

Scribble Society



Welcome to the Scribble Society!

The Scribble Society is a creative writing club at Henry Bigg Academy, the secondary school at the heart of my new series, *Bigg School*.

Each book follows the life of a different kid in Year Seven. From friendship feuds to secret crushes, the up and downs of secondary school are explored, with brilliant illustrations from Jess Bradley. It's perfect for readers in Key Stage 2 and 3, beginning with Lola's story in *Best Friends Forever*.

The Scribble Society is at the heart of the school - it's a place where children can have fun and experiment with stories; for those who are confident and experienced writers to those who simply want to have fun. A Scribble Society club can be held anywhere, at any time. All the participants will need is a pen or pencil, some paper and their imaginations!

I have created a pack so you can set up your very own Scribble Society and spark a love of creative writing. These all are tried and tested creative writing exercises I've done with children in schools up and down the UK.

The pack contains activities for six creative writing sessions. Worksheets and teachers' notes are included for each session. (Each could be between 30 and 60 minutes long depending on the age of your students.)

Have fun and let your imaginations run wild!

Lisa Williamson

BIGG SCHOOL

The Bigg School series, written by Lisa Williamson and illustrated by Jess Bradley
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Scribble Society Creative Writing Club – session 1

SCRIBBLE YOURSELF

Welcome to the Scribble Society! In today's session, you'll be doing the first creative writing exercise that Lola and Astrid do in *Best Friends Forever!*

To get started, here are some 'getting to know you' questions to get everyone warmed up. Jot down your answers then share them with a friend.

1. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?
2. What is your favourite time of year?
3. What is your favourite film?
4. What is your favourite sport to play?
5. Name your three favourite smells
6. Describe the best dessert you've ever eaten
7. What is your favourite word?
8. Do you have any hidden talents?
9. If you were a superhero, what would your super power be?
10. If it were raining meatballs, would you eat one?

Take your favourite question and turn it into a longer piece of writing. E.g., you might choose to write about why you love Christmas (question 2) or describe a day in the life of your superhero alter-ego (question 9)!

Try to write for as long as you can without pausing. Just write whatever comes into your head.

Sentence starter ideas:

My preferred ...

It may sound strange but I ...

Nobody knows that I ...

The feeling I get when I ...

My ideal day would include...

I always enjoy ...

It would be wonderful if ...

Now read your writing aloud to another Scribble Society club member.
What have you learnt about each other?

Lisa's Top 5 Writing Tips:

1. Write the kind of story you would really enjoy reading. Do you like stories about dragons? Write a story about dragons! Love to laugh? Write something funny! If you create the sort of story you'd enjoy reading, chances are someone else will too.
2. Make life difficult for your main character. No one wants to read a story about someone who is perfect and never makes mistakes or gets in trouble. Put obstacles in front of your characters and see how they react. These obstacles might be big (their house being swept away in a storm), or small (losing their pencil case) – the interesting bit is working out how your character deals with those setbacks. Do they get cross? More determined? Do they panic? It's up to you!
3. If you're feeling stuck for ideas, ask yourself some 'what if?' questions. What if my character found a treasure map? What if their dog suddenly started talking? What if they saw a ghost? Start writing and see what happens!
4. Write as often as you can, even if it's just a few lines. Writing is like a muscle and it needs regular exercise to stay nice and strong. The more you write, the better and more confident you will become!
5. Don't put pressure on yourself for the first draft of your story to be perfect. I have to rework my books over and over again until they're ready. It's all part of the process. The most important thing is to have fun with it!



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Scribble Society Creative Writing Club - session 2

SCRIBBLE YOUR SENSES

Today we're going to think about our five senses and how we can use them to make our writing come alive. This is the second activity that Lola and Astrid do at the Scribble Society in *Best Friends Forever!*

For each of these words, jot down what you think they might look/smell/taste/feel/sound like:

	Look	Smell	Taste	Feel	Sound
Chocolate					
Happiness					
Shadow					
Desert					
Anger					
Moonlight					
Clouds					
Boredom					

Share your descriptive words with the group and see if they can guess which word you are describing.

In *Best Friends Forever* Lola decides to write about the smell of her dad's shower gel:

For as long as I can remember, my dad has always used the same shower gel. It comes in a green bottle and smells of mint and tea tree. When I was little, I didn't like it because it tickled my nostrils and reminded me of the stuff my mum put on my cuts and insect bites, but as I got older, I started to like it. Sometimes, I used it when I had a shower. I liked the way it made my skin smell – all fresh and clean. When Dad moved out, mum stopped buying it. Once we went to the supermarket and I slipped a bottle of it in the trolley, but mum must have noticed because by the time we got to the checkouts, it was gone. I miss the smell, but I miss Dad more.

Can you imagine the scent of the shower gel?

Can you see why this particular smell is important to Lola?

