

LUKE TEMPLE'S WRITING TOOLBOX ACTIVITY PACK



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When I was your age I didn't enjoy reading or writing. Today, though, I'm an author and have written 10 books. This just shows that anything is possible. If I can grow to enjoy reading and writing, then so can anyone!

This activity pack contains some of the tools I use to help me make my books really exciting, fun and scary to read. I hope you enjoy using the tools to have a go at your own writing.

Please don't worry if you find any of the activities difficult and don't worry if you think your writing is 'rubbish'. I often think my writing is rubbish - it's just part of being a writer! The most important thing is to try and have fun with your writing.

Oh, and please do have a go at entering the competition on the next page!



Competition Time!



Win a **SIGNED BOOK** and a **VISIT TO YOUR SCHOOL**
from Luke Temple (3 prizes to be won!)

*Plus **everyone** who enters will be sent a brand new Luke Temple short story. No one has read the story yet. If you enter the competition, you will be one of the first people to ever read it!*

To enter the competition, complete one of the following:

- [Activity 9 on page 8](#) (a piece of writing)
- [Activity 10 on page 9](#) (a drawing)
- [Activity 11 on page 10](#) (a piece of writing)

Email your completed activity to

competition@luketemple.co.uk

and make sure you tell us which school you are from

Closing date: 31st May 2020

Luke will choose his favourite piece of work for each of the 3 activities. All 3 of these will win a signed book and a free visit to their school.

If you'd like to, you can email Luke all 3 activities. This means you will get 3 competition entries!

This activity pack is based on Luke's
most popular book:

FELIX DASHWOOD AND THE MUTATING MANSION



You don't need to read the book to complete this activity pack.
However, if you would like to read *Mutating Mansion*, you can
download it completely free from:

www.luketemple.co.uk/toolbox

How to write **EXCITING** descriptions

In chapter 1 of *Mutating Mansion*, the main character, Felix, sneaks into a mansion. To describe the mansion, Luke uses lots of different writing tools to make it feel old and rundown.



SIMILES:

A simile describes something by comparing it to something else, using the words 'like' or 'as'.

Can you find the simile in the sentence below from chapter 1 of *Mutating Mansion*?

Felix walked cautiously through tall weeds and over roots, which slithered along the broken stone path like dead snakes.

Activity 1: Create your own similes to describe a creepy garden.

E.g. What could a tree branch be like? What could a weed be as tall as?

ADJECTIVES:

An adjective is a word that describes a noun (the name of a thing or a place).

Can you find the adjectives in this sentence from chapter 1 of *Mutating Mansion*?

As Felix's eyes began to adjust to the dim light, she saw a vast, tall hallway with a white marble staircase in the middle.

Activity 2: Can you change the adjectives in the sentence above to make the hallway seem creepier?

METAPHORS:

A metaphor is a word or a phrase used to describe something as if it were something else.

Here is a sentence from chapter 1 of *Mutating Mansion*:

Felix sniffed and a mixture of rot and old cabbage ran up her nose.

Can you tell which word makes it a metaphor?

The smell of rot and cabbage can't actually 'run' up a nose, so describing it like this is a metaphor.

Activity 3: Complete the following sentence to create a new metaphor...

Felix breathed in and the taste of _____ flew into her mouth.

Can you write your own metaphors?

ALLITERATION:

Alliteration is when two or more words close together start with the same letter or sound.

Can you find the alliteration in this sentence from chapter 1 of *Mutating Mansion*?

She didn't quite know what she'd expected – maybe something spookier like a gruesome ghost chamber filled with skeletons.

Activity 4: Look at the sentences you wrote in activities 1 to 3 above. Can you add any alliteration into them?



Using **SENSES**

When you are writing a story, it is important to think about your character's five senses.

What can they **SEE**, **HEAR**, **SMELL**, **TASTE** or **TOUCH**?

If you include sentences that describe these senses, it will help the reader to feel like they are involved in the story with your character.

