as a more generic frame for writing, facilitating movement into more original content, eg:

  The protagonist is frustrated and angered by the restrictions of his home life.

  He fantasises an ‘escape’ into another world.

  He works through his anger and frustration in this fantasy world.

  He is then ready to return to reality, and welcome its positive benefits.

Working in this way, the boxing of story segments provides the basis for a plan and the ‘paragraph prompts’, eg **Later that night …** can constitute a frame for subsequent individual writing or supported composition.

Have we got a clear idea of what’s going into the next paragraph? How can we start it off then? How does it link to the last one? Does it follow on immediately or is there a time gap? How long? How can we communicate that to the reader? Is there a more interesting way? Think about some of the phrases we found yesterday when we were looking at ________.
Relevant objectives

Some terms’ narrative writing is focused upon different genres, e.g.

Y1 T3 - stories about fantasy worlds.
Y3 T3 - adventure and mystery stories.
Y4 T1 - historical stories.
Y4 T2 - stories about imagined worlds: sci-fi, fantasy adventures.
Y4 T3 - stories that raise issues.
Y6 T2 - stories selected from more than one genre, e.g. mystery, humour, sci-fi, historical, fantasy worlds.

Writing explanations and principles

There are many different types of story, often with overlaps between them. Sometimes it can be hard - and possibly false - to try to categorise a tale. However, it is commonly accepted that children’s stories fall into a number of different categories or genres. Each story type tends to have typical features - stock characters, settings, events and structures. Even the sentences and vocabulary may give them away.

For instance, the following openings to a story are all from different genres. Read them and see if you can guess:

- the name of the story - they are all rewritings of a well-known tale;
- the type of story.

1. Dark clouds scudded across the moon as a small girl hurried anxiously along the path. Her footsteps seemed to echo in the shadows. Suddenly she stopped… listened…

2. Rosie tossed her auburn hair restlessly and gazed out of the window. Why hadn’t Roger returned her call? Maybe Jackie was right to warn her that he was a bit of a wolf…

3. Monday: Granny started going dead weird on me. She’s got this terible moustache. So embarrassing! What on earth will everyone say if she calls round? And she keeps wanting me to snuggle up close to her….

4. “Oh, come on you lot, don’t be so jolly boring! I vote that we take a short cut through the woods,” urged Julian. “Timmy would love a good run….”

5. Once, not twice, but once upon a time, in the land where East meets West, and North meets South, which is nowhere, everywhere and here, there lived a foxy gentleman…
6. *Werewolves are only found in kids’ tales.* Ruth reminded herself of this fact, not for the first time, as she made her way down the dark alleyway. But she could still hear the soft patter of feet behind her, and in her mind last night’s dream lingered….

Answers:
The story is, of course, *Little Red Riding Hood.*

1. Mystery: emphasis on setting, threatening surroundings, lonely atmosphere, vulnerable character, suspense, cliff-hangers, etc.
2. Romance: glamorous heroine, overuse of adverbs, physical details, yearning mood, hopeless passion, attractive villain.
3. Diary story: colloquial style, incomplete sentences, personal feelings and comments.
5. Folk retelling: storytelling opening, old-fashioned setting and characters.
6. Horror: dramatic opening introducing evil character, use of darkness and nightmare, dramatic setting, pulling reader straight into action, rapid build up of suspense.

Themes

Different types of narrative may have their own concerns and themes. Typically most stories that children will write are built around a simple problem/resolution - sorting out things that go wrong.

**Adventure**

Typically, adventures are fast paced, action stories in which the main characters are involved in a series of events that may be unusual and exciting. For instance, they may be sent on a journey to find something or take something from A to B. They find, they explore, and they resolve problems. The main themes are concerned with ‘good over evil’. Adventures are the precursors of James Bond.

**Mystery**

Mysteries are a form of adventure, built around a problem that needs solving, with one element hidden until the end of the story. In this sense there is an element of guesswork, though clues may be given in the text. Often, who is bad - or who carried out the deed - is hidden, creating the ‘mystery’. Again the theme is usually the simplistic righting of wrongs, good over evil.

**Historical**

Historical tales may carry any theme. The setting is what marks these tales out as distinctive.

