

National
Theatre



STORY SEEKERS

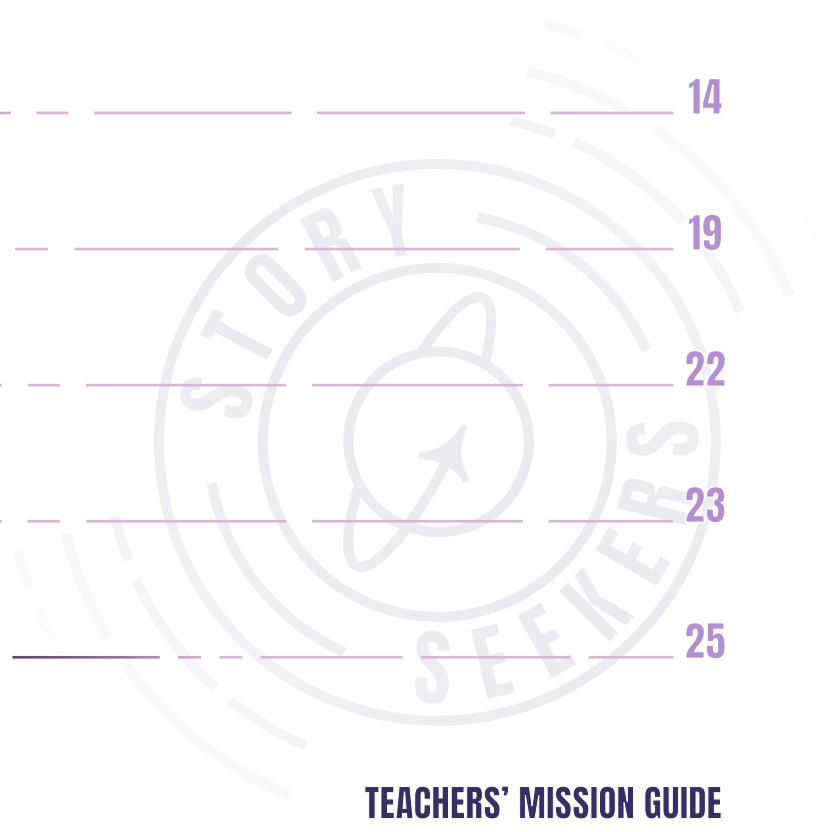
TEACHERS' MISSION GUIDE
ASC/SEND VERSION

Share your Story Seekers
progress on Twitter [#storyseekers](https://twitter.com/storyseekers)

Need help? Email us
storyseekers@nationaltheatre.org.uk

CONTENTS

WHAT IS STORY SEEKERS?	3
WHAT ARE THE AIMS AND OUTCOMES	3
HOW IS THE PROJECT STRUCTURED?	4
WHAT RESOURCES DO I GET ACCESS TO?	5
BEFORE YOU START	6
GETTING STARTED	10
TRAIN	10
SEEK	11
SPEAK	14
CREATE	19
FILM	22
SHARE	23
COMPLETION OF THE MISSION	25



STORY SEEKERS

WHAT IS *STORY SEEKERS*?

Story Seekers is a free oracy project created by the National Theatre and Unicorn Theatre working in partnership. The project challenges children to find traditional stories from across the globe, that they want to tell so they can fulfil their mission to reconnect communities through the telling and sharing of stories. Story Seekers is an online

project designed to be delivered by class teachers but with significant support from CPD sessions and a toolkit of written and digital resources by professional storytellers and theatre artists

Story Seekers is ideal for delivering as part of [Artsmark](#).

WHAT ARE THE AIMS AND OUTCOMES?

- To support children's reconnection with learning and the school community through a fun and creative learning experience.
- To support children's well-being following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- To connect children with their own cultural heritage and that of others in their class (and potentially other schools).
- To develop oracy and literacy skills in pupils at key stage 2 to support catch up in a practical and creative way.
- To develop teachers' understanding of creative learning practice, storytelling and theatre-making and how they can embed this in their teaching practice

HOW IS THE PROJECT STRUCTURED?

The project is divided into six easy-to-follow stages outlined in the following diagram:

1. TRAIN

Watch *Meet the Story Seekers* film.
Deliver the Story Seeker Training Programme – an eight-lesson scheme of work with your class.

3. SPEAK

Class work on creating their versions of the chosen stories in their own words.
Supported by workshops delivered by professional storytellers.

5. FILM

Storytelling performances are filmed and edited.

2. SEEK

Collect stories that class want to tell.
Share them in class. Decide which stories will be chosen as the focus of your filmed performances.

4. CREATE

Class work on how to present their chosen stories in preparation for filming using elements such as puppetry, props, costume and backdrops.

6. SHARE

Class share filmed performances with as many people as possible in the school community and beyond.

WHAT RESOURCES DO I GET ACCESS TO?

All of the project resources both written and digital are accessible via the [Story Seekers website](#)

Each teacher will need to set up your own personal login for the Story Seekers website via this [link](#) which will also be emailed to you.

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with this site before getting started on the project. All of the digital resources designed to be viewed by pupils are BSL interpreted and have the option of captions.

