

Sevensteps

Workshop One (Online)

Seven Steps to Transform Writing

Session Two Handout



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We are looking forward to seeing you for Session Two!



We hope that Session One of our workshop gave you lots of ideas for implementing **Step 2: Sizzling Starts** and **Step 3: Tightening Tension** with your students. Did you try out the Five Minute Fast Starts with your class? How did it go? We look forward to hearing about some of your experiences.

By now you will have received an email with your link for Session Two. Feel free to join us 10 minutes before the start of the session, to check your video and audio settings and chat with your fellow participants.

What's in this handout

This booklet includes the theory, templates and activities that we will be using in Session Two.

This session will focus on **Step 7: Exciting Endings / Endings with Impact** and **Step 1: Plan for Success**.

We'll cover how to plan for both narrative and persuasive texts, with a few examples to show how it works for informative writing. (Hint: planning for each type of text is similar, but not identical!)

To refresh your memory, here is a recap of the Seven Steps:

- Step 1 Plan for Success**
- Step 2 Sizzling Starts**
- Step 3 Tightening Tension**
- Step 4 Dynamic Dialogue**
- Step 5 Show, Don't Tell**
- Step 6 Ban the Boring**
- Step 7 Exciting Endings / Endings with Impact**

We hope that these handouts will be a valuable resource for you during these sessions. Don't forget, you have [Teacher Hub](#) to help you, with access to hundreds of resources, videos, lesson plans and activities!

WHY AUTHORIAL WRITING SKILLS MATTER

Jake was a Year 9 student who thought he couldn't write because he had dyslexia. Yet here's what he wrote with just one minute for each of these Sizzling Starts.

Although Jake's secretarial skills need work, his writing has a strong and engaging voice that can make readers laugh.

Here are a few examples of Jake's Sizzling Starts:

TOPIC: Excursion to a chocolate factory where Barry the bratty kid goes missing.

Where has he gone! his mother screamed whilst shoving more chocalet in her mouth.

TOPIC: The food fight.

It's chaos, everyone is running around having food fights even the library is on fire but not me I'm just sitting here doing my maths homework.

TOPIC: There's a tree in the school yard that eats kids.

It's just me and the tree, this has to stop. It's lookin at me with it's green leafy eyes. It's a showdown. Just me and the tree.



When we focus on authorial writing skills, such as generating ideas, brainstorming and planning, then the originality and creativity of writing soars.

The secretarial skills of writing – spelling, punctuation and grammar – should be implemented AFTER the creative content has been captured.

'The reason why I think people who are dyslexic seem to do well in life, having struggled at school, is that we tend to simplify things.'

– Sir Richard Branson

'The advantage is that my brain sees and puts information in my head differently, more interestingly than if I saw like everyone else.'

– Whoopi Goldberg

Step 7

Exciting Endings / Endings with Impact

'I always have the ending defined well before I start.
Any short story should have a wham at the end.'

– Paul Jennings, author of *Unreal!*, *Weirdest Stories* and the *Don't Look Now* series

Theory

The goal of the ending is to wrap up the piece of writing so the reader feels satisfied, inspired or persuaded. A great conclusion gives writing a powerful punch.

Without an ending, you don't have a plan – you just have a good idea! Remember the writing graph: don't start writing until you know the ending.



Top Techniques:

Narrative

- There are two parts to a narrative ending:
 - action climax (e.g. winning the grand final).
 - emotional resolution (adds richness).
- Know your ending before you start writing.
- Ban the quick fix endings:
 - 'And then I woke up ...'
 - 'Boom! They all died.'
 - 'The End.'

Persuasive

- Don't just summarise (i.e. boringly repeat.)
- Convince the reader by engaging their emotions.
- Make the reader want to change their beliefs or take action.
- Possible endings:
 - link to the introduction
 - call to action
 - inspire to empower change.

Informative

- Don't just summarise. The facts have informed, now extend.
- Create a satisfying ending by linking back to the introduction.
- End with a call to action.
- Leave the reader with something to think about.

STICKY SITUATIONS

Learning Intentions could include:

- Understand the importance of planning the ending before you start writing.
- Be able to use different techniques to give endings power and impact.
- Be able to write a narrative ending that has an action climax and an emotional resolution.