**Sci-fi**

Sci-fi may also carry any theme, as it is the setting that makes them distinctive - often placed in the future, somewhere else in the galaxy. Like adventures, these are usually about good versus evil though other themes may creep in, such as the future results of greed or pollution. Brian W. Aldiss commented that sci-fi is ‘not about reality, it’s about sharpening our understanding of reality’.
**Fantasy**

Fantasy also operates in imagined worlds, or is based in the movement between this world and an invented world. A key feature of the fantasy genre is the use of a ‘doorway’ or ‘portal’ that connects the ‘real’ world with the fantasy one: for example, the rabbit hole in *Alice in Wonderland*, the wardrobe in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and the garden door in *Tom’s Midnight Garden* (an excellent example of a ‘time-slip’ fantasy). Many different themes may be explored. Often there is a wish-fulfilment motif, possibly focusing upon something significant that has been lost and needs reinstating. In fantasy, dragons may fly, witches exist or trolls live under bridges, and so the roots of fantasy and its themes lie back in traditional tales. The possibility of using magic allows the writer to right wrongs without the messy business of reality creeping in!

**Stories with issues**

While some readers enjoy escaping into other worlds, or fast moving adventures, many children find stories that deal with real issues engaging. This is amply demonstrated by the massive popularity of authors such as Jacqueline Wilson or Anne Fine. Their stories may deal with difficult themes that children may have to face within their own lives, or the lives of those that they know. The stories offer a way to meet experiences in safety, or a way of deepening understanding of people and their motives. Issues dealt with might touch on - bullying, divorce, violence, neglect, moving home, being an outsider, being dyslexic, being homeless, refugees, injustice, etc.

Though some adults may believe that such stories are unsuitable, they are popular. They are often very moral and provide a way for children to develop a strong sense of right and wrong, making the reader sensitive to the plight of others less fortunate. In this, they are important for moral, social and emotional development.

**Structure and organisation**

Different genres, and different stories that fall within different genres, will have a range of different structures and patterns.

**Adventure**

The story may begin with the status quo being calm. Quickly, the main characters become drawn into a series of exciting events. A common pattern is based around sorting out a wrong, looking for something, chasing something or resolving a problem. Many adventures are built around ‘defeating the monster’.

**Mystery**

Mystery stories involve a secret element, that is only explained at the end. In this sense mysteries are often like a riddle or puzzle. Detective stories are usually a mystery, with a dramatic event at the start and the mystery built around discovering ‘whodunnit’. The writer drops sufficient clues - and red herrings - to keep the reader guessing.

**Historical**

May take the form of any sort of tale.

**Sci-fi and fantasy**

Often built around a simple journey or quest pattern, e.g. the main character, plus a small band of friends, have to travel a vast distance to rescue someone. Usually, there is an enemy to defeat and the tale is ‘goodies versus baddies’. ‘Point of entry’ and ‘time-slip’ fantasy tales usually begin in the known world and then transport one or more characters into an alternative reality. You could introduce this idea by reminding children of picture book examples of this genre - *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak is a classic example.
Stories with issues
These stories involve main characters who are grappling with some sort of realistic issue that directly affects either them or someone they are close to. In this sense they are problem/resolution tales. Sometimes, there is an element of wish fulfilment, based on the pattern of traditional wishing stories. Sometimes they are built around a ‘warning’ that comes true, showing the results of immoral or inconsiderate behaviour. Main characters usually win through despite the odds.

Setting

Adventure
These can take place anywhere and often involve constant changes in setting. They may involve journeys across moorland, mountains, oceans, on trains, in planes, etc.

Mystery
Often these are localised with the main characters attempting to solve the mystery within one setting.

Historical
Stories with historical settings are difficult to write unless the writer is very familiar with the time period. This means that a strong link needs to be made through historical study. A visit to a specific place where a story might be set would be useful as children could take notes of specific details. They could use the digital camera to record the place for future reference. Many writers take photos, use guide books, visit places and note details to use in their stories. Another tactic would be to become familiar with a setting through reading novels set in that time. Joan Aiken’s books such as Wolves of Willoughby Chase are actually set in an invented time. However, they would be ideal to read and then to borrow the setting, running another adventure within her imagined, historical world. In this sense, children could borrow and inhabit other writers’ created worlds.

Sci-fi
Science fiction is set in outer space or other worlds. These may well be based around aspects of our world, with some invention or exaggeration. When writing science fiction it is easier to use what is already known and make some minor adaptations rather than trying to create something totally new. The key element to sci-fi is to include detail of scientific progress - through space travel, the ability to live under water or in space, robotic devices, amazing computers and technology capable of actions that we can hardly imagine. Children enjoy inventing and drawing new inventions to include in their narrative.