THE PROJECT CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

- A digital theatre performance Meet the Story Seekers and special broadcasts from Story Seeker Command throughout the project.
- Teachers' Mission Guide – notes to guide teachers through project
- A creative literacy scheme of work for teachers to deliver - Story Seeker Training Programme Levels 1 & 2 and supporting resources (developed in partnership with the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education)
- Four online CPD sessions for teachers:
 - o Story Seekers: An Introduction
 - o Story Seeker Training Programme
 - o Storytelling Skills
 - o Creating Your Filmed Performances
- Online pre-recorded workshops led by professional storytellers to support children through the SPEAK stage of the project.
 - o The Storyteller's Voice
 - o The Storyteller's Physicality
- The Storyteller's Memory and Imagination
- Short films designed to support teachers and pupils throughout the CREATE stage of the project:
 - o Using Design to Support Storytelling
 - o Using Puppetry to Support Storytelling
- Short films designed to support teachers and pupils throughout the FILM stage of the project:
 - o Top Tips for Performing to Camera
 - o Film-making Using Everyday Technology
- A Story Bank containing a collection of filmed performances of fifteen stories told by professional storytellers from across the globe – Jan Blake – (specialises in tales from Africa and the Caribbean)
Peter Chand – (specialises in tales from India)
Masako Carey (Japan)
Clare Murphy (Ireland)
Heidi Dhalsveen (Norway)
- Story Seekers Riddle Challenge – 5 short messages from Story Seeker command each containing a challenging riddle for your class. Use these throughout the project as a fun challenge for the children.

BEFORE YOU START

This project is an opportunity to celebrate and share stories – stories that might have existed for hundreds of years, that have been passed down from generation to generation, that have been told and retold for centuries purely as an oral tradition, reshaped by each successive teller of the tale. Before there was writing, there were stories and storytellers. Their myths, fables and stories have crossed borders and seas, and have been the carriers of culture, values and wisdom.

For the purposes of this project children should be guided towards seeking and sharing traditional stories which have been passed down through oral tradition as opposed to modern stories or films they may have seen eg. *Star Wars*, *Marvel* or *Harry Potter* etc.

During this project, the children will be given time, space and the tools to go out and seek the stories that speak to them and that matter to their community, as well as the opportunity to hear, discuss, experience, share and tell stories from all around the world.

► CREATE A 'STORY ZONE'

As part of your classroom provision, it would be useful to gather together traditional tales, myths, legends and fairy tales to add to the class bookshelf. A good book list of traditional tales and other story sources can be downloaded from the SEEK section of the Story Seeker website. These can be borrowed by the children to be read and enjoyed independently or collaboratively. They should also be a regular part of the read aloud opportunities in the classroom, giving all children access to the incredibly broad and rich tapestry of stories that are available. A wide-ranging and varied access to stories will enrich their reading experiences and support them in developing a greater awareness of the variety of stories that have stood the test of time and continue to be enjoyed today. They will become increasingly confident in drawing out the similarities and differences, the multitude of intertextual connections and archetypes that can be found within and across the tales. You could timetable a slot each day in which a story can be read to the children. As the project progresses, children may want to bring in books from home, either for the class teacher to read aloud, or for the children to share with the class themselves.

As these traditional stories are rooted in the oral tradition, it will also be beneficial for children to experience and access stories through storytelling as well as reading. The class teacher, other adults in the school or members of the wider school community could be invited to tell stories to the class. You might be able to arrange for a visit from a professional storyteller or you can access both the Story Bank (via the Story Seekers website) or look for recordings of other storytellers online. YouTube is a good resource for this.

ASC/SEND

Throughout this mission guide and the Story Seeker Training Programme we have included adaptations, ideas and thoughts to make Story Seekers as accessible as possible. We have concentrated on ASC, but the adaptations will cover a broad range of needs that could be used within the SEND setting.

We have provided the SEND ideas alongside the main mission guide (in this colour) so you can integrate these adaptations with Neurotypical

students to help the project include all. In fact, a lot of these adaptations and thoughts will be suitable across Neurotypical as well as Neurodiverse learners.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all lesson plan to cover the whole range of SEND but hopefully this will help you with some tried and tested exercises and creative ways to spark your own ideas on making it accessible for your individual learner.

CREATE A WORKING WALL

It would be very helpful to allocate and prepare a space on the working wall to capture children's observations, reflections and insights as they work through their Story Seeker training. This will itself become an extremely useful resource for the children as they progress through the project.

It may be useful to add a visual timeline from the year we are living in to 2121, the year the Story Seekers have come from. This will help with understanding and provide a visual reference to refer back to as you work your way through.

SEND A LETTER HOME

It would also be helpful to send home a letter at the start of this project explaining what the children will be doing and that we need their family's help and support. Ask them to think about stories that they were told as a child. You might share some of the resources from this pack with parents so that they can be telling, reading and listening to stories together as a complement to this work, making it a project for the whole community. Explain in this initial letter, that you will let them know when they need to share their favourite story.

An addition to the letter home would be to include any information they have about the pupil's name for an exercise which we do in lesson five - 'The Story of My Name'.

It's always good to remind parents or carers that they could email or even WhatsApp a recorded version to you. This is an excellent way to gather those stories from parents, grandparents and their wider community.

