

National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS)
Navan Education Centre
Athlumney
Navan
Co. Meath

Telephone: +353 46 9093355

Fax: +353 46 9093354

Email: nbss@ecnavan.ie

Compiled and written by Fiona Richardson, Literacy Development Officer, National Behaviour Support Service, 2009.

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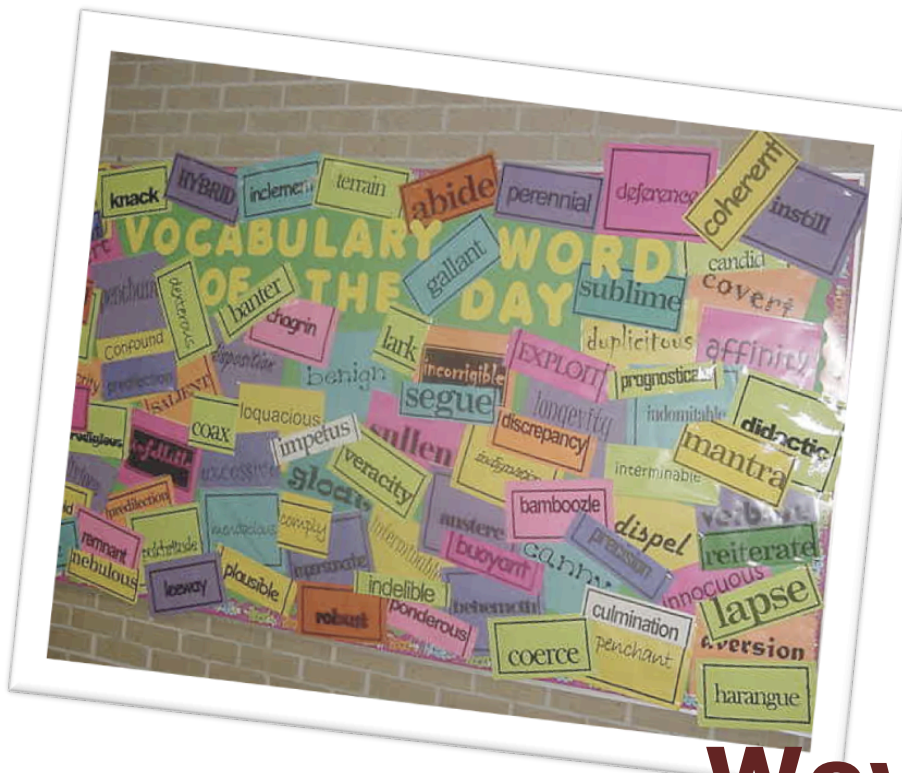
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Writing with Wow Words

Introduction

In order to develop deep understanding of words, students need to see, hear, and use new vocabulary in different ways. Getting students to think of 'Wow' words, notice 'Wow' words in their reading or in speech, as well as using 'Wow' words in their writing, are ways to deepen understanding.

One way to support and develop writing is by having students consider how to incorporate 'Wow' words into their written work. For example pointing out how using a more vibrant word than 'said', in their creative writing means the reader gets a greater understanding of a character or situation. Using 'Wow' words students can build a better picture in the mind of the reader, grabbing their attention and making them want to read on.

'Wow' words are adventurous and exciting language that students can use in their speech and writing. Focusing on building students' store of 'Wow' words can deepen their understanding of language as well as develop their written work.

Writing with 'Wow' Words

The following creative writing ideas demonstrate how 'Wow' words can be incorporated into student story writing.

Story Starters

A selection of story starters can be used initially as a brainstorming activity. First the teacher demonstrates or models the possibilities that are contained in a story title.

Title: **They walked away sadly, promising never to return again...**

To demonstrate possible characters or settings think of several examples of who '*they*' could be and from '*where*' they are walking.

They	students	Where	the last day of school
They	aliens	Where	the Earth
They	football team	Where	after a match
They	teenagers	Where	a concert by their favourite band
They	friends	Where	a party at another friend's house

Point out that characters can be any age, nationality, profession etc and that stories can take place anywhere, anytime – future, past, present, during an historical event etc. Draw attention to how stories are written for different audiences – younger children, tweenies, teenagers, young adults, boys, girls etc. You could demonstrate this by reading different paragraphs from a selection of reading material. Also think about how students who may struggle with writing could create a story aimed at a younger audience or younger brother or sister.

Divide students into groups of 4 or 5. Each group must suggest as many different '*they*' and '*where*' ideas as they can in 3 minutes. You could turn this into a competition to see who can come up with the most. The aim is creativity and a chance for students to use their imaginations! Each group must also choose their top 3 favourites from all of the ideas the group generates.

The time limit is important to keep the activity moving. Each group then shares their ideas with the whole class. After this the groups must choose one idea and in 5 minutes flesh out this idea a little more. You could encourage them to think of the 5Ws – *who, what, when, where and why* – while developing their ideas. Each group then shares their work.

Story Starters & the 5Ws

Now students are given the opportunity to come up with the 5Ws for a number of stories. Read out a selection of story starters (see some examples below that could be tweaked for your students or create your own).

Distribute the story starters. Each group could get different story starters.

1. A beautiful woman/man walks by your table in a restaurant and hands you a napkin discreetly. You open up the napkin and it says...
2. A man is running down the lane screaming. He has blood all over his clothing. He bumps into you and explains what happened. You listen, and begin to tremble in fear. What did the man just tell you?
3. A woman is jogging down the street with her black Labrador. You smile pleasantly at her and continue down the road. The woman stops jogging and shouts a warning to you. You can't hear that well because of the traffic. You ask her to repeat it, what does she tell you? Continue the story...
4. Alone on the beach, the wind whips a little boy's hair. He looks around but cannot find his family. He is in a strange country/planet etc. He does not remember the last two days. What's happened to him? Where is his family? Why is he there?
5. You're a soldier in a war. You just watched your best friend get shot in the leg. You know you only have a few minutes to escape. What do you do? Do you run? Do you try to help your friend? Or do you shoot back at the enemy? When is this war taking place – past, present or future?
6. The boat groans loudly. Everywhere passengers are screaming. You know you don't have much time but you need to find your friend. You look around but can only see panicked people who are boarding the lifeboats. You don't want to leave without her/him, but you don't want to stay on a sinking ship...
7. The loud clicking of her heels hit the pavement. She had to keep running. Her breath was hot and thick, and she was tired, but she couldn't stop. If she stopped that would be the end. Why is she running?
8. The man/woman started the engine. The purr of it eased his/her tense muscles. It had been a long time since s/he was in a race car. S/He wondered if it would come back to

him/her. The man/woman eased the car into gear, and slowly pulled out of the parking lot. Where is s/he going? What is s/he doing in a race car?