Now it's your turn. Think of a smell that connects with a particular memory – it might be the smell of your granny's perfume, or the school canteen. It could even be a smell that's not very nice! Write a short passage about it, using lots of specific details so that your reader can almost smell it too!



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Scribble Society Creative Writing Club - session 3

SCRIBBLE SOME STORY SEEDS

One of the questions I get asked a lot is where my ideas come from. The answer is everywhere! It might be a photograph, an interesting article I read in the newspaper or maybe even a snippet of conversations I overheard on the bus! Other times, ideas just pop into my head when I'm least expecting it. Occasionally though, we all need a bit of help to get started and the following two exercises are designed to do just that.

EXERCISE 1:

This is an exercise you can do together as one big group.

Pick one of these starter sentences and write it at the top of your page:

- *It was 2am and the phone was ringing.*
- *Josh hadn't meant for it to happen.*
- *'Surprise!' they shouted, leaping out from behind the door.*
- *It had been the worst day ever.*
- *I'd never seen a ghost before.*

Set a timer and continue the story. When the time is up, fold your piece of paper in half and swap with a friend. Your job now is to continue the new story in front of you! Really pay attention to what has already been written. If the beginning of the story is scary, your contribution should be scary too!

Set another timer then swap again (with someone different this time). You can do this as many times as you like but 5 or 6 usually feels about right.

At the end, take it turns to read the stories out loud. Hopefully you won't be able to tell when a different writer takes over the story!

EXERCISE 2:

This time, instead of giving you an opening line, I'm going to give you a character, a setting and an object. It is then up to you to incorporate them into your story.

To get warmed up, you can try making up a story as a group or in pairs, before working individually. Your story can be as wacky as you like!

Characters:	Settings:	Objects:
Window Cleaner	Desert Island	Packet of seeds
Father Christmas	Coffee Shop	Violin
Vet	Castle	Umbrella
Musician	Dentist	Coat hanger
Lottery winner	Hotel	Camera
Circus performer	Time machine	Single shoe
Inventor	Igloo	Frisbee
Babysitter	Cleaning Cupboard	Barbie Doll
Mermaid	Gym	Cloak
Identical Twins	Cemetery	Hairbrush
Beekeeper	Haunted House	Chess Board
Astronaut	Beach	Suitcase
Detective	Zoo	False Teeth
Teacher	Lift	Fortune Cookie
Ghost	Space Station	Goldfish in a bag
Spy	Bathroom	Diary
Stunt person	Hospital	Purse full of money
Fortune Teller	Swimming pool	Keys
Photographer	Theme Park	Mirror
Tooth Fairy	Library	Birthday cake



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Scribble Society Creative Writing Club - session 4

SCRIBBLE AN ESCAPE

In my book *Best Friends Forever*, Lola's birthday treat is a visit to an Alice in Wonderland themed escape room.

This got me thinking – wouldn't it fun to come up with our own escape rooms!

What is an escape room?

An escape game is a game in which a team of players discover clues, solve puzzles, and accomplish tasks in a locked room or series of rooms. The goal is often to escape from the room within a time limit.

Has anyone ever visited an escape room? What was the theme?

All escape rooms have these vital ingredients:

1. A Strong setting and theme

Examples: Egyptian tomb, bank vault, prison cell, cabin on the Titanic, spooky hotel room, science lab, School for Wizards, submarine etc

2. A time limit

An hour is the norm, but it's up to you if you want to make the game longer or shorter

3. A specific goal (and consequences if your players fail to reach it!)

For example, in an Egyptian tomb escape room the goal might be to lift the deadly curse! In a bank heist game, it might be to get out of there with as much money as possible!

4. Fun and challenging puzzles

These can be both mental and physical. Even better if they relate to your theme! Think secret codes, riddles, jigsaw puzzles, word searches etc.

Now, it's your turn to design your dream escape room. No idea is too wacky so let your imaginations run wild!

All escape rooms need a story! Can you come up with an enticing introduction that will make people want to pick *your* room?

Escape room name:			
Theme:			
How many players:		Age guidance:	
Difficulty level:		Time limit:	
Goal:			
Introduction:			

Once you've come with your story, you can get stuck into the nitty-gritty! Put yourselves in the shoes of a player and try to come up with as fun and exciting an experience as possible.

Draw a map of your escape room for a designer/architect.
Label all the different features, clues and puzzles in as much detail as possible.

Here are some example introductions:

Escape from R.M.S. Titanic:

The Queen of the Ocean is about to experience disaster! On April 10th 1912 the largest ship ever built left Southampton on her maiden voyage. She was called the 'Ship of Dreams', transporting people to New York in the height of luxury. Just 4 days into the journey disaster struck as she collided with an iceberg. On board, as first-class passengers faced with impending doom, what would you do to escape the ill-fated ship?