WATCH THE MEET THE STORY SEEKERS FILM

We recommend that you take time to watch the Meet the Story Seekers film (17 minutes duration) before watching it with your class. Much of level 1 of the Story Seekers Training programme relates to this film so it will help quite significantly with your preparation and planning.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH THE WEBSITE

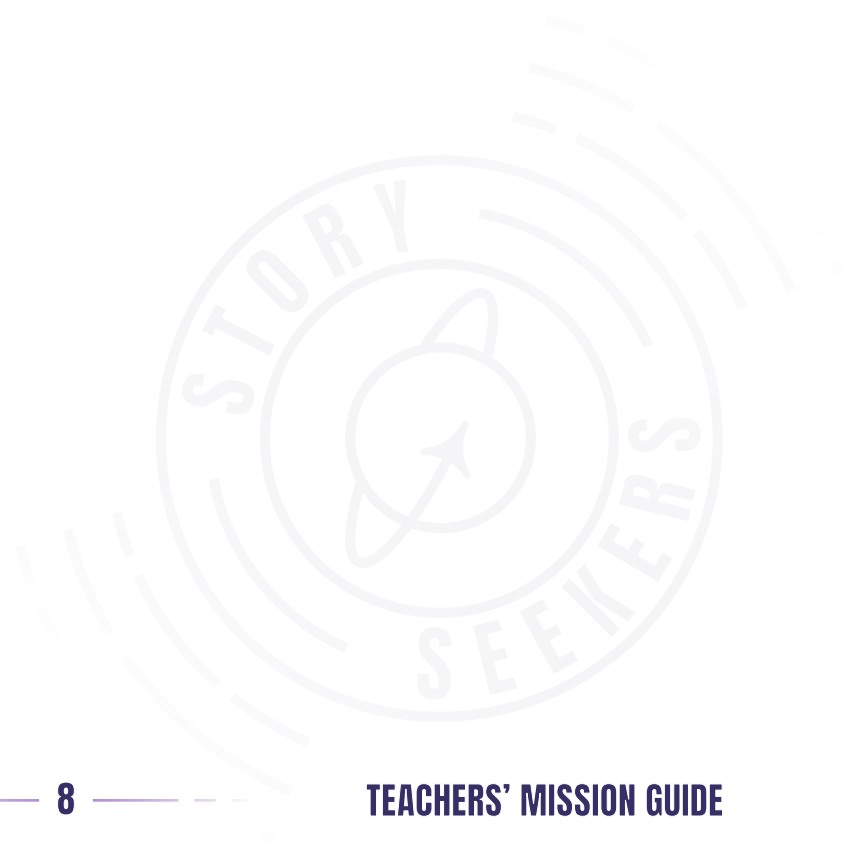
The Story Seekers website contains everything that you need to deliver the project with your class. There is one section of the website for each stage of the project so you should easily be able to find the resources that you need. Each of the resources can be viewed on YouTube, Vimeo or downloaded as a PDF via the buttons on the left-hand side of each page. It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the layout of the website before you begin to deliver the project with your class.

STORY PROPS

Gather together any props that you may have as these will be useful to signify characters. If your children react well to sensory props then these can be great for exploring settings and environment as well as character and emotion.

MARK OUT THE SPACE

If possible, create your Story Seekers space by marking out a clear story circle using masking tape. This gives the pupils a clear, defined space with marked out boundaries that your children will know is for the project and help with space management. It doesn't have to be a circle, it could, for example, be in the shape of the Story Seekers' spaceship, perfect to share back those stories.



PLAN YOUR TIMELINE

Story Seekers is available to schools once a term throughout the academic year. The CPD sessions take place in the first half of each term and you can start the project with your class as soon as these sessions are complete. It is designed to fit into a period of approximately six weeks or roughly half a term. This will slightly differ in the Spring term as the second half of term is so short.

Some schools will have the freedom to spend as long as they choose on the project each week and some may be a lot more restricted than that. Before you start, take some time to plan how you will fit the project into the time you have available. Think about how many hours a week you will be able to realistically dedicate to the project. You will need to dedicate a little more time per week as the project progresses. Below is a suggested example of how you could timetable the project:

Week One & Week Two	TRAIN	Story Seekers Training Programme delivery (eight lessons lasting around one hour each)	four hours per week
Week Three	SEEK	Seeking stories	three to four hours
Week Four	SPEAK	Working on telling the stories in your own words and completing online storytelling workshops	four to five hours
Week Five	CREATE	Create and rehearse your performances adding visual elements	four to five hours
Week Six	FILM AND SHARE	Film and edit your performances and share them as widely as possible	six to eight hours

TEACHERS' NOTE:

Obviously, the more time that you can dedicate to the project, the more the class will gain from taking part. However, if you are really short of time then instead of spending time on the **SEEK** section of the project you could take a short cut and focus solely on the stories that your class will have gathered from their families and community as part of the home learning task in lesson three of the *Story Seeker Training Programme*.

GETTING STARTED

TRAIN

In the first stage of the project, you will deliver the Story Seeker Training Programme with your class. This takes the form of an eight-lesson creative literacy and oracy scheme of work. It will prepare the class for their mission developing the essential skills and understanding that they need in order to become fully fledged Story Seekers. It incorporates the filmed theatre performance Meet the Story Seekers which introduces the Story Seekers to the children and sets them on their mission.

The Story Seeker Training Programme is designed to be delivered to a schedule to suit you. If you wish to complete the project in one half term, then we advise aiming to complete the eight lessons over the course of two to three weeks.

The Story Seeker Training Programme is designed to be delivered by teachers at all stage of teaching experience and with varying levels of experience of working with drama and creative experiential learning. Therefore, the activities are described are quite detailed. For teachers who are more experienced or who have more experience of working with drama, a summary is provided for each lesson.

Each lesson should take approximately one hour to deliver so that it can fit into a literacy lesson or can be extended to a two-hour session depending on the time that you have. There are suggested optional extension activities (Why not?) that you can choose from depending on the amount of time that you are able to give to the project.

Some exercises that benefit from more space for the children to move and interact could be delivered in the school hall. However, if that larger space is unavailable, then all the objectives and outcomes of the project can be met within the classroom. In some cases, it may be necessary to push the tables and chairs to the side of the room.