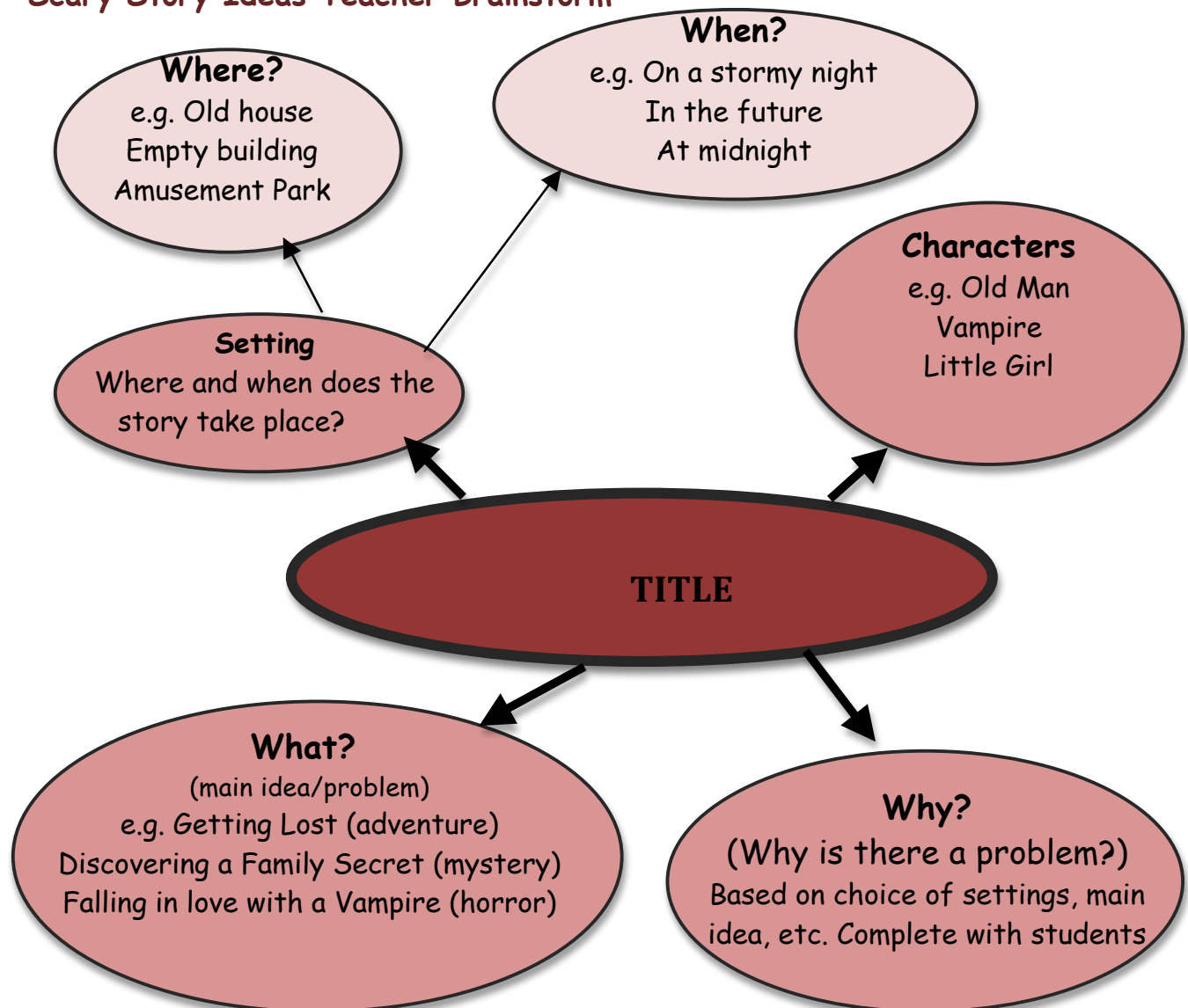
9. A construction crew is on break at the building site. The foreman is watching the crew. Suddenly a fight breaks out. He runs and stops it. He glares at the carpenter and the plumber. Why were they fighting?
10. Pat and Sam have been best friends since they were sixteen. Two months ago they had had a huge fight and haven't talked since. What happened? Why haven't they made up?
11. A young woman sits crying on the bench. A man approaches, and almost decides to walk away. He doesn't. He hands the woman a tissue and asks her why she's crying. What does she tell him?
12. A woman inherits €400,000 from a relative she didn't even know. The woman has just fallen on hard times, so the money is a blessing. She decides it's time to move and start fresh. Where does she go and why?
13. You and the love of your life have packed a picnic. Finding the "perfect" spot by a stream, you begin unpacking lunch onto the yellow checked blanket you have spread on the ground. You are thinking how wonderful it is, so quiet, so private. You stand and look down the stream toward the old mill. You wonder if some other couple long ago sat by the stream. Then you notice someone behind a tree not so far away - a girl in a long flowing dress. Could it be someone from days gone by? Who is it? Why is she here? Is she looking for someone?
14. It is Xmas and everyone is sleeping. Suddenly, you hear the faint sound of sleigh bells approaching....
15. You open the dreaded gift from Aunt Bertha, expecting to find the usual useless gift. You pull out a glowing ball of material you have never seen before. You inspect it for a moment and then tuck it away in the corner with your other useless gifts. That night, as you are drifting off to sleep, you hear a faint whirring sound coming from the corner of your room...
16. The first time s/he saw him in uniform, his/her heart stopped. Now, here s/he was....
17. Her face burned red as she recognised her diary sitting on his desk. How could he....
18. You roll through Mc Donald's drive-thru, order your usual and wait for the cashier to repeat it back to you. Only, he doesn't repeat it. Instead, through the speaker, you hear a very unusual/interesting conversation...
19. When you were little, you could swear there was a monster under your bed--but no one believed you. On the eve of your 30th birthday, you hear noises coming from under your bed once again. The monster is back and has an important message to deliver to you...

20. You're at a Chris Brown concert when you receive a text from a friend that says, "You'll never believe what just happened to me!" In the form of a text chat, find out what happened to your friend.
21. You're sitting at work one day and receive a text message from an unrecognised number. The text says, "I have the money and hid the body." You think this is a practical joke from a friend, so you play along at first. But the more texts you receive, the more you realise that it isn't a joke. Write the text conversation and story.
22. A man buys a parrot and is horrified when he discovers the only thing it can say is, "If you ever tell anyone what you saw, I'll kill you." (You can change what the parrot says).
23. You awaken with amnesia in what looks to be an igloo/strange planet/pyramid etc. You have €4, a rock in one pocket and a toothbrush in the other. Someone is staring at you... Write this scene/story.
24. You are out to lunch with people you work with, when you bump into a close friend who refers to you by a nickname. Because of its unusualness, the nickname catches the interest of one of your co-workers who asks for the story behind it. Start your story with, "This may come as a surprise, but ..." and end it with, "And that's how I got the nickname".
25. Your best friend has been arrested for illegally downloading music. While in jail, s/he asks you to go to his/her house and clear everything off the computer. As you start deleting files, you notice a folder called "Top Secret." Out of curiosity, you open it—and are shocked by what you find...
26. After years of leading a normal life, you discover you have a special ability. Afraid to share this information with anyone, you confide only in your closest friend. To your surprise, your friend shares some information with you—he also has a super power...
27. The government has issued a warning that a particular (and common) household item is having an unusual side effect on children. Worse yet, you own this item. You rush home to check on your kids. When you get there, you're shocked to find that your kids have.... Write this scene/story.
28. Write a short story based on your favourite song, using the song's title as your story's title and the lyrics for your plot.
29. Babies typically talk in babbles that adults can't understand. But one day, while at the park, you're sitting on a bench next to two babies. They start their babbling and all of a sudden you realise you can understand them. Even more, they are plotting a wicked plan. Write this scene/story.

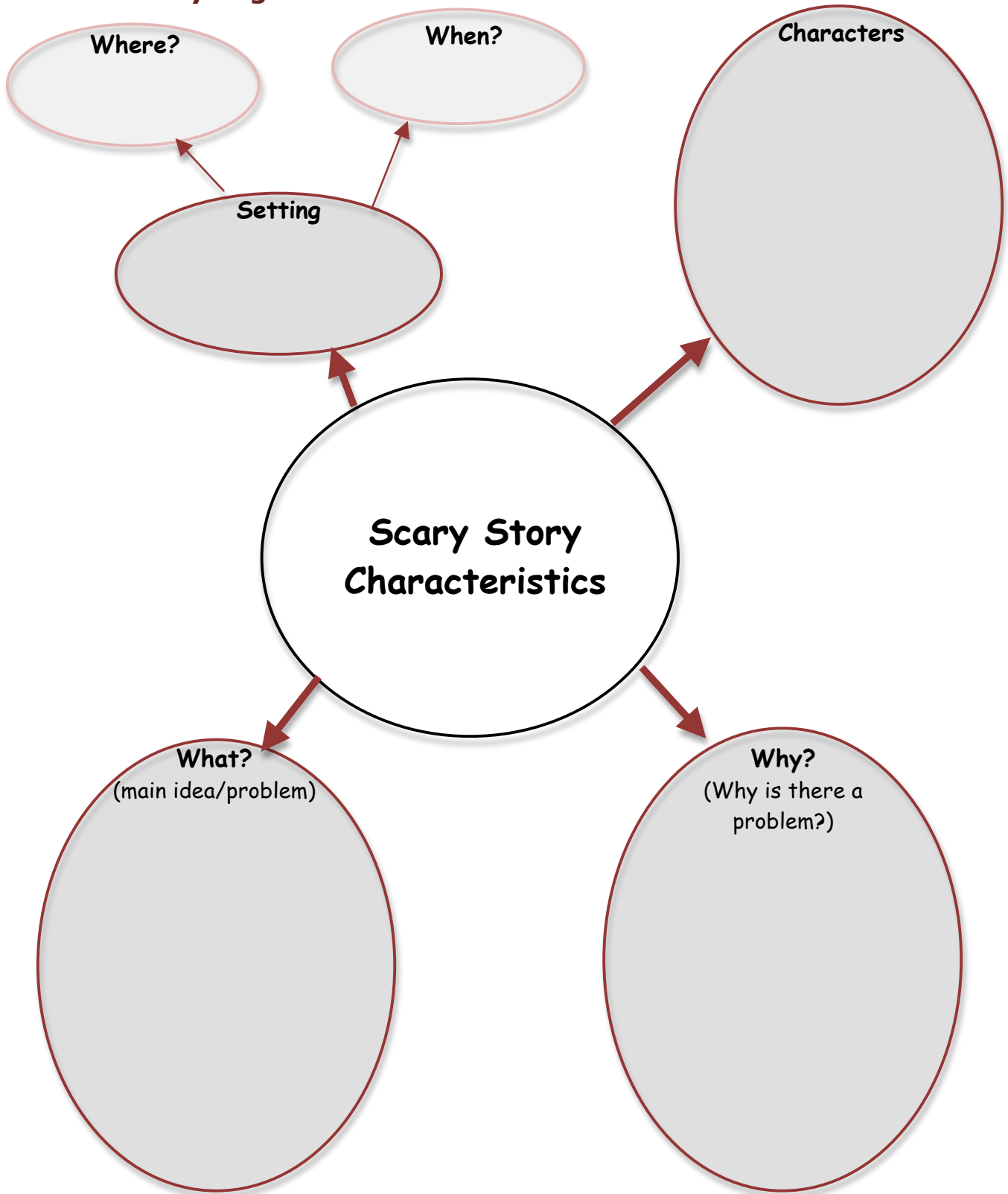
Story Organisers

Students now examine the different components of a story in more depth. Story maps or organisers can help students define characters, events, main ideas and details. Give students 10/15 minutes to come up with the 5Ws (who, what, when, where and why) for a selection of the above stories. Remind them that stories are written to entertain and writers use comedy, suspense, mystery, a twist, romance, etc. to do this. Use the story maps and organisers on the following pages to support this work. Choose the story map that best suits your students' learning styles or design one that relates to their interests – e.g. in the shape of a football, etc. Initially demonstrate how to use story maps with students before they use them on their own. Below is an example of a teacher brainstorm on a 'scary story' to demonstrate with students how ideas are organised.