Fantasy
Creating new worlds is a fascinating challenge. Like science fiction, this is possibly best created by taking what is well known and adding a few exaggerations and inventions. Drawing makes a useful way into creating fantastical settings. Fantasy can involve different aspects to space (three moons), a different terrain (a purple sea), different people (dwarves, elves, unicorns), different plants (golden trees with silver leaves and a rainbow bark), new creatures (a rabbit the size of a lion that has jagged teeth) or a time-slip back to the past alongside the present. Children should invent new features from such categories to include within their stories. Encourage them to suppose ‘what if…’ as a way of capturing a good idea: ‘what if…you shrank to the size of a mouse?…you could be in two places at once?…you could travel back in time?….your pet cat started talking?’ etc. It also helps to borrow a setting from a well-known story and create a new story using the same place, further stories set in Narnia is a simple way into writing.
**Stories with issues**
These are usually set in a familiar setting - school or home. These lend themselves to children collecting and using detail from their own experience.

**Characterisation**

**Adventure**
Adventures usually contain a few main characters - heroines or heroes - who pit themselves against an enemy. Children like to star in their own adventures. It is fun to write a series of adventures, using the same main character and setting.

**Mystery**
The main character often sets out to solve the mystery. Usually the reader is led to believe that the main character or a minor character is not what they seem.

**Historical**
Characters often fit into stereotypical views of characters from the given historical period.

**Sci-fi**
Characters usually fit into simple ‘goodies’ and ‘baddies’. Aliens are especially hard to characterise. Brief description is needed but more importantly they need to be given a specific nature - and then during the tale, they must act according to their nature. Mr Spock had to stay logical! Robots and aliens may need to be given specific details.

**Fantasy**
Many fantasy stories make use of an older, wiser ‘mentor’ figure who guides the main character at key moments, e.g. Gandalf in *The Hobbit*. Unusual and exotic names help to lend a fantastical air.

**Stories with issues**
Parents are often seen to have many failings. Occasionally an older relative or teacher acts as a stable character. The main character may be shown to have flaws but also sympathetic traits. The reader is led to understand why they have behaved in the way they do.

**Style**

**Adventure and mystery**
The style of adventure and mystery stories is similar. There will be plenty of ‘build ups’ to create tension. The writer will use ‘hooks’ to catch the reader’s interest. There will be plenty of action and suspense paragraphs.

**Historical**
Some language from the time may be used, especially in speech, to lend an air of authenticity.

**Sci-fi and fantasy**
To make the story realistic, names may need to be invented for characters, places, creatures and objects. These will need some description, including invented detail. Children can be shown and then practise in their own writing the way writers create a new world or manage the shift from the known world to the fantasy world.
Stories with issues

Everyday detail will be needed to add realism. The first person and present tense may be used to add a colloquial air. Speech plays a strong role, using local dialect to add realism.
Improving writing

Teaching writing is a major focus for virtually every primary school in the country. Whilst standards in reading have risen considerably, this has not yet been matched by improvements in writing.

This is one of a series of fliers offering advice about writing narrative, non-fiction, poetry and plays. Each flier introduces ideas that are supported by practical teaching approaches for the main writing objectives. These are to be found on the NLS website.

The Grammar for writing and Developing early writing videos show examples of effective teaching. The accompanying booklets provide many teaching suggestions.

If pupils are to become independent writers they need to be familiar with a range of writing, so that they may adapt their writing to suit the audience and purpose of a task. Their writing should also reflect their own individuality and creativity.

Creating a writing climate

It is important to establish a positive climate for writing. This might feature:

- access to a wide range of quality reading including non-fiction, stories, poetry and playscripts;
- writer/text of the week/month;
- inviting writers, story tellers and poets into school;
- spreading enthusiasm for all sorts of reading and writing;
- creating frequent opportunities to publish writing;
- writing about subjects that matter to the children;
- writing, reading and sharing favourite texts as a teacher;
- reading whole texts, not just extracts.

Planning to teach writing

- Plan units of work around a whole text and create sequences of lessons that link together over a number of weeks.
- Start with the ‘big objective’, e.g. ‘I have Year 4 pupils and at the end of this four-week block of work they will be able to write an effective adventure story.’
- Be clear about exactly what has to be taught in order for progress to be made in writing.
- Relate sentence level objectives to the teaching of written style – avoiding exercises and worksheets that do not relate to improving writing.
- Make sure that whatever is taught children begin to use it within their writing.
- Read with a ‘writer’s eye’ good examples and investigate how a writer creates different types of writing.
- Use demonstration, shared and supported composition on a regular basis.
- Teach writing across the curriculum.

