



LOWER KS2 INTERACTIVE WRITING TOOLKIT

Years 3–4 • choose a tool • click it • use the scaffold • craft your sentence

FANTASTIC

Feeling

Asking

Noticing

Touching

Action

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Personification

Feeling

Show a character's feelings through actions, body language and thoughts.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- My hands began to ____.
- I could feel my ____ ____.
- Without thinking, I ____.
- A sudden feeling of ____ filled me.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

trembled • shook • smiled • frowned • froze • sighed • stared
• gulped

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose the feeling.
2. Pick an action the body might do.
3. Add what caused the feeling.
4. Read it aloud: can the reader tell how they feel?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Sam's hands began to tremble as the door slowly opened.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Try removing the emotion word. Can your action show the feeling instead?

SELF-CHECK: I showed the feeling. ✓ I chose a clear action. ✓ My sentence makes sense. ✓ I checked punctuation.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- What if ____?
- Could ____ really ____?
- Where had ____ gone?
- Why was ____ so ____?

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

what • why • where • how • could • would • might • really

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Decide what the character wants to know.
2. Choose a question opener.
3. Finish the thought clearly.
4. Remember the question mark.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

What if the strange noise came from behind the door?

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can your question make the reader curious about what happens next?

SELF-CHECK: It is a real question. ✓ It fits the story. ✓ I used a capital letter. ✓ I used a question mark.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- I noticed ____ beside ____.
- In the distance, I saw ____.
- There, hidden beneath ____, was ____.
- At the edge of ____ stood ____.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

There, hidden beneath the leaves, was a muddy footprint.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

shadow • light • shape • footprint • mark • movement • door
• figure

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Look carefully at the scene.
2. Choose ONE useful detail.
3. Say where it is.
4. Add a precise adjective or verb.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can the detail give the reader a clue about what might happen?

SELF-CHECK: I chose one detail. ✓ I said where it was. ✓ I used precise words. ✓ I did not list everything.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The ___ felt ___ beneath my fingers.
- The ___ was ___ against my skin.
- As I touched ___, it felt ___.
- I ran my hand across the ___ surface.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

rough • smooth • cold • warm • soft • hard • sticky • bumpy

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose the object.
2. Choose a texture or temperature.
3. Add where it touches the character.
4. Use an exact adjective.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The old wall felt rough and cold beneath my fingers.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you use two well-chosen adjectives without overloading the sentence?

SELF-CHECK: I described touch. ✓ My adjective is precise. ✓ It fits the object. ✓ My sentence is punctuated.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- ___ grabbed the ___ and ___.
- Suddenly, ___ raced ___.
- ___ crept towards ___.
- With one quick movement, ___ ___ed ___.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

grabbed • raced • crept • leapt • snatched • hurried •
stumbled • charged

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose who is acting.
2. Choose a strong verb.
3. Add where or what they act on.
4. Keep the sentence clear.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Lena snatched the key and raced towards the gate.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Replace a weak verb such as went, got or did with a stronger one.

SELF-CHECK: I used a strong verb. ✓ The action is easy to picture. ✓ I avoided weak verbs. ✓ The pace feels right.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The air smelled of ____.
- A smell of ____ drifted through ____.
- The strong scent of ____ filled ____.
- I could smell ____ nearby.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

smoke • flowers • damp earth • food • salt • wood • grass • dust

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose a smell that belongs in the setting.
2. Decide if it is strong or faint.
3. Say where it is.
4. Link it to the scene.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The smell of damp earth drifted through the forest.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can the smell make the setting feel welcoming, strange or dangerous?

SELF-CHECK: The smell fits the setting. ✓ I used a precise noun. ✓ It adds detail. ✓ I did not force it in.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The ____ tasted ____.
- A ____ taste filled my mouth.
- The first bite was ____.
- On my tongue, the ____ tasted ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

sweet • salty • sour • bitter • spicy • fresh • stale • juicy

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what is being tasted.
2. Choose a precise taste word.
3. Add a reaction if useful.
4. Keep the detail relevant.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER

Can you add a reaction that shows whether the character likes it?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The first bite was sweet and juicy.