Activity 5: Below are some sentences from chapter 1 of *Mutating Mansion*. Can you identify which senses are described in each sentence?

Felix sniffed and a mixture of rot and old cabbage ran up her nose.

Felix placed her hand on the rusty gate and carefully pushed.

As Felix's eyes began to adjust to the dim light, she saw a vast, tall hallway...

She took hold of the knocker and hit it three times against the door. The loud noise echoed through the mansion.

Activity 6: There is one sense Luke didn't use in the sentence above. Which sense is it? Can you write a sentence using this sense?

SHOW

don't

TELL



Another way to get readers interested in your story is to *show* how the characters are feeling rather than *tell* what they are feeling.

This means that instead of just writing 'Felix felt scared', you describe what happens to her when she is scared. Luke does this in chapter 1 of *Mutating Mansion*.

Activity 7: How do you think Felix is feeling in each of the sentences below? What makes you think this?

Felix smiled at her friends and walked up to the large oak front door...

Felix slowly stepped back, her heart thudding in her chest.

Activity 8: The three sentences below *tell* the reader what Felix and her friends are feeling. Can you change them to *show* how they are feeling?

Hint: think about what happens to you when you feel these emotions.

Felix felt scared.

Drift was excited.

Caspar was nervous.

EDITING



One of the most important parts of writing a story is editing it. Authors never just write one version of their story. After they have written it all down for the first time, they go back through the story and think about how they can improve it.

When Luke is editing a story, he asks himself the following questions:

- Does everything make sense? Are there any mistakes?
- Are there any boring bits?
- How can I make the story more exciting / dramatic / scary?

He also asks himself whether he has used all the tools in his writing toolbox:

- Have I used enough adjectives, similes, metaphors and alliteration to make my descriptions interesting?
- **Senses:** have I helped the reader to be involved by describing more than one of the character's senses?
- **Show don't tell:** have I shown the reader how the character is feeling, instead of telling them?

Activity 9:

COMPETITION ALERT - see page 2 to enter!

The paragraph below isn't that interesting. It needs editing! Can you rewrite the paragraph, using Luke's writing toolbox to make it as fun and interesting as possible?

Felix was scared. She opened the door and walked into the kitchen. She saw thousands of rotten eggs on the kitchen table. An egg rose off the table and flew at Felix. She ducked and the egg smashed on the wall behind her. Three more eggs rose up and flew at her. She didn't duck in time and one of them hit her in the face. Felix ran out of the kitchen.

CREATE A BOOK COVER

A brilliant artist called Jessica Chiba draws all the pictures for Luke's books, including the book covers. You can see some of them below.

You can also watch how Jessica drew one of the book covers on YouTube using this link:

bit.ly/3eDH1a0

Activity 10:

COMPETITION ALERT - see page 2 to enter!

Draw your own version of one of Luke's book covers. You can either draw it in the same style as Jessica, or come up with your own completely original design.



DIARY WRITING

In *Mutating Mansion*, Felix finds a diary written by a girl called Amelie 50 years ago. In the diary, Amelie is stuck indoors – in fact, she can't even leave her bed. She misses being outside and seeing her friends. The diary helps her to stop feeling lonely and means she can write down how she feels.

You can read one of Amelie's diary entries on the next page.

Activity 11:

COMPETITION ALERT - see page 2 to enter!

Write your own diary entry talking about your experience of 'lockdown'.



AMELIE'S DIARY ENTRY

Dear diary,

Hello! My name is Amelie Summercroft and I live in Murkhill Mansion on Thistlewick Island. OK, so that is a bit of a boring way to start, but this is my first ever diary entry and I couldn't think of anything better.

