

The Imagination Exchange



Teacher guide

One story. Four imaginations. | Five weeks, 15 to 20 minutes a week. No marking.

Thank you so much for being part of this first Imagination Exchange. I've created it to give children space to enjoy writing, surprise one another and discover where a story can go when imaginations meet. I can't wait to hear what happens in your classroom. Your input will help shape what comes next.

Before you begin

Please complete the [BEFORE questionnaire](#) before your first session. Your Story Box should contain one A3 story sheet per child, with a few extras in case any go astray, and a set of optional Imagination Sparks cards. I'll send a little hello video separately.

Keep the Sparks cards to hand and pass them around if children would like inspiration. They invite children to explore their own words, descriptions and storytelling ideas, rather than copy the cards. Please follow your school's usual participation and permission arrangements.

Week 1

Opening

Each child begins a story using the prompt printed on the sheet, then folds it and places it in the box.

Weeks 2 to 4

Build-Up, Development and Dilemma, Ending

Before each draw, mix the folded sheets. Each child draws at random, reads all the writing so far and adds the next section: Build-Up in Week 2, Development (Dilemma on the sheet) in Week 3, and Ending in Week 4. Each child then folds their sheet and returns it to the box.

This gives children opportunities to:

1. Read the previous children's writing closely before continuing it.
2. See a story from another point of view.
3. Let one imagination spark another.

Keep names off the sheets and contributors anonymous. There is no competition or voting, and every child's contribution stays. Children write what fits within the session; they needn't fill every line. Adults can read aloud or scribe a child's own words if helpful. Please adapt for your class, and I'd love to know briefly if you've needed to change anything.

Week 5 Share and Celebrate

Mix the completed stories and draw a manageable selection at random to read aloud. An adult can read; children needn't perform if they don't want to. Enjoy the unexpected turns together, without naming contributors or choosing favourites. Keep every story, even if there isn't time to read them all during that session.

Children might like to add illustrations on the story sheet or separate paper. A classroom pinboard, assembly or story-sharing circle could be lovely. Would a digital class anthology be welcome too? I'd love your thoughts; it isn't a requirement. It could also be a lovely way for parents to see what the children have created, within your school's permissions.

Send them back in whatever way suits you

I've included a stamped addressed envelope for you to post back the originals after sharing and celebrating, if you and your school are happy to send them. If you'd rather keep them but are happy to share clear phone photos, scans or copies, that would be greatly appreciated. There's no need to pay for A3 copying or both post and photograph them.

Please capture every completed side clearly. If you'd like separate illustrations included in a digital anthology, match them to their stories with pencil numbers on the backs, without children's names. We can agree a school-approved route for digital sharing and any class anthology.

Your feedback really matters

Please complete the [AFTER questionnaire](#) when you finish. These two short forms are an important part of the pilot, and I'd be very grateful for your feedback. I'd also love to hear what delighted the children, what was tricky and any memorable comments, without identifying details.

Please check work for identifying details and follow school permissions. Separately, please let me know whether your school would be open to anonymous images of the work being used in a report about the pilot or shared more widely. Any such use will be agreed separately, with the relevant permissions; sending work back does not give permission for public sharing.

If a child draws a story they've written in before, normally let them discover what has changed and continue. Use your judgement for difficulties without revealing contributors. An absent child's sheet can have an extra turn from a willing child; non-participants can do a parallel activity outside the box.

Please feel free to contact me at any time at charlotte@scoplings.com. I'm here to chat through anything you need. Thank you so much for helping me bring this first Exchange to life. I really hope you and your class enjoy it. Warm wishes, Charlotte

A Scoplings initiative created by Charlotte Pearl, supported by The English Association.