The importance of establishing your space can be really helpful particularly if working with ASC pupils. To have clear, defined parameters can really help with the success of your project for these reasons:

- It can help with managing behaviours and movement in your space by allowing them a clear visual mark of where to go for each exercise.
- It means that you can move the space to a different area if your pupils find transitioning challenging.
- If you are working towards a sharing or filming of your stories, it will mean you can set positions up from the beginning and make the performance element less unexpected.
- Learning where the audience is and which way to face which can be challenging if your pupils have dyspraxia.

SEEK

During the second stage of the project your class will use their new found Story Seeker skills to find and collect a range of stories that they want to tell. In this section you will explore:

- Where to **FIND** stories?
How to **GATHER** stories with your class?
- How to **SHOW** and **TELL** what has been found?

- How to **DECIDE** which story/stories get chosen?

By the end of this section your class will have found and heard many stories and selected the story (or stories) they want to take forward, with a clear direction of what you will be making

FIND

Stories are everywhere. The Story Sources list (downloadable from the **SEEK** section of the website) provides a range of ideas for places to find a diverse range of stories. Think of this as a

starter list to help you and your children discover the stories you like, explore new ones and expand their literacy. You can come back these resources time and time again.

REMEMBER!

If you are very short of time you can focus on the stories the children found during the Story Seeker training as part of their home learning task.

As your class begin to find stories you can put them together to build your own class anthology. Spend some time thinking about the best way for you to do this. Find the easiest way for you to capture them and keep a record of all the incredible stories your children discover. Here are some suggestions:

- **Six-part story** – Use the six-part story method from the training programme and ask each child to complete a six-part story template for the stories they find. These can easily be compiled in a large book or scrap book. You will soon have your own class book filled with new stories.
- **Storyboard** – Similar to the six-part story, but you don't have to follow the exact same method. Instead let the children create a series of pictures to capture the key moments in their story. You could ask them to add key words or a sentence to each of the images as a way of guiding them when they come back to the stories and try to tell them in their own words. When everyone has completed their storyboard, you can compile them to create a class storybook.
- **Audio recordings** – If they are collecting verbal stories, then ask the children to record the person as they tell their story. (They may need the help of parents/carers for this). An audio recording can be created simply as a voice memo on a phone. You will then have an archive of stories told by many tellers. Why not set up a story booth in the corner of your classroom or school library? It can be as straightforward as an iPad with headphones for children to sit and listen to all the stories their classmates have found.
- **Washing line** – As the children find stories you can ask them to draw or write them down very simply on an A4 sheet or postcard. These can be attached to a washing line in your classroom. As more stories get added they will see their story bank grow. You could even arrange the washing line like branches of tree stretching from one corner of the room, creating your class Story Tree.

SHOW AND TELL

It is important that every child who finds a story has the space to tell it. It is also good for you to hear all the stories that have been gathered so you can select which one(s) you will take forward.

At this stage it should be a simple retelling of the events of the story (see lesson four of the training programme). You could incorporate this into your regular story time at the beginning or end of the day. A story circle like this, hearing a few each time, should build excitement amongst the class and encourage children to find more stories.

Hearing all the stories in this way may take some time, which may be difficult. So here are some other options you could consider:

Groups

In table groups get each person to tell the other members of their table their favourite story they have found. Having heard every person's story they then, as a table group, can select just one to tell the whole class. These are then the stories that are taken forward. You will then as a whole class hear just five or six stories

Share your Story Seekers progress on Twitter [#storyseekers](#) Need help? Email us storyseekers@nationaltheatre.org.uk

Tableaux

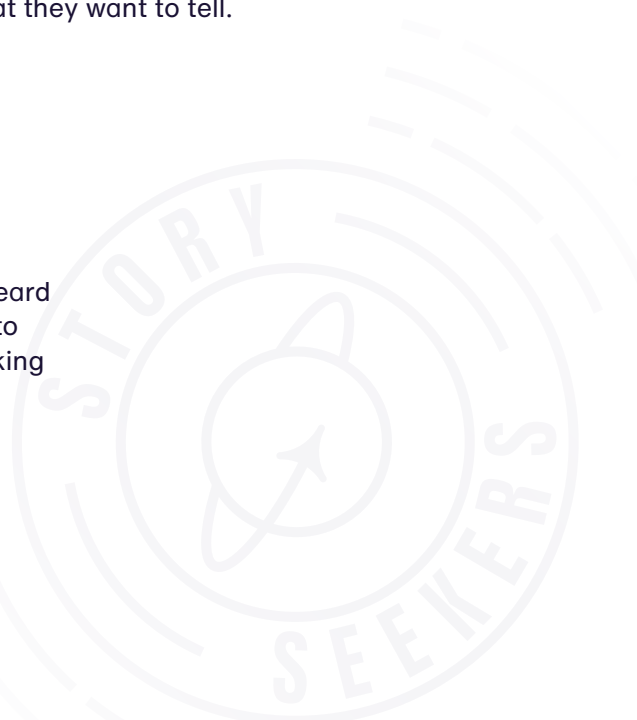
Having heard every story on their table, you can ask them to create three images as tableaux for each person's story – one for the beginning, middle and end of the story. These are shared with the whole class, distilling everyone's story into three images. You can then choose which ones you want to hear in full.

DECIDE

During the second stage of the project your class will use their new found Story Seeker skills to find and collect a range of stories that they want to tell. In this section you will explore:

- Where to **FIND** stories?
- How to **GATHER** stories with your class?
- How to **SHOW** and **TELL** what has been found?
- How to **DECIDE** which story/stories get chosen?