Topic:

- It's the day of your blind audition for *The Voice* and you've woken up with laryngitis.

Extra topics:

- You're being chased by a T-Rex and your time machine won't start.
- You get left behind on an excursion.

possible ending 1

possible ending 2

possible ending 6

The situation:

possible ending 3

possible ending 5

possible ending 4

ACTION ACTIVITIES



Narrative

The Big Race

You've been training all year.
The big race is tomorrow!

What happens? Write an exciting ending to your year of hard work.

Make sure the ending includes an action climax and an emotional resolution.

Creating Change

Persuasive

Explain to students that the main aim of a persuasive text is to change the way that people think and act. The conclusion is the final opportunity to achieve this goal, so creating an Ending with Impact is crucial.

As a class, watch the following clip: 'Always #LikeAGirl', <https://youtu.be/dxrPeFKtUwQ>.

Discuss what this advertisement aims to change.

How does the ending (2:50 onwards) help convince the audience to change their thinking and behaviour?

Ask students to form small groups and discuss how they would change their own thinking and behaviour in response to this advertisement.

Forgettable Finishes

Informative

As a class, make a poster of all the boring endings you want to ban from informative writing (this may include reports, news articles, biographies, explanations, travel writing, audio and visual documentaries).

Your list might include:

- And that is why [topic] is important.
- In conclusion, I think ...
- So now you know how [topic] works.
- Now you know all about [topic].
- So [topic] is a very important thing.
- THE END.

For more Action Activities, take a look in our manuals and on [Teacher Hub](#).

Step

1

Plan for Success

NARRATIVE

'Writing isn't something you do with your pen – it's something you do with your brain.'

– Jen McVeity, creator of *Seven Steps to Writing Success*

Theory

'Where do you get your ideas?'

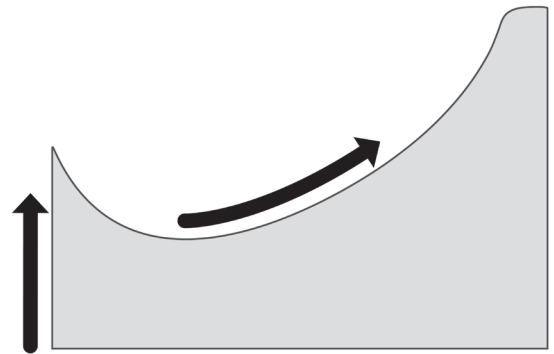
This is the most common question asked of authors. Ideas are the first and most important part of planning a piece of writing.

Authors usually spend their time:

- $\frac{1}{3}$ brainstorming / planning / researching
- $\frac{1}{3}$ drafting
- $\frac{1}{3}$ editing.

Ideas come from the subconscious (creative) part of the brain – from the Alpha brain waves. Yet the subconscious is the 'lazy' part of the brain and it needs training and discipline.

To get ideas that are original and powerful, you need to practise generating them. Then you need to spend time developing and ordering your ideas to create a plan for your text.



Top Techniques – Narrative texts:

Brainstorming and selecting ideas

- Brainstorm 10 ideas to get one great idea.
- Stay in the creative Alpha zone.
- Group brainstorming is far more effective than working alone.
- Your first ideas are not always the best – dig deeper!
- Select the right-sized idea.

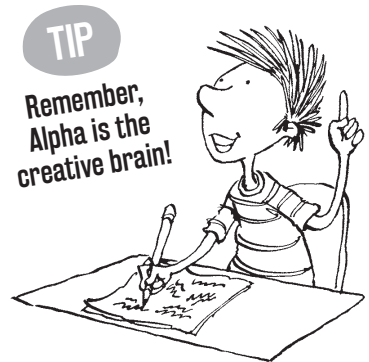
Developing and ordering ideas

- Develop the idea by brainstorming problems and characters.
- Order the problems or events to build tension (pebble, rock, boulder).
- Create characters the reader cares about.
- Come up with a Sizzling Start and an Exciting Ending.
- Plot the ideas on the story graph to create a complete plan.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

Learning Intentions:

- Be able to generate concepts and ideas.
- Understand that your first idea is the one everyone else will think of too – push through and find your Alpha brain.
- Experience the power of group brainstorming.
- Understand that verbal is vital ('If you can't talk it, you can't write it.')