Further teaching ideas and case studies can be found on the NLS website: [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy)

See also pages 154-155, Grammar for writing and Developing early writing.
## The teaching of writing sequence

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<th>Developing writer’s knowledge</th>
<th>Developing writing skill</th>
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<td><strong>1. Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>5. Demonstration writing</strong></td>
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</table>
| Read good quality examples. | Demonstrate by explaining aloud, talking as a writer, focusing upon the objective:  
- new and difficult aspects of writing  
- transforming the plan into writing  
- rehearsing, evaluating, writing and re-reading  
- referring to checklists, scaffolds and the models  
- revisiting previous objectives  
Ask pupils to comment on the effectiveness of the writing. |
| **2. Focused activities** | **6. Shared composition** |
| Teach specific objectives, e.g. investigating how to write effective openings, using adjectives to enhance settings, sequencing recounts with temporal connectives, etc. | Pupils participate in composition with the teacher as editor and scribe. |
| **3. Definition** | **7. Supported writing** |
| Summarise what has been learned about writing this text type. | Keep the focus clearly on the objective.  
Encourage pupils to rehearse sentences and reconsider weak suggestions.  
Maintain a lively pace and interactive teaching style. |
| **4. Preparation and planning** | **8. Independent writing** |
| Write about motivating subjects.  
Provide background context through drama, first-hand experience, etc.  
Create simple plans that support writing but are not straitjackets. | Practise trying out words, sentences or paragraphs on whiteboards.  
Use a range of supportive strategies such as writing partners, working from model text, writing frames, paragraph pointers, or completing half-written texts and so on. |
| **9 Publishing and reviewing** | **9. Independent writing** |
| Use response partners to develop revising and checking. Show OHT samples to the whole class so that the children can talk about their writing.  
Pupils mark in a colour where they have used a feature and comment on their writing.  
Celebrate progress in writing and decide what has to be accomplished next.  
Ensure an audience for most writing. | Remind pupils of the specific writing focus before they write.  
Some pupils may need support.  
Prior to writing, read aloud quality examples.  
A few pupils could write straight onto an overhead transparency (OHT) in order to share their work in plenaries or further class sessions. |
Teaching key writing skills

a. Planning
Writers spend time preparing, mulling ideas over, finding out information, generating ideas and organising their thoughts before they start to write. Teaching children to create a simple, manageable plan for their writing can help them improve because it frees their attention from worrying about ‘what to say next’.

b. Drafting
Key skills for committing the text to paper include:
- rehearsing sentences and parts of sentences
- revising before and during writing
- concentrating, imagining and not being distracted away from the flow of composition
- constant rereading to help compose what happens next
- selecting words for maximum effect
- creating, controlling and varying sentences
- using connectives to make the text cohere
- selecting stylistic devices, such as using similes or alliteration, to add power
- using the plan to help write the next section
- using any checklists, prompts or referring back to models used in reading
- remembering to complete any specific targets.

c. Revising and checking
Writing should be read aloud to hear how it sounds. Pupils should assist each other, developing the skills of reading critically and considering sensitively what is effective in a text and how it might be improved. It should be routine for children to check for aspects of writing that they find difficult.

Guided writing
Use guided writing to secure the link between phonics and basic spelling and handwriting in the early stages. Later on use guided writing to teach children who have not made progress through whole class teaching, or to challenge more confident writers.

What interferes with composition?
Composition will be made more difficult if certain basic skills are not automatic. Young writers need to have secured:
- a range of spelling strategies
- fluent handwriting and presentation
- the ability to create sentences with correct punctuation
- the ability to create, and write from, simple plans.

Marking writing
Identify effective examples to show to the class. Select a few examples that have weaknesses common to most of the class. Use these to teach revision. Revision should be focused on improving a selected aspect. Comment on aspects of the writing that are effective. Then identify parts of the writing that need to be improved – underline weak words, clumsy sentences, poorly constructed paragraphs, or where the text needs reorganising. Celebrate progress and set new targets.

National Curriculum and NLS Objectives
The NLS objectives link with and support work in the rest of the curriculum in several ways. We can:
- Bring content knowledge and reading/writing activities from the curriculum into the Literacy Hour. Work in the Literacy Hour is then linked to real purposes for reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- Teach language and literacy in both the Literacy Hour and other subjects, weaving the work in subjects and the Literacy Hour explicitly together.
- Apply and practise the skills learned in the literacy hour in new contexts in the rest of the curriculum.
- Use language work done in other subjects to access children’s English abilities.

