

Monday.

The Standard 英文虎報

LS LIFE

24
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Goodies

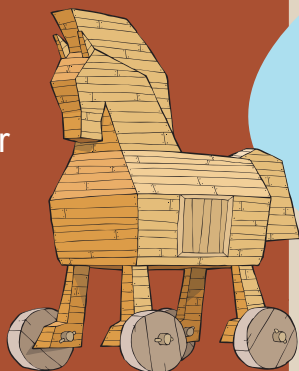


An ancient trick

THIS giant horse is famous! You may have seen it in books, movies and documentaries. In fact, the story of this wooden horse came from Greek mythology; it was an important object in the conflict called the Trojan War.

Today marks the fall of the city of Troy according to some Greek literature. According to those stories, on this day, in 1184BC, this giant horse was given as a present to the Trojans (people in Troy). They accepted it and opened the gates, but no one would guess that hidden inside this horse were many Greek soldiers who were ready to sack the city.

Many historians did not even believe the Trojan War was real until the 19th century when archaeologists found evidence of Troy in today Turkey. Did this horse really exist? Well, no evidence of that has been found, so it is still a mystery!



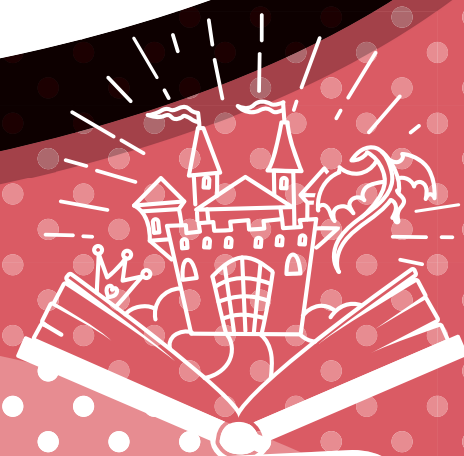
Editor's Note

Hi! I find Hong Kong is really noisy compared to other cities. I think it is because this city is crowded and there are lots of tall buildings so the noise gets trapped. Because of the noise, people need to shout to make themselves heard. I do not like the noise so whenever I go outside I put my earphones on and play loud music. Every time I pass a noisy place I increase the volume. I have been doing this for many years but I will stop now because it is actually damaging my ears. I think I will just stay inside my quiet home and be boring instead! Turn to G02 to read a news story about the safe use of earphones. Also, turn to G05-G08 to learn how to write stories.



Simon

How to write good stories



HAVE you submitted your story to our Story Writing Competition? If you have, thanks for your participation! We love hearing from you! If you have not, this four-page special feature will serve as a good reminder and as a guide to becoming a better writer!

First of all, ponder this question: what makes for a good story? A good story is...

- A story that is so interesting your reader wants to read to the end.
- A story that inspires and changes the reader.
- A story that your reader remembers.

Today, Jane HOUNG, a published children's book author, will share her writing recipe with you! Jane will tell us the main elements of a story, the writing process and give you some handy tips on writing a great story.



Structure: The shape of your story

THE most common structure is that the main character has a problem. He or she must struggle to solve a problem. Have him or her try three times to solve it. The first two times will fail but he or she learns something useful. On the third, the hero will finally be successful. Make each attempt more difficult and more important than the last. This will give your story 'rising action'. The climax should come at the end of the story.

Characters: The people in your story

YOUR main character should have a problem. Make him or her as interesting as you can. Think of lots of details, so the reader can imagine the same thing as you.

Setting: Where your story takes place

WRITE down some details about the setting of your story. Think about the weather, time of day, time of year and decide whether you want your setting to be attractive, ugly or frightening.

The main elements of a story

Point of View: Who tells your story

THE voice telling the story is known as the narrator. This voice does not necessarily take the same viewpoint as the author.

The use of 'I', 'me', 'we' and 'my' tells us that the narrator is a character in the story.

The use of 'he', 'she' and 'they' indicates the narrator is external to the story.

An external narrator can see, know and comment on all actions. It is omniscient, or all-seeing.

Remember that a character-narrator can only narrate what they witness or hear about from another character.

Plot: What happens in your story

ADD details to your story so the reader can imagine it clearly. For example, if your character is running through a wood, what sounds are heard? How does he or she feel?

Seven plots of fiction

Defeating the monster:

THE hero has to defeat a 'monster', which can be anything evil. The hero saves his family or his world from evil, eg, *Dracula*, *Star Wars*.

The quest:

THE hero travels to another place to find something important and has to face many tough challenges along the way, eg, *One Piece*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Lightning Thief*.

Comedy:

STORIES to make you laugh. The hero wants to achieve something but many funny things block his way. In the end he wins, eg, *Mr Bean*, *Pride and Prejudice*.