SELF-CHECK: I used a taste word. ✓ The detail makes sense. ✓ I chose precise vocabulary. ✓ I checked punctuation.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- I imagined ____.
- For a moment, I pictured ____.
- Perhaps ____ would ____.
- Maybe ____ was waiting ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

imagined • pictured • hoped • worried • perhaps • maybe •
wondered • dreamed

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what the character is thinking about.
2. Decide if it is hope or worry.
3. Choose a thought opener.
4. Connect it to the story.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

For a moment, I pictured the treasure hidden beneath the sand.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can the thought tell us something new about the character?

SELF-CHECK: The thought fits the story. ✓ It sounds like the character. ✓ It adds something new. ✓ I checked my sentence.

Checking

Make a character stop and check something important.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- I checked ____ before ____.
- Looking back, I made sure ____.
- Carefully, ____ examined ____.
- One more time, I looked at ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

checked • looked • examined • searched • tested • counted •
read • studied

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what needs checking.
2. Choose a clear checking verb.
3. Say why it matters through the story.
4. Use the moment to slow the action.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Looking back, I made sure the gate was still closed.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER

Can the checking moment build a little tension?

SELF-CHECK: The check has a reason. ✓ I used a clear verb. ✓ It helps the story. ✓ My sentence is accurate.

Adverbials

Tell the reader when, where or how something happens.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- Early that morning, ____.
- Behind the ____, ____.
- Without warning, ____.
- Carefully, ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

- later • soon • outside • beneath • behind • quietly • carefully
• suddenly

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose WHEN, WHERE or HOW.
2. Put the adverbial at the front.
3. Write the main sentence.
4. Use a comma after the fronted adverbial.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER

Try moving the adverbial. Which version sounds best?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Without warning, the enormous doors swung open.

SELF-CHECK: My adverbial adds detail. ✓ It is at the front if I want it there. ✓ I used a comma after it. ✓ The main clause makes sense.

Sentence Basics

Build a complete sentence with a subject and a verb.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The ____ ed ____.
- My ____ was ____.
- ____ had a ____.
- The ____ became ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

who? • what? • verb • noun • adjective • subject • action • detail

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose who or what the sentence is about.
2. Give them an action/state verb.
3. Add useful detail.
4. Check it is a complete thought.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you improve one noun or verb without adding too many adjectives?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The nervous explorer lifted the heavy torch.

SELF-CHECK: It has a subject. ✓ It has a verb. ✓ It makes complete sense. ✓ It begins and ends correctly.

Subordinate Clauses

Add extra information using a subordinating conjunction.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- Although ____, ____.
- Because ____, ____.
- When ____, ____.
- While ____, ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

when • if • because • although • while • before • after • since

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose the relationship between the ideas.
2. Pick a conjunction.
3. Write the subordinate clause.
4. Add the main clause and check the comma if the subordinate clause is first.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Although it was raining, the children continued playing.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Move the subordinate clause to the end. Does the comma still belong there?

SELF-CHECK: I used a conjunction. ✓ I have a main clause. ✓ The extra clause makes sense. ✓ I checked the comma.

Co-ordinating Conjunctions

Join equal ideas using and, but, or, so.

[← OVERVIEW](#)



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- ___ and ___.
- ___, but ___.
- ___, so ___.
- ___ or ___.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

and • but • or • so • yet • both • either • choice

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Write your first idea.
2. Choose the conjunction for the meaning.
3. Add the second idea.
4. Read the whole sentence.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The path was steep, but we kept climbing.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you explain why 'but' works better than 'and' in your sentence?

SELF-CHECK: Both ideas make sense. ✓ The conjunction fits. ✓ I did not make the sentence too long. ✓ Punctuation is clear.

Expanded Noun Phrases

Add useful detail around a noun.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- the ____, ____
- a ____ with ____
- the ____ beside ____
- an ____, ____

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

ancient • enormous • shimmering • wooden • crumbling •
narrow • mysterious • colourful

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose the noun.
2. Add one or two precise adjectives.
3. Add a prepositional phrase if useful.
4. Read it: every word should earn its place.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The ancient, crumbling tower beside the river

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you replace a common adjective such as nice, big or good?

SELF-CHECK: My noun is clear. ✓ My adjectives are precise. ✓ I did not overload it. ✓ The phrase fits the sentence.

Paragraphs

Group related ideas and start a new paragraph when something changes.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- Later that day, ____.
- Meanwhile, ____.
- The next morning, ____.
- Across the field, ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

time • place • speaker • topic • later • meanwhile • next • elsewhere

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Ask: has time, place, speaker or topic changed?
2. Start a new paragraph if it has.
3. Use an opener to help the reader.
4. Keep related sentences together.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can the first sentence of the new paragraph link to what came before?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Later that evening, the family returned to the cottage.

