



## SUNDERLAND

# Teachers' Resource Pack

We are delighted that you have chosen to bring your pupils to **Live Tales Sunderland**: Live Theatre's writing centre for children and young people. Here at Live Tales, we provide a fun and supportive environment where children can explore creativity and imagination. The key learning objectives of Live Tales' KS2 workshop are to:

- develop creative writing skills.
- build confidence and communication skills.
- support the children's writing progression.
- provide a fun and exciting experience of creativity.

This pack provides:

- i) information about how to find Live Tales Sunderland
- ii) a description of the workshop
- iii) a selection of pre and post workshop activities to use in the classroom

If there is anything else we can help you with, please do let us know.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

*All at Live Tales*

**Before your visit, please remember to email [livetales@live.org.uk](mailto:livetales@live.org.uk) with:**

- ✓ A list of the children's first names.
- ✓ The attached photograph consent form.
- ✓ Any access requirements/additional needs of the children and accompanying adults.

## How to get to Live Tales Sunderland

Live Tales is located within the Fire Station in the centre of Sunderland, just across the road from the Bridges shopping centre (next door to the Empire Theatre). Built in 1907, the fire station reopened in 2017 as a music and arts hub.

The Fire Station, High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 3DT.



### **Parking**

There is limited on-street parking and unfortunately Live Tales does not have any designated parking spaces for school coaches or mini buses.

### **Public Transport**

The Fire Station is less than 10 minutes' walk from Sunderland train and metro station. You can plan your journey with Nexus's Journey Planner, which includes extensive bus, rail and Metro information. Call Traveline on 0871 200 2233 for more travel information.

## **The Workshop**

The two-hour workshop is fast paced, full of energy and incorporates a variety of drama activities. We will be working on ideas generation and the creation of rough drafts, and every child will leave with a class storybook to finish. Please note: we will not be addressing spelling or grammar.

### **Before the workshop starts**

Please allow plenty of time to arrive so that the session can start promptly - there are a lot of fantastic activities to fit in and we need the full two hours. If you are running late, please let us know. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, unfortunately, we will have to deliver a slightly different and reduced session.

### **During the workshop**

The session will be led by a Live Tales facilitator who is supported by a team of trained volunteers (a typist, an illustrator, an editor and a number of writing mentors).

At the beginning of the workshop, pupils will:

- hang up their coats and bags.
- receive a sticker with their name on it.
- have their photograph taken. **Please ensure you complete the photograph consent form prior to your visit**

During the first half of the workshop, the pupils will be warmed up and then work together as a group to develop the beginning of a story. During the second half, the pupils will continue their story independently with the support of writing mentors. Every child will receive a book of their class story. This is a surprise; please don't tell the children! Completing this book back at school is a great post visit activity (see follow-up activities).

### **After the workshop**

Whilst we do not have a designated lunch space at Live Tales, we are sometimes able to accommodate a lunch break within a room at The Fire Station. Please contact us to arrange this.

### **What we need from teaching staff**

We would like you to relax and enjoy the session; it is a great opportunity for you to observe your pupils' creative writing skills outside of the school environment. We will only ask for your direct involvement if there is a behavioural challenge we are unable to deal with.

## Pre-workshop activities

The following activities have been designed to prepare your group for their visit to Live Tales. They introduce key ideas which we will be exploring during the workshop and will get the children warmed up and ready for their story-making session with us.

### What is a Story?

Stories can be found in lots of different places – in books, in a theatre, on television, in films, in computer games, or even on the playground when your friend tells you what they did at the weekend.

#### **Task:**

- Think of a story you have seen recently (at the theatre, on film or on TV).
- You have one minute to tell the person next to you as much as you can about it (What happens? Who does it happen to? How does it end?). Swap round and listen to your partner.
- If you enjoyed your partner's story, tell the whole class as much as you can remember about it.

#### **Objectives:**

- To develop speaking and listening skills.
- To share preferences and celebrate different opinions.
- To introduce the theme of 'stories'.

### What Makes a Story?

Everyone has different opinions – wouldn't it be boring if everyone only liked stories about love and romance and sparkly princesses? We all have different opinions about what makes some stories great and what makes others boring.

#### **Task:**

- In small groups, decide on a list of 5 things that make a really good story.
- Share these with the class and discuss different opinions. Do any groups want to change or add to their list?
- In small groups, again, develop a list of 5 things all stories must have.
- Share these with the class and discuss. Do any groups want to change or add to their list?

#### **Extension activities:**

- Hold a class debate on a particular issue relevant to the group's:
  - a. Preferences (e.g. 'A good story must be funny', 'Scary stories are better than love stories', 'Books with lots of words in are boring')
  - b. List of 'must haves' (e.g. 'A story is only a story if it has words in it', 'All stories have goodies and baddies')

#### **Objectives:**

- To develop speaking and listening skills.
- To compile and prioritise lists of ideas.
- To persuade others.