Witchcraft & Wizardry:

Congratulations! You've graduated from the school of Witchcraft and Wizardry, but you've been brought back to solve one last mystery. Only this time, you sense something sinister at work. The professor has gone mad – mad with power! You realise he's tricked you by trapping you in the room, and within an hour he will extract all magic from you! Stripped of your wand and powers, you must use your wits to retrieve your wand and escape before you lose all magic forever!

Steadfast Spies:

You need to covertly board the hijacked vessel UNS Steadfast to stop her from reaching London and launching her missiles. Can you stop Rogue agent Malice in time? The enemy have seized the battle cruiser UNS steadfast. It's up to you to stop them before it's too late... the clock's ticking!

Covert Chocolate Factory:

The famous Chocolate factory has hidden 5 golden tickets inside chocolate bars around the globe. If you find a ticket, you'll be allowed to enter the factory and see all the magic with your own two eyes! Sadly, you were not one of the lucky five... Fortunately, the mysterious owner of a rival chocolate company has managed to acquire one, but it would be far too suspicious if he went inside. Therefore, he has offered to give the ticket over to you, but only if you agree to steal the secrets held within...



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Scribble Society Creative Writing Club - session 5

SCRIBBLE A SHOE

Today's session is all about objects and how they can often spark amazing stories!

EXERCISE 1:

Let's start by having a think about our favourite objects. Can you think of an object that's really important to you? It might be a childhood teddy, a piece of jewellery, a trophy or medal, maybe even your bed or computer console!

Have a go at writing a letter to this object letting it know just how much it means to you.

Talk about how you came to have this object in your possession and perhaps describe some of the adventures you've been on together. Be as sincere and loving as possible – let your object know how much it means to you!

EXERCISE 2:

Next, we're going to try writing from the point of view of an object. Storytelling is all about putting yourself in someone else's shoes, so I thought it would be fun to write from the perspective of a shoe itself!

What kind of shoe you choose is totally up to you! It could be a wellington boot, a ballet slipper, a football boot, Cinderella's glass slipper, a cowboy boot, a flipper, a clown shoe – whatever you fancy!

Think about what sort of personality your shoe might have and the sorts of struggles and obstacles they might face. What are their likes and dislikes? Where have they travelled in the past? Have they had any previous owners? Do they like the person wearing them now?

Sentence starter ideas:

My big day is finally here!

As I sit by the door, I think about ...

Every scratch and scuff on my sole tells a story ...

My journey began in a factory ...

Each time I am slipped on, I transform into...

Sometimes I wish that ...

I don't like to boast, but I know the other shoes are jealous of me ...

EXERCISE 3:

We're now going to use objects as inspiration for a story. All objects, even ones that seem pretty ordinary like a mug or a pen, will have a story lurking inside them!

- Look at your object. Is it hard or soft? Big or small? Heavy or light? Shiny or dull? What is it made of?
- Pick it up. How does it feel? Does it have a smell?
- What is it used for?
- Think about the history of your object. Who does it belong to? How did they get it? Did they steal it? Was it a gift? Did they find it? Where and how?
- Is your object valuable?
- Is it unique?
- Does it have magical powers?

Now, have a go at writing a scene or an opening to a story featuring your object. You can write from the point of view of the object, or you could write from the point of view of its owner. Your story can be funny, dramatic, scary, magical – whatever you like! Just make sure to include your object in some way.



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Scribble Society Creative Writing Club - session 6

SCRIBBLE A SCHOOL

I've always loved school stories! From Malory Towers (set at a boarding school by the sea), to The Worst Witch (a school for young witches), I think schools make for really exciting, interesting stories. Indeed, it's a big part of the reason why I created the Bigg School series!

Do you know any other stories set in schools?

Today, we're going to have a go at creating ideas for our very own school stories.

Have a think about what sort of school you might like to write about. It could be a school for junior spies, a stage school, or maybe even a school for tooth fairies in training!

Here are some things to think about:

What is the school called?

Where is it? How would you get there?

How do you apply for a place?

Does it cost money to go there?

What does the building look like?

How many students are there? What ages are they?

Who is the headteacher?

Is it strict or more relaxed?

What sort of lessons do the students take?

What is the food like?

If it's a boarding school, what are the bedrooms like?

EXERCISE 1:

Now, put yourselves in the shoes of a new student at the school. Write a diary entry about their first day. Who are they? How do they feel about starting a new school? Are they happy to be there? Think about their journey to the school, the people they meet, the things they see and do. It's a diary so you can be completely honest!

EXERCISE 2:

We're now going to fast-forward to half-term. Write a letter or email to a friend or family member with an update about how your character is getting on at their new school. Have they settled in? Have they been in any trouble? Have they made friends? What do they like/dislike? Are they homesick? Are they top of the class, or are they struggling to keep up?

Unlike diary entries, we don't always say exactly how we're feeling in a letter or an email. Decide who you're writing to. For example, you might be more honest with a close friend than you would be with a grown-up. Think about how much your character is prepared to share.



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