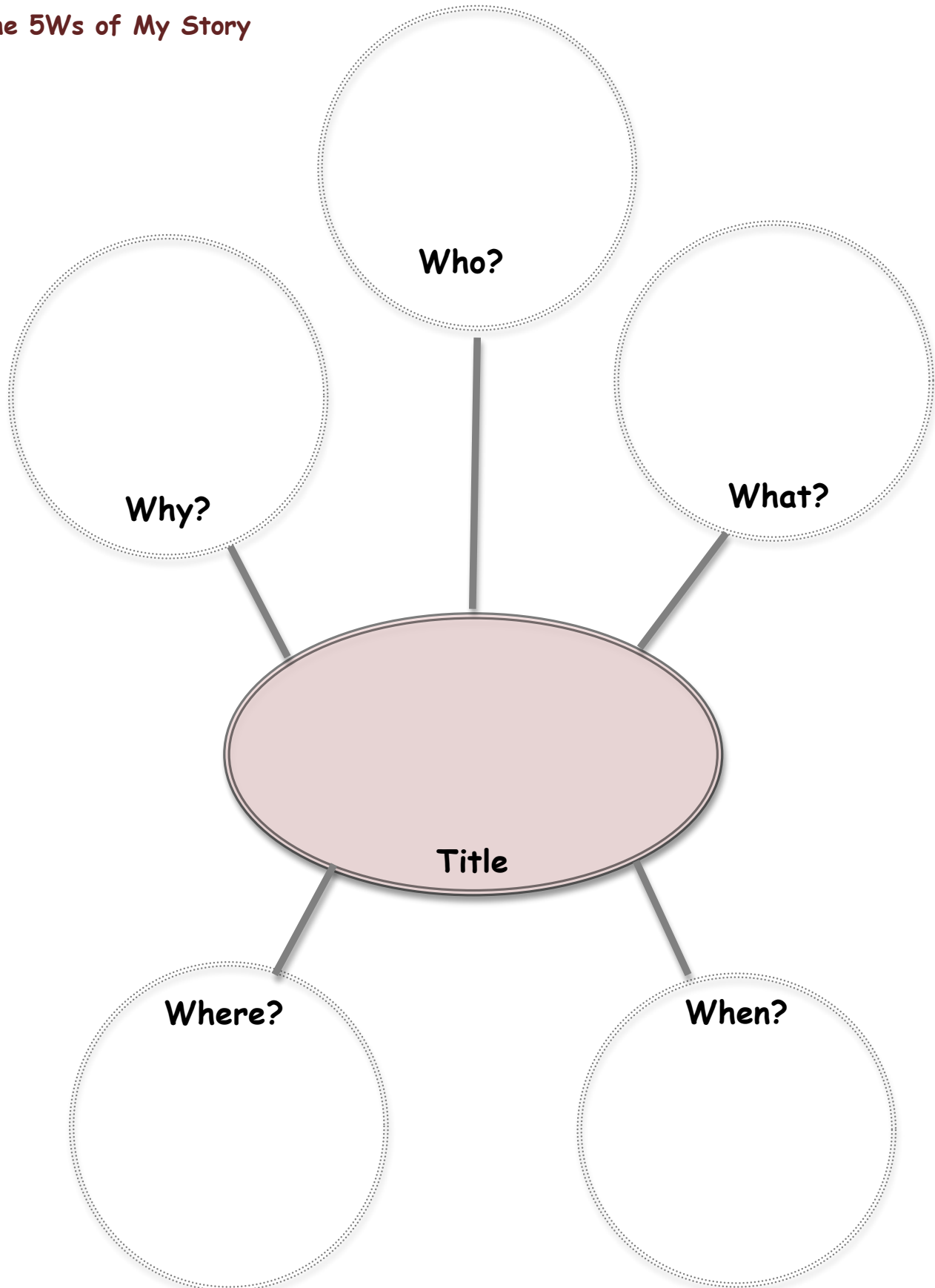
Scary Story Ideas Teacher Brainstorm



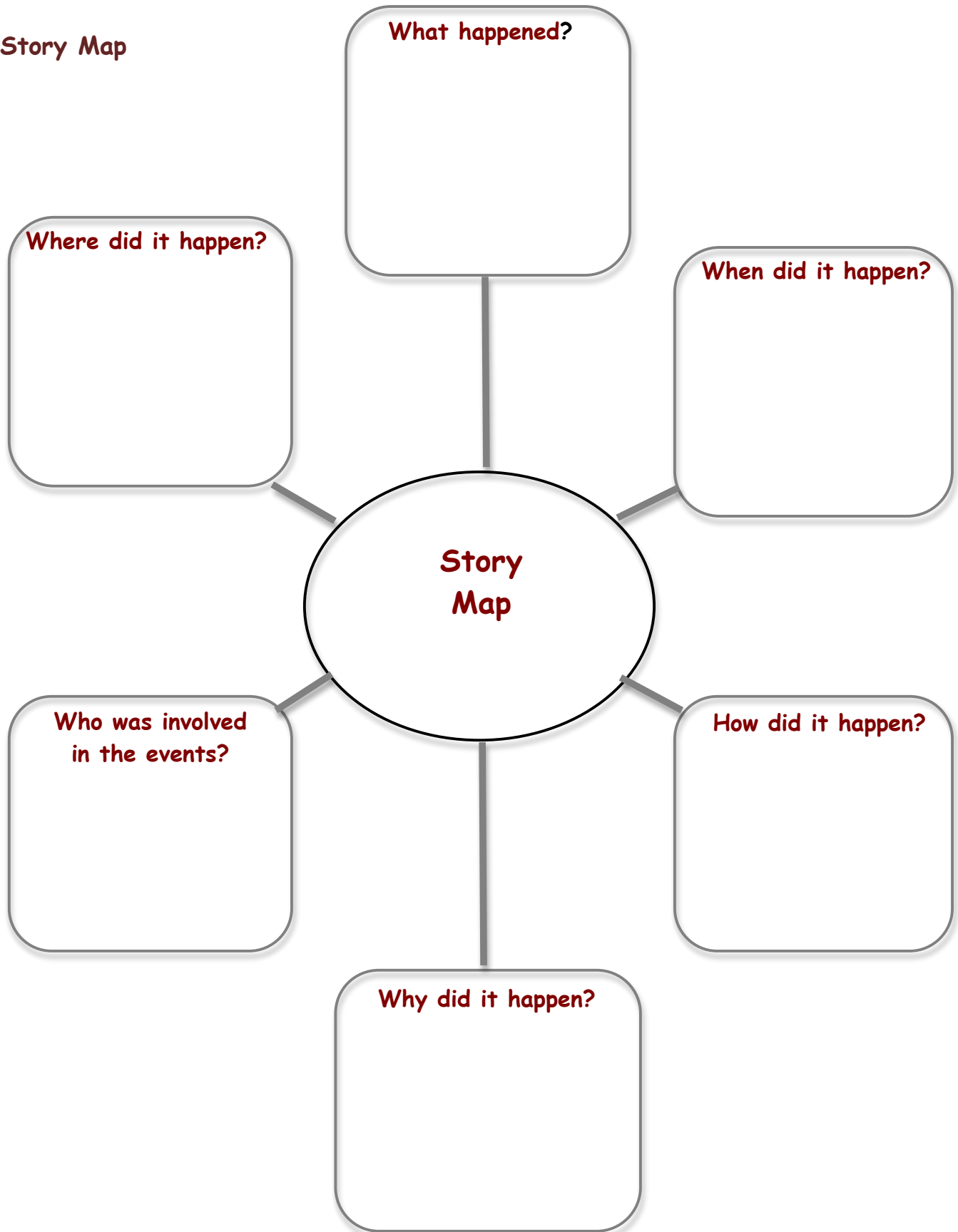
Student Story Organisers



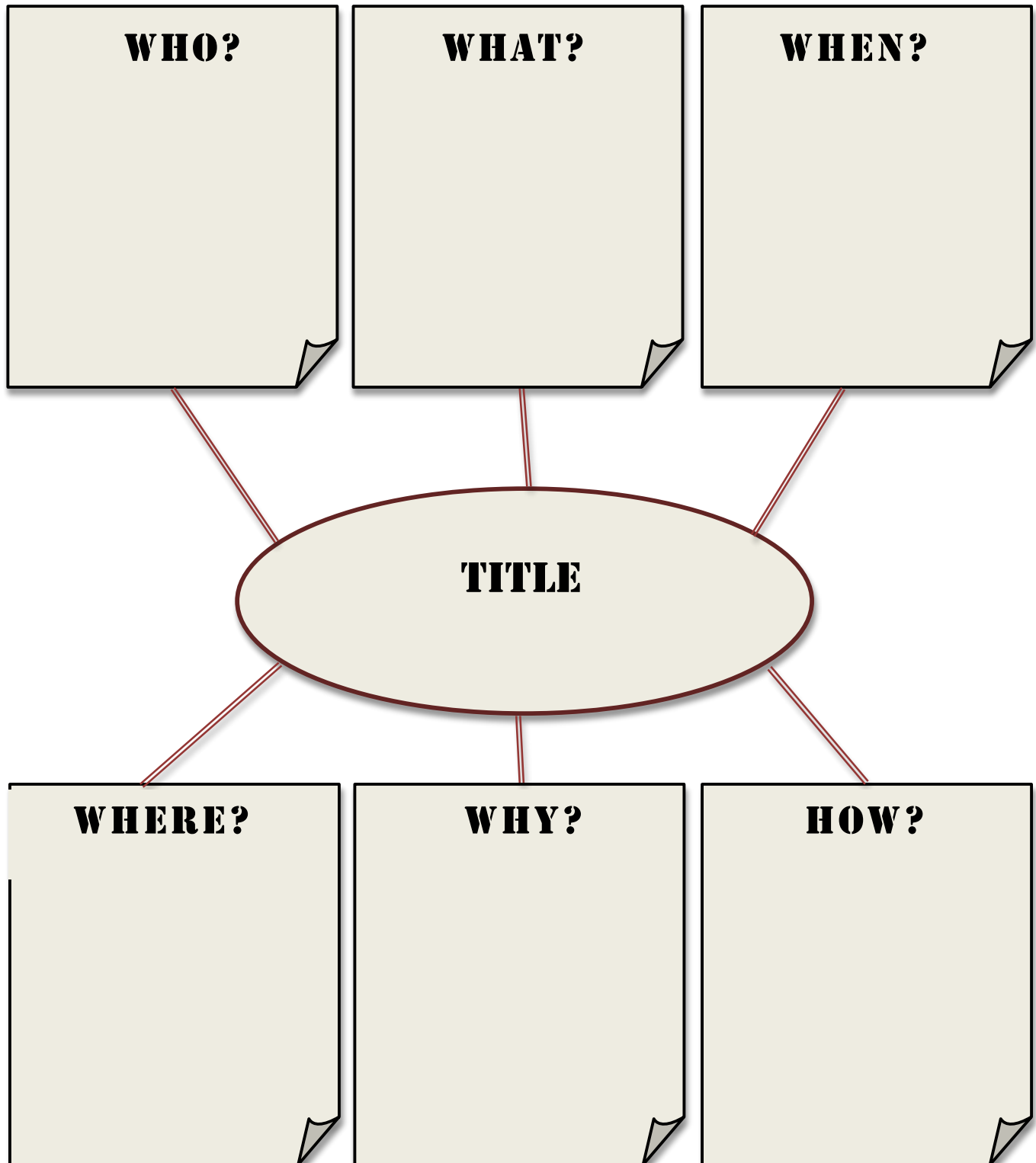
The 5Ws of My Story



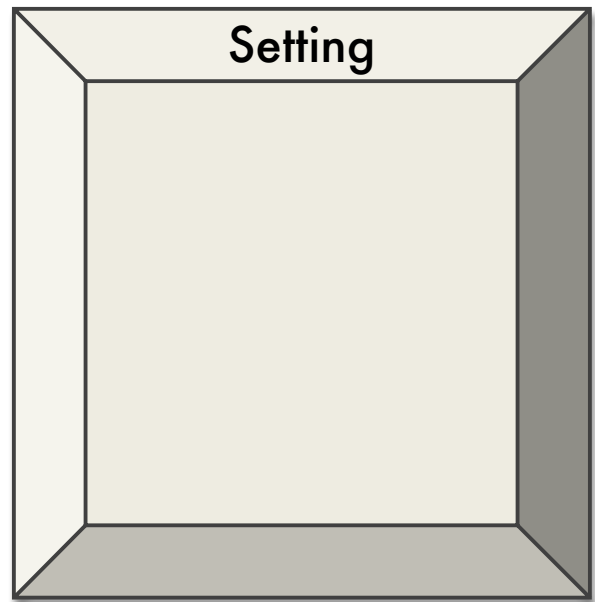
Story Map



The 5Ws and the 1H



Story Organiser



	Problems	
--	-----------------	--

	Events	
--	---------------	--

	Solutions	
--	------------------	--

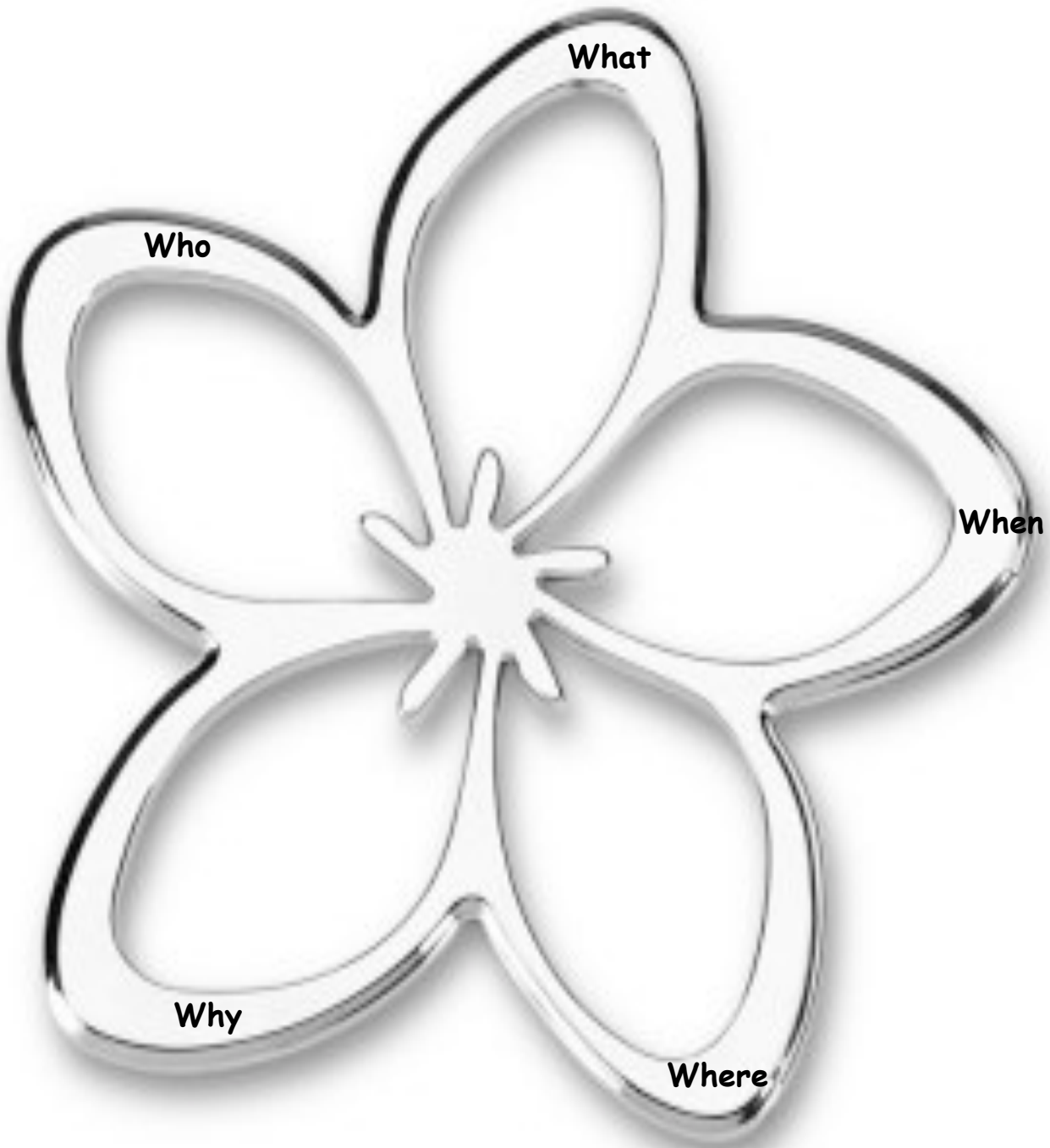
The 5Ws

To help you plan your story complete the chart with as much information as possible.

<p>WHO?</p> <p>Who are the main characters and what are they like?</p>	
<p>WHAT?</p> <p>What is the story about?</p> <p>What is the problem and how is it sorted?</p>	
<p>WHEN?</p> <p>When does the story take place?</p>	
<p>WHERE?</p> <p>Where does the story take place?</p>	
<p>WHY?</p> <p>Why is there a problem?</p>	

The 5Ws Flower

To help you plan your story, fill out as much detail as you can in each petal.



Developing the Elements

After students have tried creating the skeleton or plan of a story using the 5Ws and some story starters, it is now time for them to choose their favourite story to develop further. After they have chosen a story to develop further they then take each element that they have outlined in the story map and begin to add more detail to each section. See examples below on character development and plot development.

Character Description

Think about your main character and use the headings below to help you build up a description or picture of him or her. You can also use these headings for the other characters in your story.

Character Name:

NickName:

Age:

Male/Female:

Marital Status:

Hair Colour:

Height:

Eye Colour:

Distinguishing Features: (beard, tattoos, scars, special powers, etc):

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Parents:

Sisters/brothers:

Friends:

Personal Qualities, Traits or Superpowers (e.g.: charm; luck; humour; wisdom, invisibility, etc)

Hobbies:

The Plot

Look at the plot diagram below and the example of the plot diagram using the story Cinderella.



To support students in developing the plot of their story use the diagrams on the previous page. Or create examples using well known stories and get students to rearrange the plot and sequence of events in the correct order. After this, have students plan possible opening scenes, starting events, etc for their own story. Students can use a plot graph/diagram similar to the example here or a storyboard, mind map/concept map or other graphic organiser to help them develop their story structure further (see examples below). Make sure they also go back over and use the planning they have done before this.