Linking QCA Units of Work and NLS Writing Objectives
In order to help with planning, links have been mapped between NLS objectives and existing writing activities within QCA schemes of work for history, geography, science, religious education and design and technology.

Visit the QCA website:
www.qca.org.uk/qa/subjects/english/literacy

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Writing narrative

Writing Flier 2 This flier covers the main points relating to writing narrative, helping children to build up a repertoire of different types of narrative.

Narrative in the NLS

Story writing is included in the NLS Framework in every term, as a central aspect of literacy. Story writing is magical – its appeal lies in the creation of imaginative worlds. Stories help us to enthrall, to intrigue, to entertain, to wonder and to bring our world and ourselves alive. There is a strong cycle that links reading, discussing, telling, listening and writing.

As writers, pupils should build up a repertoire of narrative forms that they can call upon to help them compose their own stories.

Creating a writing climate

It is important to establish a positive climate for story writing. This might feature:

- access to a wide range of quality literature;
- attractive displays that focus children’s interest;
- writer of the month;
- selecting stories to tape, for other classes;
- regular reading of a wide range of stories;
- working with writers and story tellers in school on a regular basis;
- author boxes of books;
- spreading enthusiasm for stories and writers – recommendations by pupils and teachers;
- writing, reading and sharing stories as the teacher.

Writing narrative – principles

- The roots of story writing lie in a rich experience of listening to and watching stories, drama and role play, early story reading, frequent rereading of favourites and the telling/retelling of all forms of story.
- Use drama, video and puppets to help build up the content and context for stories.
- Imitation – early story composition can be based on imitating well-loved tales.
- Innovation – encourage young writers to base their stories on known tales, making changes to characters, settings, or events.
- Invention – as young writers acquire a good store of stories they can mix the ingredients and invent their own.
- Consider how different types of story have typical patterns, characters, settings, events and are written in differing styles.
- Provide audiences for writing, e.g. classroom scrapbooks, taped performances.

Find out more about writing narrative

Further teaching ideas and case studies can be found on the NLS website: [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy)
See also pages 154-155, Grammar for writing and Developing early writing.
Preparing and planning

Writers are thieves and liars! They plunder their reading and their lives for ideas. They take what they know and then invent some more. Some techniques you can ‘steal’ for planning your own stories:
- retelling stories
- changing a known story
- mixing ingredients from different stories
- retelling anecdotes.

You can take different story ‘shapes’ from stories you know and use the ‘shape’ to plan your own story. There are many different story shapes. One of the most basic narrative shapes is:

**dilemma**

something goes wrong

**CLIMAX**

something happens

events to sort it out

resolution

**OPENING**

**END**

You might start planning by jotting down ideas.

Brainstorming

Mind map

You might plan by drawing your ideas.

Storyboard

Story map

You can plan by putting events in order.

1. Tom gets a bike
2. Rides to Gran's
3. Falls off ...
4. List of scenes

Once upon a time ...
One morning ...
Suddenly ...

Using connectives in a frame

Paragraph grid

Flow chart
Characterisation and settings

- Stories can begin with a character or a place.
- Choose names with care. Make a class collection of names that might be used in stories. The right name suggests character, e.g. Mrs Savage, Scrooge, Mrs Twit.
- Keep description limited to a few details that suggest something about the character, e.g. she walked down the street in her red leggings. Weave description into the tale. Use details to bring characters alive – unusual clothing, how they walk or talk, typical expressions, their eyes or mouth, their hands, a special interest or talent. Make the details a little unusual.
- Too much description of a character, or a place, may interfere with the story line.
- Possible questions to ask about the character: what secret do they have, do they have a problem, how are they feeling, what sort of person are they, what are their wishes and fears, who else is important to them?
- Characters are created by what they SAY (how they say it) and what they DO.
- Other character’s (or the narrator’s) comments can help to build up characterisation, e.g. Jo was fed up with Sally’s sulking.
- Make sure that the character’s ‘type’ (bossy, the leader, happy-go-lucky, shy, etc.) or their ‘feeling’ (angry, sad, etc) influences what they say and do.
- Dialogue should reflect character, e.g. ‘I hate you all,’ snarled Sam.
- When writing dialogue think about:
  a. what the speaker and listener do
  b. what else is happening.
- Use this to avoid a string of speech, e.g. ‘I hate you all,’ snarled Sam. He rushed to the door. Sim stood and stared after his friend. Outside a car hooted.
- Stories are about CHANGE – what happens to the characters. Make sure this is reflected in the beginning and ending.
- Use detail and sense impressions to bring places and people alive. Base people and places on what you know – plus some invention. Many writers use their own experiences, e.g. Michael Morpurgo sets stories on the Isles of Scilly where he goes for holidays.
- Use settings to create different atmospheres. Practise creating frightening settings or comfy settings.
- Use writing on location to develop an eye for detail to bring settings alive.
- Possible questions about the setting: what is hidden there? What has just happened here or is about to happen? What is dangerous looks unusual or is out of place?
- As well as place – think about the weather and the time of day.
- Use the principle of ‘show’ and ‘not tell’.