TIP

Remember, Alpha is the creative brain!

Topic:

- First contact

Extra topics:

- Connection
- New frontiers
- Right or wrong?

TOPIC: Run

EXAMPLE

- A run in your stockings on a big date.
- Bath water running over.
- The time I got the runs ...

1. Brainstorm at least 10 ways to tackle the topic.

Topic:

1.

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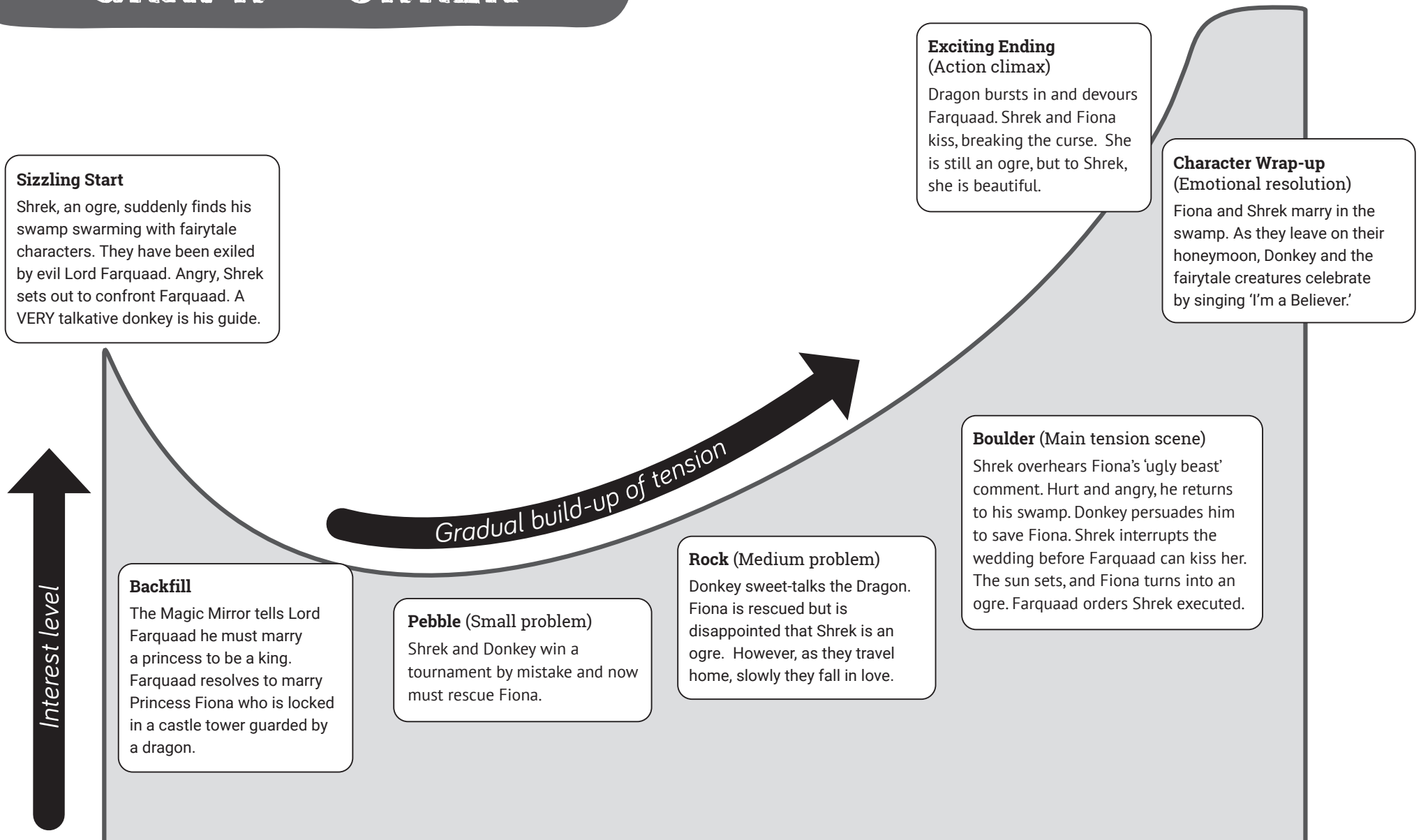
9.