Storyboard

Here's how I picture the main character...	Here's how I see the setting...
Here's the problem...	Here's an important event...
Here's another important event...	Here's one other important event...
This is the solution...	And this is what happens at the end.

Plot Your Story

Setting	Character Traits
Where and when does the story take place?	Who are the major characters and how could you describe them?
Conflict/Problem	Plot: Rising Action
What is the problem or conflict?	What events lead to the conflict?
Plot Climax	Plot: Falling Action
How does the conflict unfold and how are the major characters affected?	How is the conflict resolved?

Students could complete a facebook page and post some some tweets for each character in their story.

facebook
Home
Profile
Friends
Inbox (1)
Settings
Log out

Username:

Wall	Info	Photo	+
------	------	-------	---

View photos of me (34)

Basic information ---

Sex:

Current City:

Birthday:

Relationship Status:

Looking for:

Political Views:

Religious Views:

Personal Information ---

Activities:

Interests:

Favourite Music:

Favourite TV shows:

Favourite Quotations:

About Me:

Contact Information ---

Email:

Current address:

Education and Work ---

College:

High School:

Employer:

Position:

Description:

Groups ---

Information

Relationship Status:

Current City:

Birthday:

Friends



Username

[+ Follow](#) [⚙️](#)

About 5 minutes ago from web

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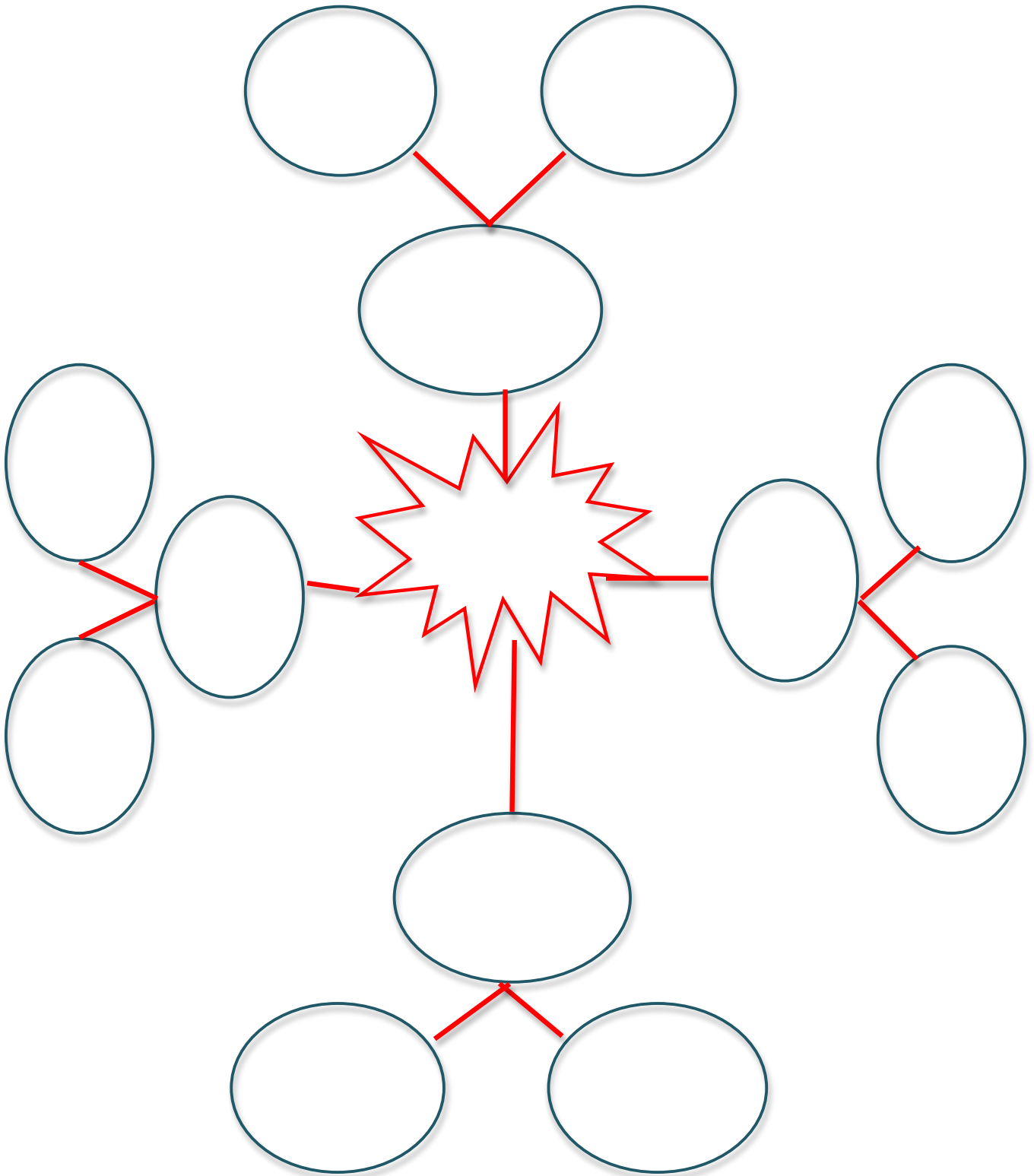
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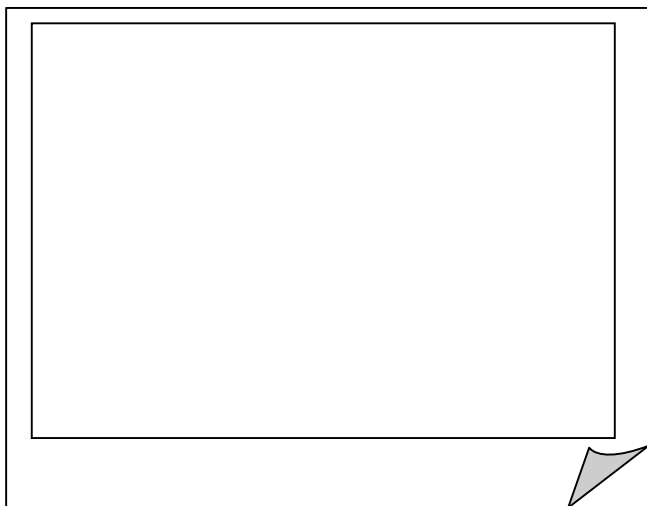
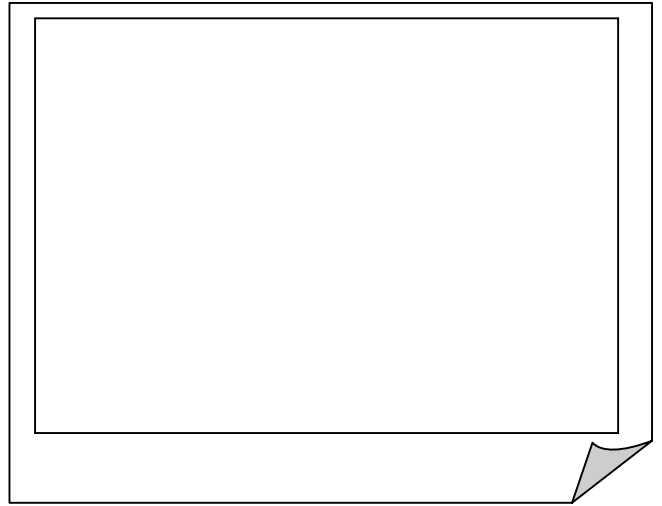
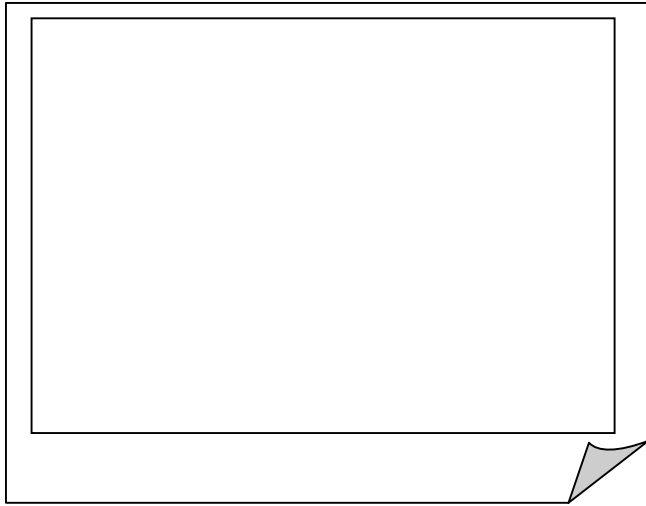
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[followers](#) [following](#)

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Mind Map/ Concept Map



Storyboard



Working with Wow Words

It's now time to focus on 'Wow' words to further develop students' stories. Explain to students how the use of 'Wow' words can help build a picture in the reader's mind and make the reader want to read on. Perhaps read extracts from a story(ies) to demonstrate this. For example, with the extract below, taken from *Point Blanc* by Anthony Horowitz, students could be asked to listen for and note down any interesting action words or verbs they hear.

Alex sensed the danger before the first shot was fired. Perhaps it was the snapping of a twig or the click of the metal bolt being slipped into place. He froze - and that was what saved him. There was an explosion - loud, close - and a tree one step ahead of him shattered, splinters of wood dancing in the air. Alex turned round, searching for whoever had fired the shot.

"What are you doing?" he shouted. "You nearly hit me!"