SELF-CHECK: My paragraph has one focus. ✓ Something changed before I started it. ✓ Ideas are grouped together. ✓ The opening helps the reader.

Past & Present Tense

Keep your writing in the correct tense.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- Yesterday, ___ed ___.
- Every day, ___s ___.
- Right now, ___ is ___ing.
- Last night, ___ was ___ing.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

walked • walks • played • plays • is • was • were • are

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Decide when the writing happens.
2. Choose past or present.
3. Check each verb.
4. Correct any accidental tense changes.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Last night, the rain hammered against the windows.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you find every verb in your sentence and check its tense?

SELF-CHECK: My tense is consistent. ✓ My verb agrees with the subject. ✓ I checked irregular verbs. ✓ Any change is deliberate.

Present Perfect

Use has/have + past participle to link the past to now.

[← OVERVIEW](#)



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- I have ____ since ____.
- She has already ____.
- They have never ____.
- We have just ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

have • has • finished • seen • visited • written • found • completed

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose has or have.
2. Choose the past participle.
3. Add when/how if useful.
4. Check that the action connects to now.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

We have visited the museum three times this year.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Compare: 'We visited' and 'We have visited'. How does the meaning change?

SELF-CHECK: I used has/have. ✓ I used a past participle. ✓ The action connects to now. ✓ The sentence sounds natural.

Direct Speech

Punctuate what a character says.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- “___,” said ___.
- “___?” asked ___.
- ___ shouted, “___!”
- “___,” whispered ___.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

said • asked • shouted • whispered • replied • called •
muttered • cried

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Open speech marks.
2. Write the spoken words.
3. Put punctuation before the closing speech mark.
4. Add the reporting clause; start a new line for a new speaker.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can the speech show something about the character instead of explaining it afterwards?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

“Where are you going?” asked Mum.

SELF-CHECK: Speech marks surround spoken words. ✓ Punctuation is inside them. ✓ I punctuated the reporting clause. ✓ New speaker = new line.

Apostrophes

Use apostrophes for possession and contractions.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- ____'s ____
- The ____s' ____
- I can't ____.
- They're ____.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The girl's muddy boots were beside the door.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

can't • don't • I'm • they're • child's • teacher's • girls' • players'

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Decide: contraction or possession?
2. For contraction, show missing letters.
3. For possession, decide who owns it.
4. Place the apostrophe carefully.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you explain the difference between 'girls', 'girl's' and 'girls'?

SELF-CHECK: I know why the apostrophe is there. ✓ It is in the correct place. ✓ I did not use one for a normal plural. ✓ The sentence is clear.

Punctuation

Use punctuation to make meaning clear.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- List: __, __ and __.
- Question: __?
- Exclamation: What a __!
- Parenthesis: The __ (__) __.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

comma • question mark • exclamation mark • apostrophe •
speech marks • brackets • full stop • colon

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Decide what job the punctuation needs to do.
2. Choose the correct mark.
3. Write the sentence.
4. Read it aloud and check clarity.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER

Can you explain the job of the punctuation you chose?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Inside the bag were pencils, rulers, glue and scissors.

SELF-CHECK: I chose punctuation for a reason. ✓ It is in the correct place. ✓ My sentence is clearer. ✓ I did not add punctuation randomly.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- Bang! ____.
- The ____ crashed ____.
- With a loud ____, ____.
- The leaves ____ beneath my feet.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

bang • crash • buzz • hiss • snap • thud • rustle • splash

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Think of the sound.
2. Choose the closest sound word.
3. Put it into a clear sentence.
4. Use it only where it adds something.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you use the sound word inside the sentence rather than always at the start?

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Snap! The dry branch broke beneath my boot.

SELF-CHECK: The sound matches the action. ✓ It adds impact. ✓ My sentence still makes sense. ✓ I did not overuse it.

Alliteration

Repeat the same starting sound for effect.

[← OVERVIEW](#)



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- Wild ____ ____.
- Slippery ____ slid ____.
- Dark ____ drifted ____.
- Busy ____ buzzed ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

wild • wind • slippery • snake • dark • dust • busy • bees

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what you want to describe.
2. Pick two or three useful words.
3. Try the same starting sound.
4. Keep it natural.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Busy bees buzzed beside the bright flowers.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you make the alliteration subtle rather than using it in every word?