By the end of this section your class will have found and heard many stories and selected the story (or stories) they want to take forward, with a clear direction of what you will be making



It is for you to set the direction – only you know how best to manage the time and energies of your class. When it comes to deciding which story or stories to choose, you can base this on what you think will work. However, you might also like to include the children in the decision making. Here are some suggestions of ways to do this:

Secret vote

Have a recap of all the stories found, referring to your class story anthology. Then ask the children ‘Which story most excites you?’ or ‘Which story would you most love to bring to life?’. Each child can write down the first story that comes to mind. Make clear whether you are allowing them to choose the story they found or not.

Process of elimination

Ask the children to select their top three stories. You could ask them:

Which stories do you think would be the best to show to an audience?

Which stories are the most entertaining?

Which stories contain the most important message that we want to share at this time?

During their selection process some stories will naturally be eliminated. Keep going with this process as the stories are whittled down to the last few. You can then either give the children the power to choose or you have the chance to make the ultimate decision, based on what you know will work best.

Pitch

Ask tables groups to decide together on the story they found most enjoyable. They should come up with all the reasons why that story should be selected. Does it have great characters or strong plot? Does it make people laugh or have a good message? Ask the groups to pitch their favourite story to the rest of the class and you.

Combination of stories

If you decide to use multiple stories for the final performance, you might wish to think about what links the final selection.

You could consider:

What connects all the stories?

Are they all connected to a bigger theme?

Are all the stories similar or is there a range and breadth?

This could be length, style, location, mood, message or topic.

What does an audience experience when they see and hear all those stories combined?

Have you selected stories from multiple voices in your class?

Make sure to include stories from people who don't always get chosen.

SPEAK

In this stage of the project the class will apply their Story Seeker training to their chosen stories, creating their version of these stories in their own words. They will learn helpful techniques to achieve this as well as tips for making their storytelling as engaging as possible using their voice, choice of language and physicality from a series of short pre-recorded online workshops delivered by professional storytellers, Jan Blake and Peter Chand.

In this section you will:

- Learn from professional storytellers about how they use their **MEMORY & IMAGINATION** in the telling of stories.
- Learn from professional storytellers about how they use their **VOICE** and/or **PHYSICALITY** in different ways to help to create an engaging performance of their stories.
- Decide how to **DIVIDE** the telling of each story to be filmed between the children.
- Help the children to practice telling their chosen stories in their **OWN WORDS** reflecting the practice of professional storytellers.

By the end of this section, you should have a rough performance or telling of each of your chosen stories which you are then ready to develop and rehearse.

The **SPEAK** stage of the project is supported by three short pre-recorded workshops for your class to watch. They show Jan Blake and Peter Chand speaking about their practice as storytellers as well as offering specific exercises that relate to the areas listed below. You should pause the film in order to give your class time to complete each exercise. The exercises in the films and a short description of them are listed below:

MEMORY & IMAGINATION

Five senses

This exercise asks the children to get into pairs and to label themselves A and B. They are both then asked to choose a favourite moment from their chosen story. B's must now imagine that they are in that part of their story. They can close their eyes if they wish. A's will ask a series of questions to B which they should answer as a storyteller in as much detail as possible:

What can you see?

What can you hear?

What can you smell?

What can you taste?

What can you feel/touch?

The pairs then swap round and B asks the same questions of A about their moment in the story.

► PURPOSE

This exercise relates to the Painting Pictures and Active Listening exercise in lesson seven of the Story Seeker Training Programme. However, this exercise focuses on using the five senses to paint a picture of a moment in the story for the listener. Children can use this throughout the telling of their chosen story, to ensure that all five of their listeners' senses are engaged.

In the City of Rome....

This exercise can be done as a whole class or in smaller groups. It asks each person to add a small detail to a developing story. It is reminiscent of games such as 'My grandmother went to market'. The first person begins by saying 'In the city of Rome there is a street and at the end of that street there is a sparkling fountain... The next person repeats this sentence and then adds a sentence to create a detail or the next part of the story e.g. 'In the city of Rome there is a street. At the end of that street there is a sparkling fountain. Every night at midnight the fountain's water turns to liquid gold.' Each person repeats the whole story so far and then adds their detail. It is important to note that the retelling of what has gone before does not have to be repeated with exactly the same words. Each teller will use their own memory and imagination to tell the story slightly differently as it develops. Try to encourage them to include the five senses in their ideas for the additions they make to the story.

You might also like to use a similar method to develop the telling of their chosen stories for their filmed performances.

► PURPOSE

This exercise is great for developing listening skills, imagination and creativity. It requires them to listen carefully as an audience and to pay close attention to the pictures in their head as the story develops. It is also great for simply demonstrating that it is perfectly possible and acceptable for a story to be told slightly differently each time.

VOICE

Blah Blah Blah

The 'Blah blah blah' game asks the children to try to communicate a particular scenario or event using just the words 'blah blah blah' in place of actual words. Here is a list of a few scenes you could give to a pair to try to communicate to the rest of the class:

- Asking for directions to the train station
- Friends watching a football match
- Child asking to borrow money from a parent
- Giving someone a present who was hoping to get the latest games console but it is actually new socks.

► PURPOSE

This game explores how the way we use our voices (and bodies) as much as the language we choose communicates meaning to an audience.

The Colour of Voice

This exercise asks the children to choose key characters from their chosen story and to answer two questions in relation to what their voice might sound like:

If their voice was a colour what colour would it be?

If their voice was a sound what kind of sound would it be? (This is asking what the quality of the voice is like, rather than how it sounds)

Once they have decided on the answers to these questions they keep this in mind when they try to say something from their story in the voice of that character.

► PURPOSE

Storytellers will often use different voices for different characters in their stories which tell the audience quite a bit about what type of person or character they are presenting. This exercise helps the children to think about how they might use different voices in the telling of their story.