Practise writing scenes from stories so that you become skilful at paragraphing and writing, e.g. openings, build-ups, complications, dilemmas, cliff hangers, suspense paragraphs, atmospheric settings, resolving problems, endings.
Helping the story progress

- Have a working title but be prepared to alter this.
- Put numbers on pages; leave spaces between scenes – this helps to give the feeling of accomplishment.
- Think of the story or paragraphs as a series of scenes.
- If stuck, go back to the plan, imagine a new scene, introduce a new character or event, find something hidden, look in a pocket, make a discovery.
- Collect story triggers – incidents that get scenes going, e.g. a phone rings.
- Keep in mind a simple story idea, e.g. two children get lost but find their way home.
- If stuck use your whiteboard or notebook to jot ideas, mind map some possibilities.
- Collect and use paragraph openings:
  - Change of place – On the other side of town…
  - Change of time – The next day…
  - Change of person – Tom entered the room…
  - Change of event – At that moment a dog barked…
  - Change of speaker – ‘Hi,’ said the girl…
- Pace yourself as a writer – avoid rushing any part – but do not elaborate too much.
- Reread every now and then but don’t let this stop you from driving on to the end.

Writing endings

- Knowing where your story is going can help you concentrate on the quality of your writing. However, if you near the end and a better idea comes along – then use it.
- Don’t cop out with a tricksy ending, e.g. It was all just a dream.
- Distinguish the end of a story from the resolving of the plot. At the end of the story you could:
  - describe, or show, the character’s feelings
  - reflect on events (provide a moral)
  - look to the future
  - mention some object or detail from the story
  - reread the beginning to see if some sort of link can be made or to show how a character has changed.
# Year 4 Term 1

## Text type: Historical stories

### Key writing targets

- Use main features of story structure to organise events, varying openings, build-ups, conflicts and endings.
- Use paragraphs to structure narrative, for instance isolating an initiating event or introduction. Use appropriate layout conventions for non-fiction.
- Attempt to spell unfamiliar words using known conventions and rules and a range of strategies including phonemic, morphemic and etymological.

### Selected Framework objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>W1.</strong> To read and spell words through:</td>
<td><strong>S2.</strong> To revise work on verbs from Year 1 Term 3 and to investigate verb tenses (past, present and future):</td>
<td><strong>T3.</strong> To explore chronology in narrative using written or other media texts, by mapping how much time passes in the course of the story, e.g. noticing where there are jumps in time, or where some events are skimmed over quickly, and others told in detail.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- identifying phonemes in speech and writing;</td>
<td>- to understand the word tense (i.e. that it refers to time) in relation to verbs and use it appropriately.</td>
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<td>- blending phonemes for spelling;</td>
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<td><strong>T4.</strong> To explore narrative order: identify and map out the main stages of the story: introductions - build-ups - climaxes or conflicts – resolutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- segmenting words into phonemes for spelling;</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>T10.</strong> To plan a story identifying the stages of its telling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- correct reading and spelling of high frequency words from KS1 and Y3;</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>T12.</strong> To write independently, linking experience to situations in historical stories, e.g. <em>How would I have responded? What would I do next?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>- identifying syllabic patterns in multisyllabic words;</td>
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<td><strong>T15.</strong> To use paragraphs in story writing to organise and sequence the narrative.</td>
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<td>- using phonic/spelling knowledge as a cue, together with graphic, grammatical and contextual knowledge, when reading unfamiliar texts.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W2.</strong> To identify mis-spelt words in own writing; to keep individual lists (e.g. spelling logs) and learn to spell them.</td>
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Selected text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Butterfly Lion</td>
<td>Michael Morpurgo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collins</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ISBN 0006751032</td>
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Reason for text choice

This beautifully crafted story was the winner of the Smarties prize and the Writers’ Guild award in 1996. It tells a number of interwoven stories about loneliness, friendship and love in a sensitive and engaging way that will appeal to both boys and girls. The historical and physical setting moves between Africa, Britain and France and from the First World War to the very recent past.

