



SESSION 8 – TEACHING NOTES – Podkin Adventure 2
Monday 21st June 2021 1.30 – 2.30 pm

Today's Game – We start with a quick warm-up to get our creative juices flowing. In pairs or threes, build a setting. Your characters have to hide in a setting from your map, e.g. a goblin palace, forest, abandoned mine, old house, etc. In pairs, make decisions and rapidly gather ideas, using your senses. At half-time, swap roles so that each of you have had a chance to develop ideas for your setting.

(objective - generating setting ideas)

WHERE ON YOUR MAP?

Warren Modern or ancient city Futuristic or fantasy city Forest Ruins Swamps and lakes A fishing village	The edge of the sea A rocky landscape Mountains and a valley Small village A river winding through a valley An armed citadel A lonely tower
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Where?	Old stable in goblin palace
Time of day?	Night
Weather?	Cold - some snow
I can see...	straw scattered on the ground rats scampering a rusty water bucket a harness on the ground an ancient door a crack between the roof tiles dusty spider webs empty stalls for the horses
I can hear...	the wind moaning snow swirling an old door creaking footsteps outside a goblin singing in the distance an owl calling

Where?	
Time of day?	
Weather?	
I can see...	
I can hear...	

Padlet – Build inside/outside sentences - children have a few minutes to complete one or more 'post it notes'. The challenge is to write sentences that build a description, using the senses to help the reader 'imagine' what it looks like and describing what is 'outside' and 'inside'

Outside, the wind howled across Goblin city.

Inside, the candle flame flickered.

Outside, the sun slipped over the horizon and weary trolls lay down to sleep.

Inside the inn, a clock ticked relentlessly, as time slipped by like a willow-the-wisp.

Outside, mist crept up the streets and smothered the alleyways.

Inside the palace, the table was set for a feast with gleaming plates piled high with juicy fruits.

Outside, rain beat down on the harbour where the boats had anchored.

Inside the abandoned warehouse, Pipkin investigated the saddle bags for gold.

You can mention - where, time of day, weather, what you can see or hear.

The Objective – to write sentences, describing a setting, using inside/ outside..

Children's Audio – *Objective – to listen attentively, enjoy and reflect on what makes good writing and performance.*

Jotcast activity – showing the setting through the eyes of the main character and building suspense.

Objective – building a scary setting through the MC's eyes.

Kezzi went into the shed. It was messy, dark and dirty. There was a load of stuff in there. She hid.

Kezzi stared round the shed. A fly crawled up the dusty windowpane, cobwebs hung from the rafters and a broken chair lay beside a pile of old carpets. The air smelled musty. From the back of the room, where it was quite dark, came the sound of something scratching, something scraping, something alive. But she had not got time to worry about that. Kezzie ducked down behind a large box and waited.

- a. Pipkin stared at.....
- b. Three things MC can see
- c. Smell
- d. Hear something
- e. Use empty words, e.g. something, a shape, shadow, silhouette
- f. MC's reaction

Gallery Challenge – *THE GORM*

Using any medium, draw The Gorm. This display is from Mrs Silva's class. Use illustrations from the book or on Kieron's website as a basis.



Blogging Activity – writing the second part of a Podkin style adventure. The story pattern for the four sessions will be:

Podkin Adventure 1 – meeting our main character/s as they set off on their journey.
Podkin Adventure 2 – the journey continues but a threat appears
Podkin Adventure 3 – suspense builds – the threat gets closer!
Podkin Adventure 4 – a magical ending.

Objective – learning to write an atmospheric setting and introducing suspense.

Audio Challenge – If children want to record their own blog ensure that they have read it aloud a number of times. They should read it slowly and clearly with expression. This could be worked on in pairs or threes so that children can develop their performance.

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Chapter 1 - The Leaving contd

That night, they ate slices of dried apple, oatcakes and nibbled at the clover bread and stoat cheese that their mother had packed. Prue was soon fast asleep, snuggled between his older brother and sister. Carefully, Pipkin tugged some branches across the front of their shelter, hoping it would be enough to hide them from prying eyes.

As Pipkin drifted into sleep, his mind swirled with dreams of the metallic clank of the Gorm, moving through the darkness like a relentless wave of fear. Would they ever reach the safety of Splinter Holm?

Chapter 2 - The Goblin Palace

The sun had hardly begun to breathe life into the forest when Pipkin woke with a start. Something was tapping at the entrance to the shelter. A beady eye peeked through a gap and Pipkin sighed with relief. It was Flame, the robin-carrier, with a message from their mother to say that the Gorm had destroyed the warren and had last been seen following their tracks

over the river. There was no time to lose. Podkin checked the map and with Flame's help, the little band set off through the woods, heading ever North.

As they set off, the forest was silent. There had been a blizzard during the night and snow smothered the branches overhead, making walking harder. Icicles hung from trees like jagged teeth. The wind bit, brutally cold.

Pipkin knew that it would be easier for the Gorm to track them in the snow as it was impossible not to leave a trail behind. By midday, they had reached the edge of the forest and there the rabbits paused. Ahead, they could just make out the outline of what had to be The Goblin Palace. Perhaps we could hide there, thought Pipkin.

Several hours later, the weary band found themselves skirting the towering walls of the palace. Fiercesome goblin soldiers guarded the main gate, their red eyes glinting. So, Pipkin led Pasco and Prue round the walls until they found a place where a fox or badger had burrowed a small entrance.

The darkness of the tunnel pressed in and the air was rank with the foul smell of fox but Pipkin led the way until at last they came out on the other side. The goblin palace was the ideal place to hide. The Gorm would not be welcome and, as long as the rabbits avoided being caught, they would be safe until the danger passed.