Almost immediately there was a second shot and, just behind it, a whoop of excited laughter. And then Alex realised. They hadn't mistaken him for an animal. They were aiming at him for fun!

He dived forward and began to run. The trunks of the trees seemed to press in on him from all sides, threatening to bar his way. The ground beneath him was soft from recent rain and dragged his feet, trying to glue them into place. There was a third explosion. He ducked, feeling the gunshot spray above his head, shredding the foliage.

This exercise could be repeated using different story extracts and students could note great describing words; words used to communicate feeling, smell, sounds; or words used other than 'said', 'went' or 'looked'. Students could also write down 3-5 'Wow' words that stand out as they listen to audio recordings of different stories, the lyrics of songs or the lines of poetry. All 'Wow' words should be explained, with examples and non examples, compared to words with similar meanings and discussed in context.

Different ways of helping students remember the word should be incorporated into the class and linked to the ways students learn e.g. get students to draw a picture related to the word; or put the words into a crossword or word sleuth; make a "Wow' word cloud in wordle <http://www.wordle.net/> or make other words out of the letters of the 'Wow' word. The 'Wow' words could also be hung up on the classroom wall and illustrated by students. For homework, students could be given the task of choosing and sharing in class the next day a 'Wow' word from something they read at home, saw on a poster or street sign or heard on a TV programme. All homework 'Wow' words could be shared and

discussed in class the following day, as well as hung up on the wall or a class 'Wow' word cloud created and displayed.

Building a 'Wow Word Wall' of adjectives, verbs, adverbs, alternatives to 'said', etc will support students use of these words when it comes to writing their stories.

Another way to support 'Wow' words vocabulary development is by asking students, in pairs or groups, to replace a specific verb or adjective or 'square' word (e.g. said, nice), with a 'Wow' word. Students could also be given a dictionary or thesaurus and set the task of finding alternatives to particular words. The thesaurus available on Microsoft Word can be a useful tool for students.

The following pages contain examples of some 'Wow' words vocabulary development exercises that could be adapted, developed and tweaked to suit students.

In groups your task is to come up with at least 3 'Wow' words to replace the following words.

Bad	Nice	Talk	Said	Think
Look	Big	Small	Look	Went

Square Words to Sparkling Words

Replace these 'square' words with 'sparkling' words. Adjectives are in red and the 'action' words or verbs are in blue.

- Sam was upset(_____) when the big (_____) balloon burst.
- Sean felt mad (_____) with his little (_____) brother.
- Ann went (_____) into the big, dark (_____, _____) cave.
- She has a nice (_____) face and nice (_____) hair.
- The thief took (_____) a new watch, and then ran (_____) away.
- She saw a scared (_____) kitten holding (_____) on to the branch and went (_____) to rescue it.
- When the vampire got up (_____) from the coffin, Bella was scared (_____). She got a stake and tried to hit (_____) him.

Something Else Instead of 'Said'!

Read the sentences and then choose a word to replace the word 'said' in each sentence. Make sure that the meaning of the sentence is not changed.

- 1) "Stop that!" said the irritated teacher.
(yelled / stammered / cried)
- 2) "Did I upset her in some way?" said the doctor.
(shouted / questioned / asked)
- 3) "Don't worry," I said to her, "It was Anne who upset her."
(whispered / sobbed / explained)
- 4) "We need to get out of here quickly," Billy said to Sean.
(muttered / shouted / replied)
- 5) "I like that!" said the little girl.
(questioned/ exclaimed / screamed)
- 6) The boy said to the girl, "Give that back to me now!"
(laughed / asked / demanded)
- 7) The teacher carefully said to her class how to do the sum.
(shouted /questioned / explained)

Powerful Verbs

Verbs are action or doing words like run, jump and walk. Powerful verbs can make your writing much more **exciting** and **dramatic**. In your groups underline the verb and then re-write the sentence with a more powerful verb. You can use a thesaurus if needed. *(Students could also be given a list of words to choose from e.g. grabbed, leapt, crawled, strode, exclaimed, glared, etc).*

1. John took the sweets from the boy.
2. The gang of boys ran after the ice cream van.
3. The monkey went up the tree.
4. Patrick said to David, "It's my turn on the Xbox!"

5. "Pass me the ball!" said Claire.
6. The child went under the stairs.
7. The athlete jumped over the hurdle.
8. Liz walked up to get her prize.
9. Mr McBride looked at the students who were talking during the assembly.
10. "I passed, I passed!" said the girl.

Create a sentence using the following 'power' verbs.

grabbed	snatched	sprinted	scrambled	shouted
screamed	crawled	leapt	strode	yelled
	exclaimed	glared		

Students can also create their own 'Wow' word lists as they discover new 'Wow' words from listening, reading, class exercises or homework. Class or student awards for the best 'Wow' word of the day or the best use of a 'Wow' word could be incorporated into this activity. (See blank 'Wow' word lists on pages 33 and 34)

More Wow Words

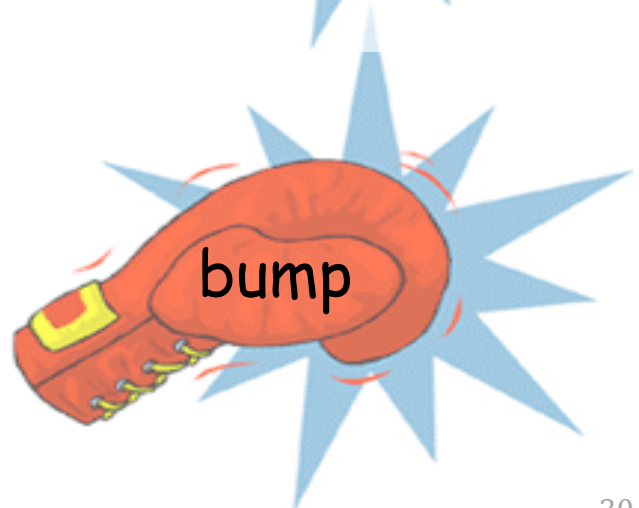
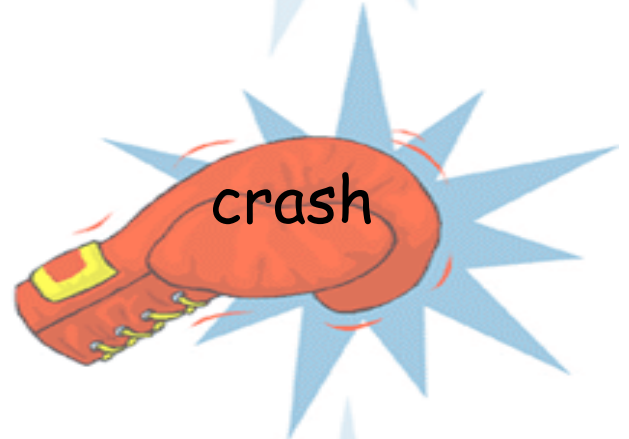
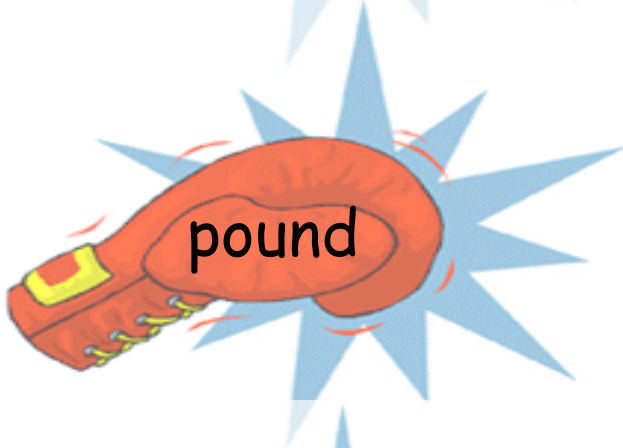
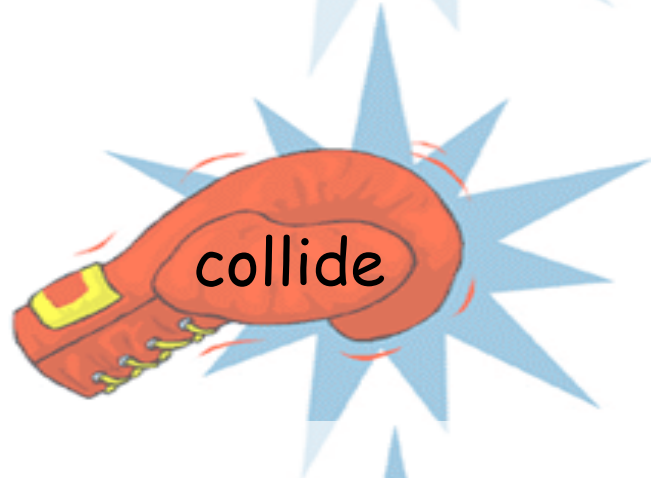
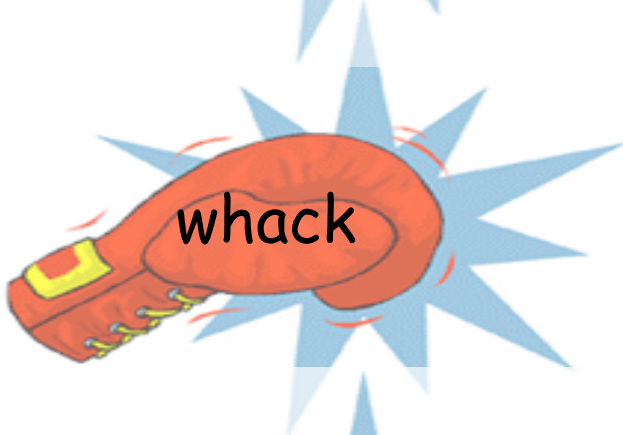
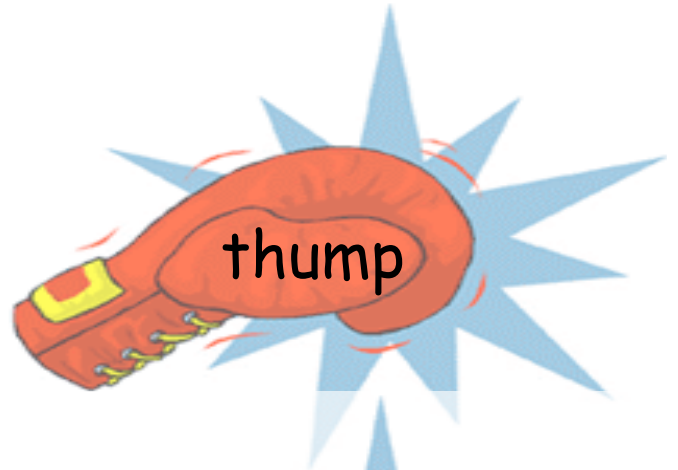
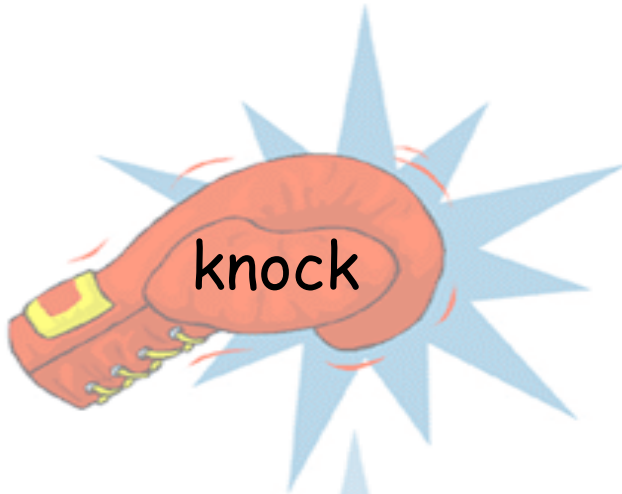
Students can now consider how they might use the 'Wow' words they have discovered from doing the 'Wow' word exercises (and that are also visible on the classroom wall) into their stories. Lists of 'Wow' words can also be put on students' desks as reminders and 'helpers', as they begin to write their stories.