The Butterfly Lion could form part of an author study of Michael Morpurgo in Term 3 (stories by the same author). It is also a very suitable text for a ‘short novel’ focus in Term 1. The work outlined below will be particularly effective if it follows on from this. Otherwise, a substantial part of the book would need to have been read as part of a read aloud programme before starting this unit of work.

Teaching opportunities to address key targets within the structure of a literacy hour

Shared whole class work

This unit would work well if the class had already focused on it for the ‘short story’ focus for this term, or if a substantial part of it had already been read to the class as part of a read aloud programme

Reading

- In shared reading, identify the bare bones of the story in 7 main points as if creating episodes for a television series. Plot onto a planning frame under the headings of opening, build up, conflict and resolutions.
- Highlight how Michael Morpurgo has created several stories within a story. Consider the amount of time that passes between events and how the author moves from one period of time to another. Look at the opening, build up, conflict and resolution.
- Look at extract and highlight how Michael Morpurgo uses paragraphs to sequence narrative.
- Choose one of the main characters to discuss (e.g. the narrator, Millie or Bertie). What do the children think they know about them from the story? Scribe their ideas and model making a character web. Is there anything about the character that puzzles them? What questions do they have in their mind? Hot seat the character.
- Model mapping out the main points of the character’s story in chronological order, in preparation for independent work.
- Re-read part of the story where a decision has to be made, for example the first chapter where the narrator decides to run away from school or when the
white lion is given to the circus owner. Use drama techniques of thought tracking and conscience alley to make decisions about what to do at this crucial point in the story. Ask: How would I have responded? What would I do next? How would my decision have altered the story?

- Discuss most likely use of tense in historical stories. With extract on OHT identify verbs and tense. Change sentence to present and future.

**Writing**

Shared writing over several sessions:

- Choose one character’s story as a focus for shared writing in role drawing on the story map to support the structure, and the insights from the character web and drama work to inform the content and the way it will be written. These experiences will help the children to deepen their understandings and to develop a clearer ‘voice’ in their writing. Map the story on to the planning frame under the headings of introduction - build-ups - climaxes or conflicts - resolutions.

- Model introduction and build-up. Show how paragraphs are used to show how narrative is organised (possibly one paragraph for introduction and one for build up) See Unit 25 in Grammar for writing.

- Specifically model strategies for spelling unknown words.

- Use one child’s work to model editing. Put on OHT and read aloud as example of good quality writing. Encourage positive responses before redrafting. Include in redrafting identification of mis-spelt words and add to class spelling log. Note procedures for editing as model for children when they are working with a response partner.

- *Grammar for writing* Unit 21 activity focusing on tenses.

**Independent work**

- Create character webs for the main characters as modelled in whole class work. Use a large sheet of paper to brainstorm ideas. Choose the best words/phrases and report back to the whole class, justifying the group’s decisions from events in the text.

- Following on from shared writing, invite the children to write their own stories in role as Bertie, Millie, or the narrator using planning frame. Remind them of the work they have done on the character webs, and the insights they have gained from thought tracking and conscience alley. They will know their material well, and this will help them to write from the inside and take on the style and language of their character. Introduce the word tense and ensure this is consistent.
- Consolidate use of tenses and paragraphs through *Grammar for writing* Unit 21 ‘Yesterday – today - tomorrow’ story.

**Extension, consolidation, homework tasks**

- Children can continue writing the story in role and redraft, edit, illustrate and publish their work.

- Encourage children to work in pairs to plan a story around a dilemma where something precious/important has to be left behind. Invite them to write the dilemma in the middle of a piece of paper and brainstorm possible events and resolutions around it. Alternatively they could use post it notes to order and re-order events. This could lead onto making an illustrated storyboard. The children could then tell their stories to the class and/or record them onto tape.

- Link to ongoing work in history. Take point of view of character and write story that takes place over course of time using narrative planning frame.
OBJECTIVES

S2 to revise work on verbs from Y1 Term 3 and to investigate verb tenses: (past, present and future): compare sentences from narrative and information texts, eg narrative in past tense, explanations in present tense (eg when the circuit is …); forecasts/directions, etc. in future. Develop awareness of how tense relates to purpose and structure of text; to understand the term “tense” (ie that it refers to time) in relation to verbs and use it appropriately; understand that one test of whether a word is a verb is whether or not its tense can be changed.