As night fell, Pipkin sought out the perfect hiding place. Deep in an alleyway, he found an empty stable. Up a rickety ladder was a small attic covered in straw. It was clean and made an excellent place to sleep. Outside, the snow fell. Inside, Pasco and Pipkin talked about their mother and wondered whether she was still safe. Baby Prue cuddled up in a corner and was soon fast asleep.

Pipkin slipped out into the alleyway. They needed food. He kept to the shadows and stared round. Snorts and snarls drifted through the silence as goblins quarreled and argued. One or two passed the stables on their way back from a tavern; their singing was worse than a banshee howling. At the other end of the alley, two street goblins spiked mice onto metal spikes and

roasted them over a griddle, crunching through tiny bones.

Pipkin shuddered. The Gorm were terrible; goblins were just as bad. From a deserted market stall, Pipkin stole a loaf of dark bread, tomatoes, an onion, some hard, yellow cheese and a flagon of milk. At least they would not be hungry.

At that moment, there was a call from one of the houses in the alleyway. "Oy, what yer doin?" A drunken, scabby face leered out from a window at Pipkin. Tucking himself into a shadow, his heart beating wildly, Pipkin froze. Something was now coming down the street towards him. He could hear it dragging itself towards the stable. Shadows moved. A yellow, pus-filled eye glinted.

The street goblins each picked up a ragged, rusted blade and began to make their way towards the shifting shadow. Pipkin waited hoping that he would not be seen...



Techniques to create a setting

a. Show the setting through a character's eyes

One strategy is to bring the main character to a place and then show it through their eyes, having them 'look round', e.g.

Sally stared at ...

Bill glanced round ...

Gary peered into ...

Frances gazed at ...

This allows the writer to build the description by showing the setting through the main character's eyes so the reader also pictures the image, e.g.

Sally stared at the old oak door. Faded, pink paint peeled back like old scabs and the door creaked as she leant against it.

b. Describe key objects

In a shared session, practise creating noun phrases for significant objects found in a setting. You say an object (or even better – show them one) and ask the children to build up a noun phrase by answering questions:

What is it?	<i>a vase</i>
What is it like?	<i>an old vase</i>
More description	<i>an old, cracked vase</i>
Where is it?	<i>an old cracked vase lay on the table</i>

Practise using similes to build the description, e.g. *The walls were pink as a flamingo... the carpet looked like a rainbow...*

c. Describe the weather and time of day

Of course, a setting on its own will not be sufficient to build the whole picture. It is also important to think about:

The weather

The time of day

Make the point that the setting, the weather and time of day all conspire to form a mood or effect upon the reader. Discuss the difference between a park on a hot summer's day and the same park on a dark, wintery night.

- Collect and generate phrases to describe different types of weather and think about the different atmospheres created, e.g.

The bright sun blazed...

The west wind swept down the streets...

The snow drifted...

Rain pelted the window...

- Ask the children to imagine their main character in their setting. Tell them to develop one of their phrases describing the character's reaction to the weather, for example, 'The bright sun blazed. Tom tugged off his coat and slipped into the shade.'
- Make lists of sentence openers that introduce the time of day. For example:

The midday sun...

In the afternoon, the snow blew...

Later that evening, the wind stilled...

It was midnight and the streets were empty...

Early in the morning, the balloon sailed over the mountain range...

d. Show where things are in the setting

When writing a description, use prepositional phrases to map out for the reader different aspects of the setting. Try combining this by showing the setting through the character's eyes, e.g.

*Jason stared round Salamander's hall. **On the ceiling**, he could just see a faded light flickering. **In the far corner**, there was what looked like an old suit of rusted armor. **To one side**, a table lay strewn with ancient maps, candlesticks and a silver horn. **Under the table** and poking out from a small box was the very thing that he had been seeking, a miniature dragon.*

e. Settings create atmosphere

If you watch any film with an eye on the setting, you will notice how the editor uses the setting to manipulate how the viewer feels. Though it is a cliché, it is true that stories may well begin in a homely and comfortable setting before launching the characters off into something more dramatic. In the same way, endings often take the main characters home, or put them into a cosy and safe setting with the weather brightening. These are metaphors that make us 'feel' the story. Get the children starting their stories in a comfortable and moving their characters to a more dramatic setting.

Comfortable settings – home, kitchen, bedroom, classroom, gran's house, friend's house, a den, etc.

Dramatic settings – alley, deserted house, wasteland, caves, mountains, distant galaxy, etc.

f. Suspense settings

Get the children to co-construct a suspense toolkit based on scary setting. Can they spot the tools that the writer is using in this passage?

The door to the damp cellar creaked open. Pipkin crept in and stared at the old, wooden desk. It was smothered in a thousand carvings. He could just make out strange animals, twisted serpents and what looked like dragons with flickering tongues. At that moment, the door slammed shut, leaving him in the shadows. A vague silhouette shifted. Pipkin spun round and reached out but the door was no longer there. From right behind him, a low whisper hissed his name.

- Put you put character alone in a scary setting
- Describe the setting with unusual and threatening detail –carvings, animals, serpents, dragons
- Use negative adjectives – damp, old, strange, twisted, flickering
- Use ominous sounds, e.g. creaked, hissed, slammed
- Make it dark and cold – damp cellar, shadows
- Show or hint at how the character feels by what they do – crept, stared, spun
- Hide the threat – vague silhouette, low whisper
- The main character hears something – hissed
- The main character catches a glimpse of something – a silhouette

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