

Narrative – Dialogue, playscripts, and film narrative

Specific features and structures of some narrative types

Children write many different types of narrative through Key Stages 1 and 2. Although most types share a common purpose (to tell a story in some way) there is specific knowledge children need in order to write particular narrative text types. While there is often a lot of overlap (for example, between myths and legends) it is helpful to group types of narrative to support planning for range and progression. Each unit of work in the Primary Framework (Fiction, Narrative, plays and scripts) provides suggestions for teaching the writing of specific forms or features of narrative. For example: genre (traditional tales), structure (short stories with flashbacks and extended narrative), content (stories which raise issues and dilemmas), settings (stories with familiar settings, historical settings, imaginary worlds) and style (older literature, significant authors).

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Purpose: Although these forms of storytelling differ from narrative in that they are not necessarily narrated they usually share the same purposes: to tell a story and to have a deliberate effect on the viewer/listener/reader. They include scripts for film/digital viewing or audio (e.g. digital audio recording or radio plays) and stories told using images and speech bubbles (such as comic strips) sometimes supplemented with an additional narrative element.

Generic structure	Language features	Knowledge for the writer
<p>Structural conventions for scripting vary, particularly in their layout on the page or screen but they usually include:</p> <p>name of character and the words they speak:</p> <p>MRS GRAY Hello dear. How are you?</p> <p>organisational information (Scene 2 The kitchen DAY); stage directions (ENTER Sita, dancing).</p> <p>Comic strip and some digital animations usually include speech bubbles within the images; interactive texts may include</p>	<p>Exclusive use of direct speech and absence of narrative text such as "he said".</p> <p>Dialogue (conversation between two or more characters) or monologue (one character speaking).</p> <p>Any necessary narrative information is provided by images (as in comic strip or animations) by stage directions (as in a playscript) or by supplementary narrative, e.g. when a comic strip with speech bubbles also includes some narrative below each picture.</p>	<p>Knowledge of standard narrative for writer</p> <p>PLUS: Use only direct speech. Playscripts: apply the presentational conventions of a script consistently throughout.</p> <p>Comic strip with speech bubbles, animations, multimedia and other dialogue: keep the text fairly short and only include dialogue that moves the story on or gives important information; make the images and words work well together so they each add something special to the story.</p>