### Your Favourite Story

Lots and lots of stories are written down in books. These can make you laugh, cry and sometimes jump out of your skin. Books may have lots of words or not many at all; they may have illustrations on every page or not a single one. Every storybook is different.

#### **Task:**

- Think about your favourite storybook (e.g. from home or school; from today or years ago)
- Why is it your favourite story?
- Share these with the class

#### **Extension activities:**

- Design a poster celebrating your favourite story and highlighting what makes it great.
- Deliver a pitch to the rest of the class to persuade them that your story is the best. Vote for a class favourite.
- Read extracts aloud from different stories and vote for a class favourite.

#### **Objectives:**

- To develop speaking and listening skills (including appreciating others' opinions).
- To consider, explore and articulate personal preference.
- To persuade others.

Please note: these activities are not compulsory. If you choose not to use them, your group will still have an inspiring, enjoyable and story-filled time at Live Tales.

# Follow Up Activities

The following creative activities can be used with your class when you return to school. They will help to develop literacy skills, alongside encouraging continued enjoyment and engagement with writing.

## **Finish the Story**

Each child will leave Live Tales with a printed copy of their class's story (**PLEASE NOTE: this will be a surprise for the group!**), handwritten ideas for their individual story ending and, we hope, a lot of enthusiasm about their brand new story. It just needs to be finished...

### **Task:**

- Enable the children to finish their story in rough, using both writing and illustration. Encourage them to find a place in the classroom/school hall where they would not normally write (e.g. lying down, by a window, sitting on the floor, at a different table).
- Once rough drafts have been completed and edited, a neat version can be written in the printed book, giving each child a finished story.
- Each child may then read 2-3 classmates' stories:
  - Discuss what happens in the different stories and enjoy talking about the variety of endings.
  - Ask all children to write down, on small slips of paper, a sentence/short review for the stories they have read. These could form part of a display celebrating the class's creativity.

### **Objectives:**

- To understand and experience stages in the writing process, including redrafting and editing.
- To explore personal preference (i.e. locations for creative writing).
- To reflect on others' work (peer reviewing).

## **Creating New Stories – Automatic Writing**

Story ideas can come from anywhere: what you see, hear, smell, touch and taste. Try writing stories using different senses as a starting point.

### **Task:**

- Give time and space for responding to different stimuli. (Open questions enable the children to develop ideas silently, on their own). The following are examples of starting points for creative writing:
  - Listen to a piece of instrumental music with eyes closed. What place can you see in your imagination? What colours? What objects? What people/creatures? What could happen there?
  - Gather a selection of images/photographs. Each person chooses an image (without telling anyone) and looks carefully at it. What is happening? What has happened just before/just after the image?
  - Gather a selection of objects (e.g. a hat, a watch, a candle, a key). Each person chooses one (without telling anyone). Who owns this object? What makes it important to them? When did they last use it?

## **Creating New Stories – Frozen Images**

Drama activities can provide a great starting point for story creation.

### **Task:**

- Ask for a volunteer who will stand in front of the class in a position – e.g. showing a particular emotion. They must be able to stay very still.
- The class look carefully and consider who this character could be.
- If anyone has an idea of someone/thing else that may be in this scene, they are to put up their hand. If selected by you, they join the image, taking up a position and standing still. They must respond to what they can see and try to build the story.
- Encourage ongoing class discussion as more and more children join the image: How is the story changing? Why has it changed?
- As more and more children join the image, it will change. This will lead to interesting discussions on how small details can have an impact on character/narrative.
- This can lead onto monologue writing with each child writing about a story from a character's perspective.

### **Objectives:**

- To practice drama techniques including making still images and building scenes through physicality.
- To develop speaking and listening skills in collaborative story telling.
- To reflect on ways in which small decisions can affect character and narrative.

- Following a time of imagining, do some automatic writing:
  - Take a pen and a piece of paper and write non-stop for three minutes based on your thoughts. (You may want to give a very open sentence as a starting point).
  - You can't pause to think or edit, you must keep writing – if your mind goes blank, write the last word over and over again until a new word/sentence comes into your mind.
  - This could be done a few times with a different focus each time.
- Ask the children to put a line through at least half of their writing and only keep what they think is interesting (even if this is only one sentence/phrase). Use this as a starting point for discussion about the experience of editing.
- This can then lead onto other extended creative writing tasks.

**Objectives:**

- To develop an appreciation that ideas for stories can come from anywhere.
- To become comfortable with exploring new and not yet fully formed ideas without censoring yourself.
- To experience the editing process and learn more about the journey from draft to 'neat' work.

WHERE  
the *story*  
begins...

**We look forward to welcoming you to Live Tales.**

**If you have any additional questions about your visit please contact:**

John Dawson (Creative Programme Administrator) [livetales@live.org.uk](mailto:livetales@live.org.uk) 0191 269 3494