SELF-CHECK: The repeated sound is clear. ✓ The words still make sense. ✓ It fits the writing. ✓ I did not force it.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- ___ light / ___ night
- ___ sky / ___ high
- ___ play / ___ day
- ___ tree / ___ me

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

light/night • sky/high • day/play • tree/me • blue/you •
rain/train

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what you want to say.
2. Find a rhyme pair.
3. Build a line around each word.
4. Read it aloud.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The stars shone bright / throughout the night.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you keep the meaning strong instead of choosing a silly word just because it rhymes?

SELF-CHECK: My rhyme words match. ✓ Both lines make sense. ✓ It sounds natural aloud. ✓ The rhyme suits the task.

Repetition

Repeat a word or phrase on purpose.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- No _____. No _____.
- Again and again, _____.
- Run, run, run!
- It was _____, it was _____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

no • again • never • run • still • everywhere • nothing • more

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what needs emphasis.
2. Choose a word/phrase to repeat.
3. Repeat it in a pattern.
4. Stop before it becomes too much.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

No sound. No movement. No way out.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can the repeated words build towards the most important idea?

SELF-CHECK: I repeated on purpose. ✓ It adds emphasis. ✓ The pattern is clear. ✓ I did not repeat by accident.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The ____ was like ____.
- As ____ as ____, ____.
- ____ moved like ____.
- Like a ____, the ____ ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

ice • feather • lion • lightning • shadow • giant • mouse • rocket

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what you are describing.
2. Think of its main quality.
3. Find something else with that quality.
4. Join them using like or as.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The lake was as smooth as glass.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you create your own comparison instead of using a familiar one?

SELF-CHECK: I used like/as. ✓ The comparison makes sense. ✓ It creates a picture. ✓ It fits the mood.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The classroom was a ____.
- The sun was a ____.
- His words were ____.
- The road was a ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

furnace • blanket • river • maze • jungle • torch • monster • ribbon

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose what you are describing.
2. Choose the quality you want.
3. Pick an image with that quality.
4. Write it without like or as.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The playground was a furnace in the afternoon sun.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can you add one more detail that continues the same image?

SELF-CHECK: I did not use like/as. ✓ The image makes sense. ✓ It creates a clear picture. ✓ I kept the image consistent.

Pathetic Fallacy

Use weather or nature to help create a mood.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The dark clouds ____.
- The rain ____ against ____.
- Bright sunlight ____ across ____.
- The wind ____ through ____.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

- gathered • hammered • danced • howled • whispered • shone
• raced • drifted

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose the mood.
2. Choose weather that fits or contrasts.
3. Add a strong verb.
4. Connect it to the scene.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

Dark clouds gathered above the lonely house.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Could cheerful weather make a sad moment even more powerful through contrast?

SELF-CHECK: The weather helps the mood. ✓ I used a strong verb. ✓ It fits the setting. ✓ I did not overdo it.

1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- That was a ___ idea!
- The ___ was on a roll.
- What a ___ way to ___!
- It was a very ___ situation.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The baker was delighted because business was on a roll.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

roll • bright • point • right • rock • current • sole • cool

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose a topic word.
2. Think of another meaning.
3. Build a sentence where the joke works.
4. Check your reader will understand it.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER

Can you use a pun in a headline, joke or slogan?

SELF-CHECK: The double meaning works. ✓ The joke fits the context. ✓ It is easy to understand. ✓ It suits the audience.

Personification

Give a non-human thing a human action.

← OVERVIEW



1 CHOOSE A STEM / OPENER

- The wind ____ed ____.
- The sun ____ed down.
- The shadows ____ed across ____.
- The trees ____ed in the wind.

2 WORD BANK — MAGPIE, THEN ADAPT

whispered • danced • watched • smiled • crept • waved •
sighed • chased

3 BUILD IT STEP BY STEP

1. Choose a non-human thing.
2. Choose a human action.
3. Make sure they fit together.
4. Add where/how if useful.

4 MODEL SENTENCE

The shadows crept slowly across the wall.

5 MAKE IT STRONGER Can your human action help create the mood of the setting?

SELF-CHECK: My subject is non-human. ✓ The action is human-like. ✓ The image makes sense. ✓ It adds to the atmosphere.