Tragedy:

THIS is an unhappy story where a character tries hard to reach a goal and fails, eg, *Romeo and Juliet*.

From poor to rich:

A POOR and sad person goes through many tough challenges but wins in the end and lives happily ever after, eg, *Cinderella*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

A journey and return home:

THE main character, who has a boring life, goes to a strange and magical world and has an adventure. The hero returns home as a better and more experienced person, eg, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Born again:

THE main character has done something wrong but has to change so that he or she can be happy, eg, *Frozen*.

The Writing Process

Before you write...

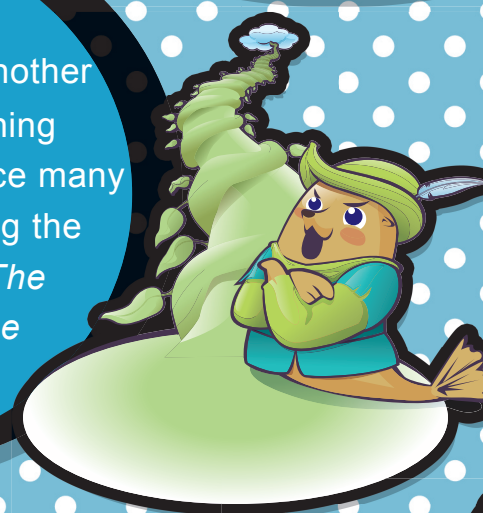
- A Write a summary: write about who, what, where, when, why and how.
- B Gather information: learn your topic from books, magazines, websites, etc.
- C Use a chart: organise details of your story.
- D Identify your audience: ask yourself who do you write for?

When you write...

- A Write a draft: keep your pen moving; do not care about grammar, the flow of the story, etc. Keep writing down your ideas.
- B Write more drafts: Go back to rewrite your first draft or even a second draft.
- C Receive comments: Let your friends and teachers read the final draft in order to make comments.
- D Be a reader yourself: Try to read it as a reader and make a note of your own reaction.

After you have written...

- A Rewrite.
- B Enliven dull sentences.
- C Vary the length of sentences.
- D Correct grammatical mistakes.





Tips on being more creative

1 Value your ideas

If you feel that no one is interested in your ideas, enjoy the moment. You are now free to experiment, fail and experiment again.

2 Feel inadequate

It is okay to feel inadequate and not as good as others. This can be a driving force to learn to do better.

3 Do not just experiment. Be the experiment!

Always look for new ways and methods to express yourself.

4 Be committed to commitment

Ninety-nine percent of the difference between successful creative people and those who fail is a commitment to self-improvement.

5 To stand out, work out what you stand for

Write a list of your values and make it your call to action.

6 Reject acceptance and accept rejection

Every time your work is rejected, use it as an opportunity to improve it.

Tips for writing a great story

1 Write a strong beginning

A great story beginning makes your reader want to continue.

2 Show, do not tell

Unpack your characters' emotions and find ways to let the reader see the story for themselves. For example, instead of writing 'the man was angry', write 'the man clenched his fists and hissed beneath his breath'.

3 Use stronger verbs

For example, instead of writing 'I ran quickly', write 'I sprinted'. Or, instead of writing 'I shouted loudly', write 'I screamed'.

4 Keep your reader hooked by adding tension and drama

Give details of the scene or setting to make the story feel real. You can do this by using the character's senses e.g. what he or she sees, hears, tastes, smells and touches.

5 Create a strong ending

Try to make your ending satisfying and believable as well as surprising.

6 Read! Read! Read!

If you do not read, there is no way you can write well.

Five minute warm-up writing exercises

- Think about your own breakfast routine. What does it reveal about you, your family and your culture?
- Write a scene in which two characters say goodbye to each other. It could be a temporary parting or permanent. Who are these characters? What are their circumstances? Are they sad or happy? Will either of them learn from the parting? What happens at the parting which points to the future?
- If you could go back in time and change just one event in your life, what would it be? How might your life be different as a result of this change?
- Imagine you have been washed up onto a fantasy island. All you have with you are your wits. How will you survive? Enjoy your fantasy.
- Write about a character whose past contains a guilty secret. What is their secret? How does it affect the character's life?

Jane Houg has published a novel, a biography, poetry and children's books. Her books *Cat Soup and Other Short Stories* and *Pun Choi: Retellings of Chinese Folk and Fairy Tales* are available at Commercial Press bookshops. Her website is: www.janehoung.com



Goodies is giving away 5 copies of *Story Time for Kids*. To win a copy, tell us what you have learned from this four-page feature. Send your entry to us; our mailing address is printed on G12.



Name: _____

Age: _____

Address: _____

School: _____

Contact number: _____

What you learned: _____
