

Story Starter and Planner

Choose an opening line, plan a five-stage story, craft sentences and write a 200-word opening.

Name _____ Date _____ Class _____

Learning objective: I can plan and write an engaging story opening using a range of techniques.

✓ I can plan a story structure ✓ I can show, not tell ✓ I can vary my sentences

1 Choose a starter Tick one opening line, or invent your own. All four were written for this sheet.

☐

The message on the classroom whiteboard had not been there when we left on Friday.

☐

Every lamp post on Harbour Street went dark at exactly the same moment.

☐

Grandma's old suitcase was heavier than it should have been, and it was humming.

☐

The school trip was going perfectly until the coach took a road that wasn't on any map.

☐

My own: _____

2 Plan your story Make brief notes for each stage.

Stage	Notes
Exposition – who, where, when?	
Rising action – what goes wrong?	
Climax – the most tense moment	
Falling action – how is the problem faced?	
Resolution – how has the character changed?	

3 Craft your sentences

Improve each sentence using the technique given.

- 4** Write a one-word or very short sentence for impact.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Answer Key

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Question	Answers
2 Plan your story	Exposition – who, where, when? – Notes: notes Rising action – what goes wrong? – Notes: notes Climax – the most tense moment – Notes: notes Falling action – how is the problem faced? – Notes: notes Resolution – how has the character changed? – Notes: notes
3 Craft your sentences	1. e.g. I could not see my own hand in front of my face. 2. e.g. Without a sound, she slipped into the room. 3. e.g. The floorboards creaked and the air smelt of damp and dust. 4. e.g. Silence. / Then it moved.
4 Write your opening	Look for: • A hook in the first line • A clear character and setting established with detail • Varied sentence lengths and openings; accurate punctuation, including speech marks if used • A hint of the problem to come

Teaching note: creative writing has no single right answer; the key lists success criteria. Pupils can generate more starters in the companion app.