Today was my 10th birthday. I couldn't have cake, because that would make me too sick, but all the presents made up for it. Mum and Dad's present was you - my first diary. What should I use you for? There would be no point in me writing down what happens each day, because not many exciting things happen in my life. It's kind of difficult to have adventures when you're stuck in bed. Mum and Dad think I should use you to write stories. They are always telling me that I have a big imagination. Mum also thinks that if I write down all the nightmares I have, it might stop them. Dr Ralph said I should write about *it* too, but I really don't want to think about that.

I know a diary doesn't sound like a big present, but it's OK. Mum and Dad have to spend a lot of money on me. They haven't said that to me, but I know that all the medical equipment in my room is expensive. I also got some drawing pencils from Uncle Ferdinand and a sketchpad from Aunt Cariola. Other than the fact this stinks of Aunty Cariola's horrible perfume, it is a perfect present - I love drawing.

Another thing I love is reading. If you can't have adventures of your own, the next best thing is to read about them. Most of my other presents were books, and I am almost looking forward to lying in this bed all day now that I have all these adventures to go on.

The best present of all, though, was a surprise one. It was wrapped in shiny red paper and the label on it read: 'Dear Amelie, I hope this helps you to make your dreams come true. From Mr Blaze'. I didn't even know who Mr Blaze was until Dad told me he is the person we are renting this mansion from. Murkhill Mansion is far too big for the three of us, but apparently Mr Blaze insisted we take it.

Dad helped me to unwrap the shiny red paper and I pulled out a rag toy. It is about twenty centimetres tall and wears a long black coat, like a magician's cloak. Its face is the best bit, though - like a golden, smiling theatre mask. I turned it round to show Mum and she said it gave her the creeps. But I love it!

The only thing that could have made my birthday even better today was if I had seen my classmates from school. I really miss them - even Bartley, who always annoyed me.

I haven't talked to my toys since I was about five, but this evening I found myself telling my rag toy how much I wished all my friends could have been here today. But none of them came. It was just me and my rag toy, who smiled at me as I told him all about them. Of course he smiled - he's a toy, that's all he can do. He's sitting at the end of my bed now. I've just told him that I am writing about him. A 10-year-old girl talking to her toy. It's a bit sad, isn't it? Still, I do love his smile.

AN INTERVIEW WITH LUKE TEMPLE

What advice would you give to young writers?

- Don't worry if you think what you've written is rubbish! Even if you think it's terrible, just keep writing. I **always** think my stories are rubbish when I first write them. But the more you work on them, the better they get and the more fun you'll have.
- Write, write, write!!! In football, the more you practice kick ups, the better you'll get at them; in dance, the more you practice a routine, the better you'll get at performing it. It's exactly the same with writing: in order to be a good writer you have to write, write, write! The more you write, the easier and more fun it will get!
- Cram as many different stories into your head as you can. Reading books is important, but I don't just mean that. You can also read magazines, watch films, listen to your friends' and grandparents' stories. The more stories you cram into your head, the easier you will find it to write your own.

What inspires you to write?

I get ideas. Lots of them. They buzz round my head, banging into each other and forming bigger, brighter ideas. And those ideas hit more ideas and explode like fireworks in my mind. If I'm not careful, too many fireworks will go off at once and my head will explode.

Can you tell us anything about your next book?

I'm currently writing a book of short stories. Here are some of the story titles:

- *Zombie Cows From Outer Space*
- *The Disappearance of Author Luke Temple*
- *The Cheese Rolling Elephant*

How long do your books take you to write?

My record for the fastest time writing a book is 1 month! It usually takes about a year, though. Out of that time, I spend about 6 months writing the first draft, then another 6 months editing it.

Editing is my favourite part of writing. When I read through my first draft I think it is rubbish. By editing it and changing the bits I don't like, I am able to turn it into a book I love!

Why do you enjoy visiting schools with your books?

The best part of my job is meeting children in schools and bringing the world of writing to life with them using audience participation action-packed drama and laugh-out-loud fun. It's amazing that I get to visit schools and help inspire children to read and write.

If you weren't an author what job would you like to have?

I'd probably be a teacher. They're lovely people. Really.