PHYSICALITY

Archetypes and Emotions

In this exercise Jan Blake and Peter Chand lead the children through a series of different archetypal characters and emotions and ask them to represent these characters physically. Children could follow this exercise by creating a pose which represents each of the key characters in their chosen stories.

► PURPOSE

This exercise demonstrates how important physicality is in storytelling.

Samson, Delilah and the Lion

This is a fun game based on the game 'rock, paper, scissors', except that this requires the players to use their whole bodies and voices. Each of the three characters – Samson, Delilah and the lion – has its own gesture and sound. Players choose one of the characters to perform after a countdown of three. Delilah beats Samson, Samson beats the lion and the lion beats Delilah. They can have a go at playing this game in pairs. Next, they are asked to think about their chosen stories. Are they able to come up with a version of this game using the key characters from their story? Who beats who and can they relate this to the action of their story?

► PURPOSE

As well as creating physical representations of the characters this game asks them to think about the power dynamics in their story.

DIVIDE

In the previous section you should have selected the story or stories that you wish to create filmed performances of. If you haven't done so already then you will need to decide at this point how you are going to divide the telling of your chosen stories between the children in your class. This will be based entirely on your knowledge of your class and the time that you have available. There are many ways to do this. In the interests of time, we recommend allocating a certain section of the story to each class/group member. This will give every child a short section to make their own and work on in detail.

OWN WORDS

The oral storytelling tradition relies almost entirely on the retelling of stories using a combination of memory and imagination. Each story is given its stamp by the person telling it. It is shaped and reshaped based on the imagination and improvisation skills of the particular storyteller every time it is told. This results in a slightly different retelling each time. Children are natural storytellers given the right environment and this coupled with their Story Seeker training and the choices you make with them about which stories to tell and how to tell them – individually, in small groups, in pairs etc – should help them to feel confident.

If you feel that your class or some children in the class, will be best supported in this process by writing some of the elements of the story down to develop ideas initially then you should feel free to do this. However, what we want to avoid is filming children reading something they have written from a piece of paper as this is an oracy and performance project.

► WHY NOT?

If you wish to include writing in the project then why not ask them to write their stories down once they have filmed them. Use the oral storytelling approach to engage their imagination and as a springboard into writing rather than the other way round. You could create a class story book of all of the stories gathered that could be put on display at the entrance to school or perhaps sent to parents and other members of the school community.

Think about how they could use some of the following exercises (some of which are drawn directly from the Story Seeker Training Programme) to use as prompts for the telling of their story rather than creating a fixed script to follow:

- **Painting Pictures and Active Listening**
(Lesson 7 Activity 3) – This exercise can be used to flesh out the way the children tell their stories, adding detail that will really help to create pictures in the imagination of their listeners.
 - **Group Story Whoosh**
(Lesson 3 exercise 1) – This will help each group to be reminded of the narrative arc of the whole story that they will record.
 - **On the Line**
(Lesson 3 exercise 2) – You could use this exercise to create a series of pictures on a washing line to use as a prompt for the telling of each part of the story.
 - **Six-part Story method/Story boards**
(Lesson 3 Exercise 3) – If you have split the telling of the chosen stories between small groups of children it can be extremely helpful to adapt the six-part story method exercise and get them to break down their part of the story into a series of detailed pictures. You could get them to write key words relating to the senses around the edge of the picture of each moment in their part of the story to remind them to include these in their telling
 - **Props as Mnemonics** –
Think about how you could use a series of objects which relate to the story as prompts for each section of the story.
 - **Working wall** –
Ask the children to return to the lists they made on the working wall during lessons five and six of their training. How can they apply these vocal and physical techniques to the telling of their chosen stories?
 - **Playback** –
Ask children to record themselves telling their part of the story (using Voice Recorder or similar audio-recording apps). Encourage them to listen back to their own story, deciding if the way they are telling the story is painting the pictures they intend in the imagination of the listeners. How could they improve their telling of the story by adding more detail to the language or using tempo, pitch, tone or volume at key points?

You could also ask the children to film each other so that they can start to practise working with the camera and looking into the lens as they tell. Again get them to critique their own and others work by making suggestions for improvement using their story seeker knowledge.

Alternatively, you could ask different groups to listen to each other and get them to make suggestions for how the telling of the story could be communicated more clearly or effectively.
- You could also get the children to film each other so that they can start to practice working with the camera and looking into the lens as they tell. Again get them to critique their own and others work by making suggestions for improvement using their story seeker knowledge.
- Alternatively, you could ask different groups to listen to each other and get them to make suggestions for how the telling of the story could be communicated more clearly or effectively.

CREATE

Once the children are feeling confident in being able to tell their stories it is then time to think about how they want to present their stories in their filmed performances. This stage of the project asks them to think about how they might create things which will support their storytelling and make it visually more exciting such as backdrops, props and costume elements.

There is also an option to present the stories as a puppetry performance. This can be a useful approach if you have any safeguarding concerns about showing children's faces on the films. The CREATE stage is supported by short films by theatre artists to give the children lots of different ideas for this.

In this section you will explore:

- How **DESIGN** elements can bring your story to life
- How to add **MUSIC** and **SOUND** to your story
- What other **CREATIVE DECISIONS** can help your class tell this story together
- Ways you can **PRACTISE** your story?

By the end of this section your class will have at least one story ready to perform.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

It's time to get creative with how you can add to your story in a visual way. Here are some short videos that will give you ideas on how you could incorporate:

- [Background design, props and costume](#)
- [Puppetry](#)

These should spark ideas about how you can add different colours, approaches and materials to bring your story to life. Remember: you don't need a huge budget to achieve some brilliant and creative effects.