Principles and explanation

● See Teaching Units 2 and 37.
● The simple present is usually the base form of the verb, but with an -s added when it takes a singular noun or he, she or it as the subject, eg I live, Jamila lives.
● The simple past is usually the base form of the verb plus -ed, eg He lived, but irregular verbs form the past tense in a number of different ways, eg I find – I found; I have – I had; I bring – I brought; I blow – I blew; I wake – I woke.
● The most common way of referring to the future is to add will or shall to the base form, eg I will live. I shall live.

Sentence level activities

Tenses

Make cards which say Today/Tomorrow/Yesterday/Last week/Next year/Last century/In the distant future, etc. Make up a simple sentence in the present tense. (Or ask one or more of the pupils to mime a simple action, and then describe it.) Show the cards one at a time and ask the pupils to rewrite the sentence starting with that word (and consequently changing the tense). Award the card to the pupil who offers the first/best correct sentence. First work orally, then in writing on dry-wipe boards.

Today, the man feeds (is feeding) the cat. Yesterday, the man fed the cat. Tomorrow, the man will feed the cat. In ten years time, he will not need to feed the cat because it will be dead. In the distant future, the man will be dead, let alone the cat!

Improve (page 161)

1 “I expect it hurt when you cut your finger,” said Mrs White to her three-year-old grandson. “I didn’t cut it, I shut it in the door. It hurt a lot because I burst the skin and splitted the nail as well. My Mum putted a big plaster on, but it still hurted. It upsetted me. So I went to the hospital and they setted it in plaster. Then they letted me come home.”

2 He brought a piece of metal which he finded at the tip. He bended it and builded a wonderful buggy. It was much better than the one you buyed from the shops.

3 He burned something on the fire which smelled really strange. It sended him to sleep and he dreamed that he had learned to do magic. In fact he had spilled the wizard’s potion when he leaned on the tree and that had spoiled everything.

4 As soon as he awaked he arised from his bed and beginned to feel hungry. He bited a magic tomato and blowed the seeds out of his mouth. The seeds flyed through the air. They rode on the wind until they reached an enchanted tree. The tree shaked its branches and the magic bells ringed.
Ask the children to examine the corrected past tense verbs in each of the four boxes above to see whether they can see some similarities between them. In box 1, the past tense verbs are the same as in the present tense. In boxes 2 and 4, most of the past tense verbs have radically different spellings from the present tense. In box 3, most of the verbs have could be spelled with -ed or -t.

*Ensure children apply this sentence level learning in their writing.*

**Shared writing**

**Related text level objectives:** Y4 Term 1 T9, T10, T11, T14, T15

- Write a YESTERDAY-TODAY-TOMORROW story in three paragraphs. Think of a simple everyday situation which falls neatly into these three stages (eg *Yesterday you had a big falling out with your friend. Today you are feeling really lonely and have nothing to do. Tomorrow you will swallow your pride and make up with your friend.*)
  
  Plan it out in three boxes, corresponding to three paragraphs. See Teaching Unit 8. Paragraph 1 will start ‘Yesterday …’ and explain what happened previously (in the past tense). Paragraph 2 will start ‘Today …’ and explain how you are feeling now (in the present tense). Paragraph 3 will start ‘Tomorrow …’ and in it you will imagine what you are going to do to put matters right (in the future).

- Think of a story which you (and your readers) know very well. Pick a starting point somewhere in the middle of the original story.
  
  Write a non-rhyming poem, with three verses, on a TODAY-YESTERDAY-TOMORROW pattern (using appropriate tenses), where you share some of the thoughts and feelings of one of the main characters from that story.
  
  Give clues to the original story, but never actually say what it is. Get others to guess the story, eg:

Today, I have this island, my island;  
Not for ever, perhaps, but for today.  
Today I have the ring too, beautiful golden;  
Not yet fully mine, but certainly not hers now;  
(And us only twelve pence the poorer!)  
How much better it suits my finger, than her nose.

And yesterday? Yesterday I had the sea,  
The green sea and the green boat.  
Yesterday I had the starlight,  
The plucked strings, his crooning voice.  
How smooth he was; all honey and flattery!  
But I’d not have had him different. No.

And tomorrow? Tomorrow will be the day,  
Better than Christmas. “I will. I will.”  
And afterwards? That night will be all feast and dancing;  
Hand in hand, dancing by the sea’s edge, dancing in the moonlight.  
I will gaze for ever into his enormous eyes.  
Tomorrow? Tomorrow will be quite … runcible!