The following pages contain 'Wow' word lists. These can be used to support student writing as they draft their stories. Suitable 'Wow' words to describe a character, a setting, etc can be added to the story maps they have developed so far. Lists could also be enlarged, labeled e.g. '*Amazing Adjectives*'; '*Pick a Power Verb*'; '*Instead of Said Use...*' etc and put on the wall as a visual reminder. Pre-teaching, discussing and putting these words in sentences will help students become more familiar and more confident with using them in their stories or in speech.

Wow Words



Verbs with a Punch



Don't Just Walk...



strolled



strutted



staggered



swerved



darted



browsed



dived



stomped



sauntered



hurried



raced



rushed

What to Use Instead of Said!



How Did You Look?



Adjectives to 'Wow' With...

dark
unlit
shady
sunless
gloomy
sombre
bleak
dismal
black

old young delicate clear
windy soothing effective
sore tender kind soft
hard warm safe wooden
smooth hairy big wrinkly
flaming burning creamy
shadowy everlasting true

light
glare
shine
luminous
sparkle
glow
radiant

suspicious
doubtful
suspect

tall
high
lofty
giant
towering
colossal

cold
chilly
freezing
arctic
raw
numbing

special
exceptional
extraordinary
curious
rare
strange

unusual
uncommon
odd
extraordinary
peculiar
cruel

fierce
strong
evil
menacing
savage
wild

quick immediate fast
slow leisurely gradual

interesting attractive
exciting convincing
enchanted fascinating
compelling stimulating

colourful
energetic
alive
stunning
fantastic
tragic
shocking
pretty
clumsy
fierce
vicious
amazing
annoying
dumbfounded
lively
handsome

Adjectives for Characters

Good Guy 		Bad Guy 	
angelic	beautiful	brutish	violent
helpful	kind	unhelpful	rotten
saintly	clever	mean	evil
upright	talented	wicked	vicious
skilful	worthy	mischievous	rude
grateful	gentle	ferocious	wild
wise	generous	vile	horrible
wholesome	true	selfish	spiteful
courageous	brave	undisciplined	sick
honest	strong	destructive	foul
thoughtful	patient	disobedient	ghastly
considerate	helpful	naughty	shocking
gracious	loving	immoral	devilish
sympathetic	fair	cruel	vindictive
obliging	sincere	nasty	slanderous
trustworthy	tolerant	venomous	savage
sensible	truthful	rough	aggressive
reasonable	gorgeous	hostile	murderous

Source: www.primaryresources.co.uk/english

Choose a Power Verb

When you replace a weak verb with a strong one, make sure it works in your sentence as words have their own 'shades of meaning'. So, check any word you replace and see if it makes sense!

cry	weep, shed tears, sob, blubber, snivel, mourn, lament, whimper, wail, howl, groan, bawl, plead, moan
talk	speak, converse, chat, reply, gossip, consult, discuss, reveal, confess, address, negotiate, lecture, rant, rave, mutter, chatter, utter, prattle, babble, rattle on
think	reflect, consider, ponder, imagine, meditate, picture, contemplate, deem, recollect, recall, speculate, conceive, fancy, realise, surmise, rationalise, muse.
run	race, hurry, speed, hasten, dash, sprint, dart, zoom, scamper, scoot, scurry, bustle, rush, hustle, trot, scramble, flee, take flight, skedaddle, jog, glide, bolt
walk	stroll, promenade, wander, saunter, march, trudge, tramp, hike, parade, tread, pace, step, prance, amble, trek, waddle, cruise
laugh	chuckle, giggle, roar, chortle, cackle, guffaw, snicker, titter.
yell	shout, holler, scream, bellow, roar, howl, shriek, bawl, whoop, yowl
eat	gobble, devour, munch, snack, consume, swallow, dine, chew, feast, feed, nibble, gulp, wolf down, lunch, ingest
watch	look, stare, gaze, peep, ogle, observe, notice, attend, regard, survey, scrutinise, pore over, eye, note, examine, view, tend, oversee, patrol, guard
dream	daydream, fantasise, wish, hope, imagine, fancy, muse, desire
see	discern, distinguish, spy, mark, mind, note, notice, observe, view, detect, glimpse, spot, witness
sleep	nap, doze, drowse, rest, nod off, snooze, forty winks
say	reply, converse, disclose, explain, inform, express, state, report, announce, mention, acknowledge, answer, declare, suggest

Student Wow Word Sheet

Name:



Student Wow Word Sheet

Name:



My Weekly Stash of Diamond Wow Words

Proofing and Editing

After students have drafted their stories they can then work with a partner to help improve and revise each other's rough drafts. Initially the skill of peer editing should be taught as a whole class activity so students can learn how to respond effectively to one another's writing. The three steps to good peer editing are:

1. Compliment the author

What are the things that you liked about the author's writing?

2. Make specific suggestions regarding the author's:

Word choice

Use of details

Organisation of events

Sentence length

Opening sentence (does it grab your attention – how?)

Variety of words to start sentences and paragraphs.

3. Mark corrections on the writing piece

Look for spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes.

Use a sample piece of text (teacher's own work perhaps) on an overhead projector, a PowerPoint or handout and demonstrate how to edit. Using the example, bring students through the writing and show the different ways it could be improved e.g.

Word choice - Did the author choose interesting words that help you paint a picture in your mind? Does the opening sentence grab the reader's attention?

Using details (for example, details about what the characters do, feel, say and think and realistic dialogue, using comparison - 'like' and 'as').

Organisation - Can you understand what the author is trying to say? Are the events in a logical sequence?

Sentences - Is there a mix of sentence lengths or are some sentences too long? Do sentences start with different words or do many sentences start the same way?

Theme/Topic - Does the author stick to the topic/story line or talk about other things that don't really fit with the plot?

Add, Subtract, Multiply and Divide

You could teach students the '*Add, Subtract, Multiply and Divide*' editing method. This is where students select a paragraph or paragraphs from their story and add specific vocabulary to give their writing more variety.

Select a paragraph or paragraphs from your story and use '+ + - - × and ÷' method to improve your writing.

+ Add	a metaphor or simile (e.g. "The violin sounded like a rusty gate swinging on its hinges").
+ Add	proper nouns (e.g. McCabe's Pharmacy instead of shop).
- Subtract	three 'square' words, such as <i>stuff, things, nice, pretty</i> and <i>good</i> , and replace them with 'Wow' words.
- Subtract	all unnecessary words and repetitious ideas.
× Multiply	the number of vibrant verbs, such as <i>screamed, ripped</i> and <i>scoffed</i> .
÷ Divide	the writing into paragraphs.

