

KS1/2

WRITING A FABLE

Teacher Notes

These ideas will support planning for a short writing unit on fables, linked to online safety. It includes suggested activities for five sessions, which could be taught across writing, computing or PSHE lessons. The unit could be extended by adding further activities linked to your writing curriculum and covering specific punctuation or grammar objectives, and the final writing task could be extended to allow extra time for editing, redrafting and publishing the fables.

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Two winning fables will be chosen for each of three age categories (7–9 years; 10–11 years; 12–15 years), with each of the six winners receiving:

- Their winning fable published by Andersen Press in a book (printed and ebook), illustrated by Sue Cheung, Fiona Lumbers and Paddy Donnelly
- Two tablets for their school
- A library pack of 100 books for their school
- A Kindle Paperwhite (kids)
- A £50 book token
- The chance to feature in *First News*!

 **vodafone**

All entries should be marked with the child's name and age, plus contact details, and uploaded at firstnews.co.uk/Vodafone, by **1 November 2024** (for full terms and conditions, visit firstnews.co.uk/Vodafone).



Learning objectives covered

Reading

- Read and discuss a wide range of fiction ...
- Reading ... structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
- Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books

Writing

- Plan their writing by discussing writing similar to which they are planning to write ...
- Plan their writing by discussing and recording ideas
- Years 5 and 6, in writing narratives, considering how authors have developed characters and setting ...
- Draft and write by, in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot; Years 5 and 6 integrating dialogue to convey character and advance action

Computing

- Use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly; recognise acceptable and unacceptable behaviour; identify a range of ways to report concerns about content and contact

Relationships Education

Online Relationships

- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them

Being Safe

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe ...
- where to get advice, for example family, school or other sources

childline

If children have any worries or concerns about their safety, or someone else's, online or offline, then they can contact Childline any time on **0800 11 11**.

*Additional lessons could be planned to cover specific punctuation and grammar appropriate for your year group and the teaching of fables. These could include activities on **direct speech, past tense**, and the use of **adverbials, adjectives** or **antonyms**.*



Resources included in this pack



- Example fable
- Features of a fable poster
- Collecting ideas worksheet
- Developing characters worksheet
- Fable planning sheet and margin planner
- Expert writing tips from children's authors Jeanne Willis and Joseph Coelho
- Display materials – key question as posters for display
- Also available, for sharing with parents, is the TRUST toolkit, created by Vodafone, in partnership with the NSPCC: tinyurl.com/VFtoolkit

Lesson 1 – Reading Focus

Understanding the features of a fable

Read the **example fable** included in the resource pack with the children, highlighting and explaining any unfamiliar vocabulary. Check pupils' understanding of the text by asking questions about the characters and moral of the tale.

- Q) Who is the main character?
- Q) What did they learn in the story?
- Q) Why do you think that is an important lesson to learn?

Using the **features of a fable poster**, annotate the example text, highlighting the features listed. Focus on grammar and punctuation you would like to teach within the unit.

Explain that they will be writing their own fables about using technology and devices safely, and responsibly, and keeping safe online, over a series of lessons.

CHALLENGE

Pupils could use one of the **planning sheets** to summarise each section of the example fable, thinking about how the author has structured their writing.

NOTE: You might also want to read other examples of fables, for example, one or more of Aesop's Fables, to look at how these stories follow a similar structure to the example text.

Lesson 2 – Computing/PSHE focus



Using technology and devices safely, and staying safe online

Reread the **example fable** in the resource pack.

Discuss what the main character learns about using technology safely and responsibly.

Q) How can technology help us in our lives?

Discuss as a class how technology can help us in our everyday life. Ask pupils to give examples of how we use technology and devices to help us at home and in school. Examples might include: using an app for homework; finding answers to questions; entertainment (TV, games consoles or apps); the IWB at school; digital alarm clocks and timers etc.

This could be recorded on sticky notes around the question above, which could then be added to as more examples of how technology helps us are found.

Q) How can we be safe and responsible online?

Remind children that there are great benefits to being online, but risks, too. Discuss the question above, thinking about the responsibilities we have to ourselves and others when online. For example, only using the internet with adult supervision; telling a trusted adult if we see anything that makes us uncomfortable; sticking to limited screen time etc.

Ideas could be recorded on sticky notes around the **display poster** of the question above to create a whole class display, or pupils could complete the **collecting ideas worksheet**.

Lesson 3 – Writing Focus

Developing ideas for characters

Reread the **example fable** and revisit the characters in the story: Frog, and Mum.

Q) How are they different?

Q) What did the main character learn?

Explain that pupils will be creating their own fables with a moral that teaches people how to use technology safely and responsibly to enjoy a happy and healthy online life.

Discuss how fables usually include two characters – often animals – with opposite characteristics. Collect examples of opposite characteristics that might be appropriate for a fable that includes a lesson on using technology safely and responsibly. Examples might include kind/unkind, wise/foolish, confident/shy, lazy/energetic etc. Remind children that fables are about helping people change their behaviour in a positive way, not blaming them for their mistakes.

Q) Which animals could we use in our fables that have these characteristics?

Discuss the question above as a class and record ideas that the pupils can use as inspiration.

Explain that they will be thinking about creating two characters for their story. Model drawing or writing a description of two characters, completing the **developing characters worksheet**.

Model adding words that could be used to describe each character and what they will learn in the story, referring back to lesson 2 when collecting ideas about how to use technology responsibly and safely.

CHALLENGE

Look at how dialogue can be used to convey character, thinking about what someone might say, or how they might say it, that helps to tell the reader about their characteristics.

Pupils will then plan their own characters using the **developing characters worksheet**.

Lesson 4 – Writing focus

Planning a fable

Revisit the **example fable** and use the **features of a fable poster** to recap how it is structured.

Explain that the children will be using their ideas from lesson 2, on the **collecting ideas worksheet**, and lesson 3, on the **developing characters worksheet**, to plan their own fables with a moral/lesson about using technology and devices safely and responsibly, and staying safe online.

Share the **expert authors' writing tips** sheet – and have copies available on tables and/or on display.

Teachers should model using their own **developing characters worksheet** to plan their own fable using the **fable planning sheet** or the **fable margin planner**.

Pupils then plan their own fable using the sheets provided.

Encourage pupils to orally rehearse their stories, once planned, to support the composition of sentences before writing.

CHALLENGE

Pupils could think about dialogue that they will use in their fable and rehearse this orally or by writing dialogue in speech bubbles.

Lesson 5 – Writing Focus

Writing and editing a fable

This session could be extended over a series of lessons to incorporate additional time for writing, editing, redrafting and publishing a final copy.

Remind pupils that they will be writing their own fables with a moral that teaches people how to use technology and devices safely and responsibly to enjoy a happy and healthy online life. Explain that a fable is a short story (400–800 words) and that they will be using their plans from lesson 4 to support their writing.

Model using a completed planning sheet from the previous lesson to write a section of their fable. Use this opportunity to revisit the structure of a fable and demonstrate how punctuation and grammar that you would like them to use can be incorporated successfully into their writing.

Pupils should use their **fable plan** from lesson 4 to write their own fables.

Encourage proof-reading of their writing at regular intervals.

Fables could then be edited and published over a series of lessons.



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