



Lesson 1: Big Ideas



1 How to come up with ideas

It's the most frequently asked question: Where do you get your ideas from? Sometimes it can be something you see by chance. I saw a heavily tattooed woman with two small daughters in Central Park, and my own daughter Emma whispered that they looked like the sort of family I'd write about. That's how I wrote *The Illustrated Mum*.

Another gift was seeing photographs of children in my local newspaper, all needing foster parents – this gave me the idea for *The Story of Tracy Beaker*.

Everyone gets their ideas in different ways.

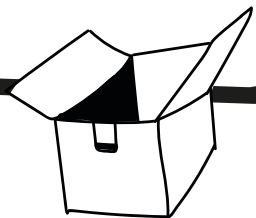


INDIVIDUAL WARM-UP: STORY HATS

Get pupils' creativity flowing with the Story Hats!

Bring in three hats (or boxes) – fill Hat One with objects, Hat Two with locations and Hat Three with characters. **You can cut out the words from the Story Hats Template at the back of the pack or come up with your own.**

One by one, invite pupils to come to the front and choose a piece of scrap paper from each Hat (one object, one location and one character). Give them 5–10 minutes to come up with some initial ideas for a story, and maybe even to write the opening line!





CREATIVE ACTIVITY 1: STORY MAPS

Jacqueline Wilson describes how she likes to find her ideas and inspiration in different ways – through talking to others, or sometimes even by chance! The important thing is to keep your eyes peeled: and to keep track of what you see by writing it down, or even drawing it!

- ★ Think of a time when you have had an adventure. It might be in a foreign place with your family, or it might be in your local town or city (or even your school) with a group of friends. Share your adventure with the person sitting next to you or with the whole class.
- ★ Draw a map of the route that you took on your adventure, taking into account any places that you stopped to rest, or anything significant that you stumbled across. Annotate and label your map with important landmarks. Design your map to make your adventure come to life on the page.
- ★ Annotate each part of your map with one sentence describing the scene, the other characters present, and how the different characters felt. Were there any surprises along the way?
- ★ Can you put your sentences together to reveal the beginnings of a story? Read you story maps out to the whole class; take your classmates on an adventure!





CREATIVE ACTIVITY 2: SETTING THE SCENE

Jacqueline Wilson describes seeing photographs of children in her local newspaper, all needing foster parents – and this gave her the idea for ***The Story of Tracy Beaker***. What can you see in photographs to ignite your imagination?

- ★ Bring one of your favourite photographs to school – or your teacher might provide you with some photographs to look at.
- ★ Swap photographs with your classmates. When you have a photograph that you're happy with, mount it in the middle of a piece of A3 paper.
- ★ Take a moment to look at your photograph and take in the scene. What are your initial reactions to what you can see? Make a note of your ideas by writing down key words around the photograph.
- ★ Then, in each corner of your A3 sheet of paper, write the following headings: 'What'; 'Where'; 'When'; and 'Who'. Under each heading, make some notes about what you imagine could be happening in the photograph (i.e. What is happening? Where is it happening? When is it happening? Who is present?).
- ★ When you've finished making notes around your photograph, present your A3 sheet to someone else in the class. Ask your classmates what they think of your interpretation of the photograph? Can they add anything to it? Have you created the beginnings of a brilliant story?