Praise – Question – Polish (PQP)

Another peer editing method that could be taught to students is the '*PQP: Praise – Question – Polish*' technique. 'The PQP technique requires a group of students (usually two to five per group) to take turns reading each others drafts aloud as the other students follow along with photocopies of the story. This oral reading helps the writer/student to hear the piece in another voice and to independently identify possible changes' (Neubert and McNelis, 1986). The other students then react to the piece by writing comments on the PQP form (see overleaf). The teacher models the technique first and gives examples of comments that are too vague and provide little or no specific direction for revision, such as "*Try to revise the entire second page*" or "*I liked this piece*" or "*Describe Anna better.*"

The teacher should demonstrate how to give comments that provide the writer with specific direction for revision. For example: "*I still can't get a picture of Anna. What kind of clothes does she wear?*"

The teacher then distributes a paragraph of writing and together the students and teacher use the PQP technique. After the students have some practice they can get into their groups and use the technique with one another's draft stories.

PQP: Praise - Question - Polish Peer Review Form

Use this form to give feedback to the writer.

Writer's Name: _____

Story Title: _____

Praise Questions

What is good about the writing? What should not be changed? Why is it good?

Question

As a reader, what do you not understand?

Polish

What specific suggestions for improvement can you make?

* A PowerPoint presentation on Peer Editing that could be used in class is also available from the NBSS.

Writing Review Sheet

Students could also use a checklist, like the one below, to review their own work.

Features of writing	Did I do this?		
	Yes	No	A little
Text level			
My title and opening engage the reader's interest.			
I have included an effective ending.			
My ideas are sequenced into paragraphs in order to interest my reader.			
The theme and purpose of my writing is clear.			
I can create characters and relationships through description, dialogue and action.			
Sentence level	Yes	No	A little
Each paragraph has a topic sentence.			
I vary my sentences to develop ideas and detail (e.g. when, where) and use simple sentences for effect.			
I use imagery to develop character, mood and setting.			
I can use visual and sound effects to create an impact (e.g. alliteration).			
Word level	Yes	No	A little
My verbs create impact and add to the effect.			
I use 'Wow' words to create effect.			
Punctuation	Yes	No	A little
I use punctuation correctly.			
I use speech marks correctly.			

Publishing & Reflecting

Once students have edited their work they then redraft and check again. After this it is time for them to create their story in their chosen format! It might be an idea to introduce the different ways their stories can be created/published at the very start of the exercise as a means of generating some momentum and excitement for the project. Show them examples of different 'finished products' e.g. front cover designs, typed A4 or A5 stories, illustrated stories, stories in shaped books, PowerPoint books, animated books online, talking books, photo books, comic books or digital book trailers (this is where students create the book trailer of their story - like a film trailer).

Contact the NBSS for website links and other information on producing students' writing in these formats. See also the NBSS 'Useful Websites' resource that contains information on websites where students can create animated stories, photobook stories and publish online.

Finally, when students have finished their stories, have them reflect on their writing. Some of the following sheets might assist this reflection:

Reflection on Writing Name: _____ Date: _____

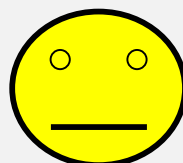
1. When I look back at the work I have done I feel:



Terrific



OK



Needs Work

2. I have got better at writing sentences:

using capitals and full stops

spelling

telling a story

telling my ideas about something

3. I am really proud of...

4. Next time I write I will...

Reflection on Writing

1. When I look back at the writing I have done, I feel...

2. I have got better at...

- Writing complete sentences
- Using capitals and full stops
- Spelling
- Writing a story with details and great words
- Writing my ideas in an order that flows and makes sense
- Beginning sentences
- Ending sentences
- Neatness
- Other: _____

3. I am very proud that...

Self Reflection

Name:

Date:

When I look at the work I have done, I feel..... I have got better in:

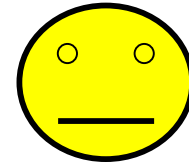
Forming letters



Terrific



Ok

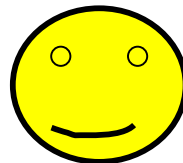


Needs Work

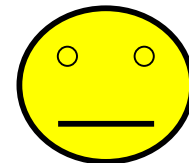
Neatness



Terrific



Ok



Needs Work

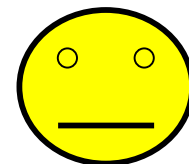
Spacing



Terrific



Ok



Needs Work

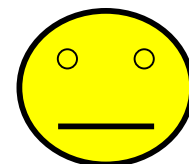
Telling my ideas, using a beginning, middle, end



Terrific



Ok



Needs Work

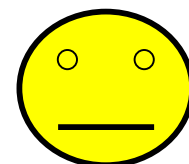
Using 'Wow' words



Terrific



Ok



Needs Work

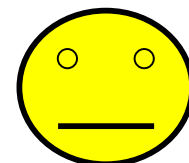
Using capitals and full stops



Terrific



Ok



Needs Work

I'M A WRITER

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write about yourself as a writer.

1. My favourite things to write about are _____

2. I can do my best writing when I _____

3. The things I find difficult to do when I write are _____

4. I can tell I have got better at writing because

5. I think I need to improve my writing by _____

6. If I could give some advice to younger writers about what to do to be a good writer, I would say _____

NBSS 'Learning to Learn' Resources available to support Academic Literacy & Learning:

1. **Comprehension and Learning Strategies for all Subject Areas** (NBSS 2008). This resource outlines research-based comprehension, learning and thinking strategies that can be integrated into all subject areas.
2. **Comprehension and Learning Strategies Classroom Posters** (NBSS 2008). These posters are designed to supplement the teaching of the strategies outlined in the above resource. They are intended as a visual reference for students of the key comprehension and learning strategies all learners need. Comprehension strategy bookmarks or thinkmarks are also available to print and use with students.
3. **Language and Literacy Games** (NBSS 2008). This resource contains numerous ideas on how to develop vocabulary and oral language skills in a fun way.
4. **Read: Engage Student with High Interest and Low Readability Books** (NBSS 2008). This teacher resource provides information on high interest/low readability fiction and non-fiction texts, as well as titles related to specific subject topic areas. High Interest and Low Readability books can encourage reading and support the development of fluency and vocabulary skills.
5. **Literacy and Learning: Programmes and Resources** (NBSS 2008). This teacher resource gives an overview of commercially available programmes and resources that teachers in NBSS partner schools have used successfully to support the development of reading, learning and literacy skills.
6. **Activating Prior Knowledge - Lesson Starter Ideas: Previewing & Reviewing** (NBSS 2009). This resource outlines over 30 activities that can be used to activate students' prior knowledge. Activating prior knowledge increases student comprehension. These activities can also be used at the beginning of a lesson to review learning from a previous class.
7. **Listening, Discussion and Teamwork Lesson Ideas** (NBSS 2009). This resource suggests activities that can be used to develop students' listening, speaking and group work skills.
8. **Useful Web Resources and Sites for Literacy & Learning** (NBSS 2009). This teacher resource gives an overview of websites that can be used with students to support learning across a variety of curriculum areas, as well as numerous sites where teachers can access and download resources to use in their subject area.
9. **Writing with 'WOW' Words and Vocabulary Building:** (NBSS 2009). This resource describes ways to expand students' use of vibrant or 'wow' words as well as activities for developing creative writing skills. Also available is a powerpoint presentation on proofreading and editing that can be used with students in conjunction with this resource.
10. **Strategies for Vocabulary Teaching** (NBSS 2009). This resource outlines research-based strategies for vocabulary teaching as well as games and activities that can be used to develop subject specific vocabulary.
11. **Adolescent Literacy and Learning Information Sheets** (NBSS 2009). This resource gives a brief overview of the 5 key areas in relation to Adolescent Literacy (i.e. comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, phonics and phonemic awareness) and effective practices for addressing the literacy needs of adolescent learners.
12. **Teacher as Researcher: Resource Pack for Literacy and Learning Research Projects** (NBSS 2009). This teacher resource provides several research instruments that can be used as part of the *NBSS Teacher as Researcher Projects* that focus on the development of literacy and learning skills with students.
13. **Learning and Study Skills Toolkit** (NBSS 2010). This resource provides over 30 strategies and templates that can be used to develop students' learning and study skills. The resource is used in conjunction with a NBSS student study skills questionnaire that can help identify those strategies students may need to be taught to improve learning and study skills. Also available to use with these resource are powerpoint presentations or workshops on study and learning skills.
14. **Learning from Textbook Reading at Second Level: Strategies for Success** (NBSS 2010). This resource contains a variety of exercises on text features, questioning and summarising strategies that can help students read and learn from their textbooks. The exercises and skills outlined in this resource can be introduced to 1st year students as part of a transition and transfer induction programme.



Writing with Wow Words and Building Vocabulary

Readability	
Passive Sentences	0%
Flesch Reading Ease	73.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	4.4

*Flesch- Kincaid (US) Grade Level is 11.2

(6th grade = 11-12yrs; 7th grade = 12-13yrs; 8th grade = 13-14yrs; 9th grade = 14-15yrs; 10th grade = 15-16yrs; 11th grade = 17 -18 yrs)

The *Flesch Reading Ease readability score formula rates text on a 100-point scale based on the average number of syllables per word and words per sentence. The higher the Flesch Reading Ease score, the easier it is to understand the document.

* Available in MS Word

National Behaviour Support Service

National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS)
Navan Education Centre
Athlumney
Navan
Co. Meath
Telephone: +353 46 909 3355