▶ TEACHERS' NOTE

If there are any safeguarding concerns about capturing the children on film, you can choose to tell the whole story using puppetry.

MUSIC AND SOUND

It's time to get creative with how you can add to your story in a visual way. Here are some short videos that will give you ideas on how you could incorporate:

- **Atmospheric sounds** – Could different groups of children add sound effects? You can explore body percussion (making sounds with your body i.e. clapping, stomping feet, clicking fingers, or patting different parts of the body) vocal sounds. Experiment with creating soundscapes at various points in the story. Recorded sound effects could also be used to create an atmosphere, if you are short of time.
- **Underscoring** – Could the telling of the story be supported by playing a piece of music underneath? Music can help with the energy, pace and mood. What track would work in harmony with the story and amplify the storytelling for the audience?

CREATIVE DECISIONS

There isn't just one way to make your filmed performances. It's really up to you to decide how you see the final products. Let your imagination run wild. If there were no limits what would you do?

Here are some other elements you might want to consider when deciding how you present the story:

- **Straight to camera** - You may want to keep it simple and have the children taking a small section of the story each, speaking directly to the camera in a similar style to the stories in the Story Bank.
- **Chorus** – Small groups of children could speak or move together to create a chorus. Could you give the chorus a collective character? For example, they could all be the neighbours in the village, peering out from behind curtains, retelling the story from the windows of their houses of an unfortunate person in their village. Once you give the chorus a persona it can help you make design and text decisions. Do the neighbours all repeat certain phrases, for example, or echo certain lines?
- **Characters and narrators** – Who are the characters in the story and how can they be brought to life? You could choose some children to be the storytellers who narrate the story and some children to become the characters and act out the story, miming the action. This option works really well for those children who enjoy movement but not speaking, and for those children who really enjoy acting.
- **Physicality** – How can you get the whole class to use their bodies to tell the story in different ways? You could ask them to become things in the setting, like a forest, a house, a fireplace, a storm or a ship. They could do this individually, as small groups or as a whole class. You can vary the size of the groups depending on how important that element is for the story. They can also work in groups to create a character in the story. Magical creatures and animals work well when created in this way. For example, the whole class can make a living statue of fire-breathing dragon. Get everyone to move and breathe together as one.

There are so many other creative directions to take. You could choose to use stop animation, or shadow puppetry or create table-top worlds. The possibilities are endless. Remember, you can choose different styles for different scenes in the story. Have as much fun as possible being inventive with your story-making.

Remember, you can include the children in the decision-making process. An ideal creative process is one where the children are able to contribute ideas and solutions. Here are some tips to help:

- Let them know from the very beginning of the process their ideas are welcome. It is a team effort, ideas will come from anyone, as members of the company they are actively invited to share their thoughts.
- You may want to choose how and when they share ideas. Are you happy for them to share at any point in a rehearsal, or will you give specific time and space for this during the process? You can decide the way they contribute so that it suits your process.
- You may wish to invite a range of ideas about one specific moment. For example, 'How do you think we could show the woman floating up to fairyland?' Then everyone has space to contribute lots of ideas. You can select the one that you think will work best, explaining the reasoning for that decision to the class.
- Are there children in the class who would like to take a leadership role in one area such as design, sound or choreography? In this way you could give some children responsibility to make decisions for specific parts of the story.
- A nice way to keep them engaged throughout the process is 'Digging for Gold' at the end of every rehearsal. Ask the children for their observations of that rehearsal session – what have they noticed? What parts are they happy with? What is feeling hard? What else could we do? How could we improve the story?

REHEARSING

Now you have the story and how you will bring it to life all you have left is to practise!

The main thing to keep in mind is do not over-rehearse. You want to keep it fresh and still exciting for the children. You should avoid repeating it over and over again until it becomes a chore or the children are just speaking by rote. Instead, each time you rehearse make clear what is the specific purpose of that rehearsal. Explain that to the children so they know what the purpose is each time. The purpose could be to get it roughly up on its feet; or to run through the telling of the story; or to work on the movement or physicality; or to build on the emotion and feeling; or even just to build confidence, to help them be loud and clear. Do not try doing all these things at once, all of the time. Build it slowly and in layers. For example, if the purpose of one run-through is to rehearse the movement, you don't have to worry if they aren't loud enough. You can let that go until they have mastered the movement. You should find that by the end they are able to put it all together without it feeling old and tired.

FILM

In this stage you will film and edit your class' storytelling performances.

By the end of this section, you will have your finished storytelling performances ready to share far and wide.

A camera on a smart phone or tablet is more than adequate to film the performance. You will need to make sure that you have sufficient memory on your device to capture the stories. Try to involve the pupils as much as possible in the filming of the stories. This stage of the project is supported by the following short films:

- [Top Tips for Performing to Camera](#)
 - [Film-making Using Everyday Technology](#)
-

VOCAL WARM UP

Remember that all professional performers will warm up their bodies and particularly their voices before performing on stage or on camera. You can revisit the vocal warm-up exercises from lesson five of the Story Seekers Training Programme and run through a few favourites with your class before you start filming. This will also help them to focus for the filming.

CREATING A SPACE FOR FILMING

If possible, it is a good idea to use a quiet space in order to film your stories so that you are able to capture the voices of your story-tellers rather than those of other children in the class or those passing by. This can be the classroom when the rest of the class is otherwise occupied or in a different space. You may have created a storytelling backdrop during the **CREATE** stage

that everyone will use, or each group may have created a different background for their story or part of the story. You will need to build in time for each group to set up their performance space. Alternatively, you could allocate a different area of the classroom to each group so that they can set up their performance space in advance and all you will need to do is to move the camera.

