

What we already know

- Key elements of narratives - structure, characters, setting
- Key features of classic tales and imaginative stories

Stage 5 and 6 English: Short Stories

What's next

- Identifying concepts in a novel
- Identifying concepts in short stories

English Golden Concepts

Reading: Fluency

Reading: Comprehension

Speaking and Listening

Writing Transcription

Writing Composition

What are short stories?

A short story is a piece of fiction that tells a complete story in a limited number of words. Unlike novels, short stories must be concise, focusing on key characters, a single setting, and a clear plot.

Key features of short stories

- ✓ A strong hook - An engaging first sentence that grabs the reader.
- ✓ A single setting - The story takes place in one key location.
- ✓ Limited characters - Usually 1-3 main characters to keep the focus.
- ✓ A central conflict - The story revolves around a problem or challenge.
- ✓ A clear resolution - The problem is solved (or left open-ended).
- ✓ Show, don't tell - Descriptions reveal emotions and action rather than stating them directly.

Character development in short stories

Writers use actions, thoughts, and dialogue to reveal personality.

- The Protagonist - The main character, often facing a challenge (brave, determined, curious).
- The Antagonist - A person or force working against the protagonist (mysterious, ruthless, unpredictable).
- The Sidekick - A supporting character who helps the protagonist (loyal, funny, clever).

Character Traits & Dialogue:

A brave character: "We have to keep going," Mia whispered. "No matter what."

A nervous character: Tom's voice shook. "Maybe we should

How can I show off my understanding of language?

Identify a range of language choices in the text and use:

1. Creating a Strong Hook

A short story must start quickly—no long introductions!

Here are some great ways to start:

- ✓ Action: *The waves crashed against the rocks as Sam struggled to hold on.*
- ✓ Dialogue: *"I don't believe in ghosts," Jake said, stepping into the attic.*
- ✓ Mystery: *Something was wrong. The door was open, but no one was inside.*

2. Show, Don't Tell

Rather than telling the reader what a character is feeling, show it through actions and description.

Telling: *She was scared.*

Showing: *Her hands trembled as she reached for the handle.*

3. Sentence Variation

Mix short, sharp sentences with longer ones for impact.

Short sentence for tension: *The door slammed shut.*

Longer sentence to build suspense: *For a moment, everything was still, except for the flickering candlelight casting long shadows across the wall.*

4. Creating Mood & Atmosphere

Eerie setting: *The wind howled through the empty streets, rattling the old shop signs.*

Exciting setting: *The market buzzed with energy, the scent of sizzling food filling the air.*

How short stories differ from longer stories

| Short Stories | Novels |
|-------------------------|---|
| One setting | Many settings |
| Few characters | Larger cast of characters |
| Focus on one main event | Multiple storylines/subplots |
| Shorter time frame | Events may take place over longer periods of time |

| Stage | What Happens? | Example Openers |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Hook (Opening) | An engaging start that draws the reader in | <i>The clock struck midnight. Max held his breath... / No one ever went near the abandoned lighthouse...</i> |
| Build-up | Introduce the character and setting; hint at the problem | <i>Ella traced her fingers over the ancient map. Could the treasure really be here?</i> |
| Climax (Problem/Turning Point) | The most exciting moment; the biggest challenge | <i>The door creaked open, and she realised she was not alone...</i> |
| Resolution | The problem is solved (or left as a cliffhanger) | <i>With one final breath, he leapt across the chasm... / The letter crumbled in her hands. She would never know the truth...</i> |