

Activity 1 – Planning a Portal Story

Nearly all portal stories follow a similar pattern:

- Main character (MC) finds magical portal & enters new world
- Describe new world
- MC explores this new world & encounters a problem
- MC has to escape & return through the portal
- MC cannot find portal again
(sometimes brings back a memento of new world)

Once you have identified the pattern of the story, the possibilities are endless. Let your imagination run free. Brainstorm lots of ideas and then decide which captures your interest as a writer. Before you start, take a look at my top tips.

Top tips for story writing:

- **Start in a world/a setting that you know well** – it is far easier to describe something familiar to you, e.g. a garden, your school, your local town, etc.
- **Use a stimulus (e.g. picture) for the new world** – an image will help you focus in on the detail and describe what is there.
- **Let your ideas flow** – don't worry about spelling, handwriting or presentation ... you can go back and edit this later.

Here are a couple of ideas to open your mind to the world of possibility:

Underlying Pattern	Story idea 1	Story idea 2
Main character (MC) finds magical portal and enters new world	Elif is playing in her Grandmother's garden and notices a small fairy door. Touches door and shrinks/ enters.	Josh and Archie playing hide and seek in their house. Archie opens hatch in the roof and discovers new world.
Describe new world	Arrives in an underground world full of caves, giant toadstools and magical creatures.	Transported to life onboard an enormous sailing ship in Tudor England.
MC explores new world and encounters a problem	Elif explores new world and enters an area strictly forbidden. Picks magical flower.	Ship is thrown into battle.
MC has to escape and return through the portal	Alarms sound and Elif runs. She is chased through the magical world by unknown threat and escapes.	Archie desperately searches for portal and way back to own world.
MC cannot find portal again (sometimes has brought back a memento of new world)	Elif cannot find fairy door again, but the cut flower lives on forever reminding her of her journey.	Archie escapes with small pouch of gunpowder in his pocket.

★ Using this underlying pattern, plan a few portal stories of your own. You may like to draw upon your own personal experience as well as your wider reading and imagination. I have also included two pictures in case they help you.



Underlying Pattern	Story Idea 1	Story Idea 2
Main character finds a magical portal and enters a new world.		
Describe new world.		
Main character explores new world and encounters a problem.		
Main character has to escape and returns through the portal.		
Main character cannot find the portal again but may have a memento to remind them of the other world.		

Activity 2

Make a start on your story. Choose your favourite idea that you have planned and take your pen for a walk.... I would like you to look back through all the work you have done so far leading up to this piece of writing, to help you with your ideas. Remember, all the best writers steal ideas from each other!

This week, I want you to focus on paragraph 1 and 2. Use your plan to help you write the first two paragraphs. Focus on cohesion (making sure it makes sense – avoiding repetition) and drawing your reader in by using engaging vocabulary. You want to take your reader on an adventure with your main character. Once you have had your first go at writing, leave it for a day or two, then go back to it and proof read for silly mistakes.