EDITING SOFTWARE

We advise that in thinking about how you will approach the filming you try to keep the amount of editing to a minimum in order to save you time.

Here are a few free or low-cost, user-friendly editing software options that you could try if you don't currently have access to this kind of editing software:

- [RUSH](#) (Adobe software) – Works well on mobile and desktop About £10 a month.
 - [iMovie](#)
 - [Lightworks](#)
 - [Hitfilm Express](#)
 - [Shotcut](#)
-

SHARE

The final challenge of the project is to share your performances with as many people as possible in as many different ways as possible. Obviously, you will need to consider the safeguarding aspects around the sharing of the work that you have created. Please make sure that any way you decide to share the stories complies with your school safeguarding policy and that you obtain the appropriate permissions from parents before filming or sharing the children's work.

You may wish to consider the following questions with your class:

How can we share our storytelling performances with our school community?

How can we share our performances with as many members of our family as possible?

How can we share our performances with other schools?

Do we have a school Twitter account where some of the work can be shared?
Is there any other way that we can safely share our work on social media or other platforms?

Could we invite our school community to a screening or Zoom meeting where we share our performances?

Is there a local radio station which might broadcast an audio version of one of the stories?

You could keep count of the number of people that each child in the class manages to share their stories with. Maybe you could have a competition for who can share the performance with the most people?

PAIRING SCHEME

As part of **SHARE** we have set up a pairing scheme which you will need to opt into. This will pair your school with another school in a different part of the country and your pupils will have the opportunity to swap performances so that your pupils get to see what other children have created. In doing this you will be making a commitment to completing your filmed performances by the end of term in time to share these with another school. Once you have received details of the school you have been paired with then you will need to make contact with them as early as possible in order to agree a date to swap your stories. Suggestions for how to share the work you have created will be detailed in the information you are sent.

STORING AND SHARING LARGE MEDIA FILES

You may be creating several large media files during the **FILM** stage of the project. This may cause you problems with storage and also when it comes to the sharing of your films. Here is a list of suggestions for ways that you could store the files that you create. Where possible, it is best to share the files via a link so that people can only view rather than download the films.

MEMORY SOFTWARE

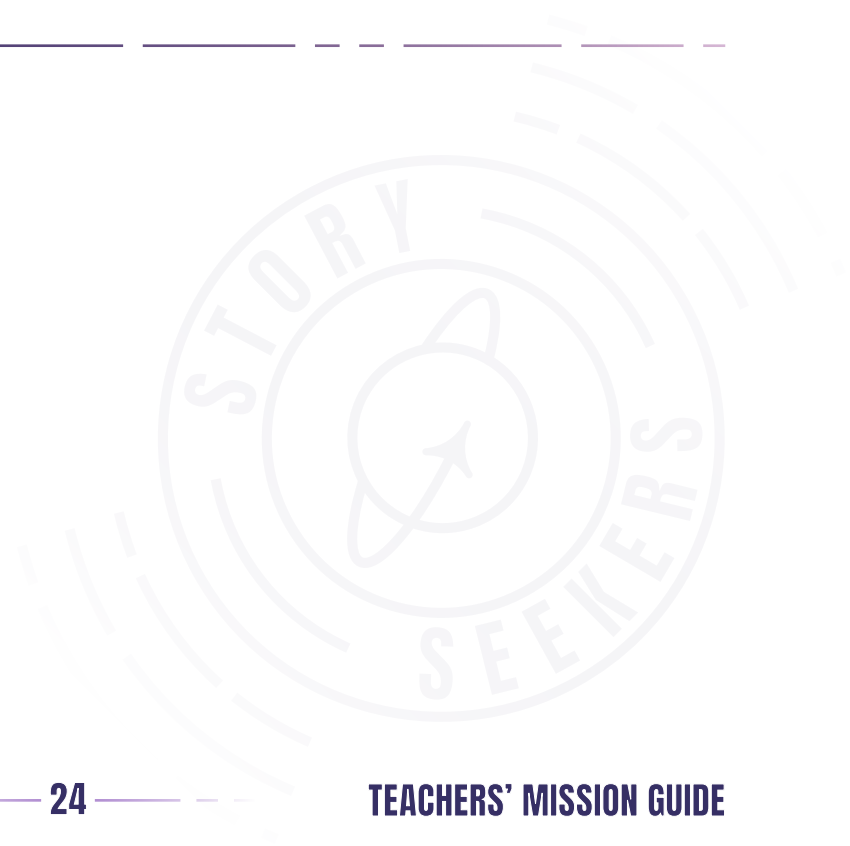
- [OneDrive](#)
 - [Google Drive](#)
 - [DropBox](#)
 - External Hard Drive
-

WAYS TO SHARE

- [Seesaw](#)
 - [Padlet](#)
 - [Unlisted You Tube Links](#)
 - [Vimeo](#)
 - [Google Classroom](#)
-

WAYS TO SHARE

- Under 2GB - [WeTransfer](#)
 - Above 2GB - [AirBridge](#)
-



COMPLETION OF THE MISSION

Once you have completed your Story Seeker mission, you can request your FREE story seeker badges for each member of your class. This can be done via the link on the [Story Seekers website](#). You can then present them to each of your fully fledged Story Seekers and play them the final message from Story Seeker Command congratulating them on the completion of their mission.

***WELL DONE STORY SEEKERS!
THE FUTURE IS SAFE THANKS TO YOU.***