10.

2. Circle the best idea. Make sure it is a short story-length idea (500 words), not a 100,000-word epic novel idea.

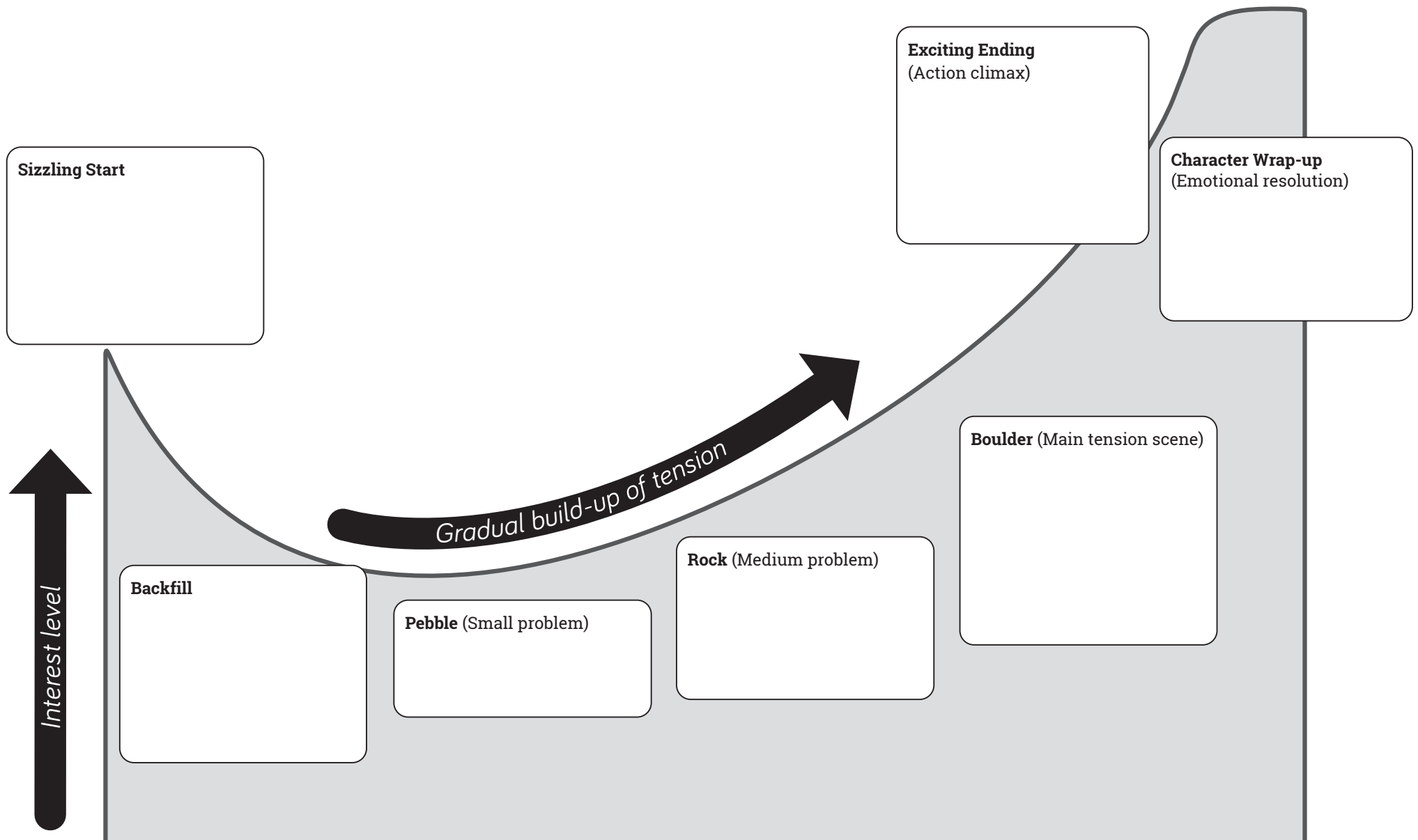
SAMPLE STORY GRAPH – SHREK

Get students to plot their favourite books, movies or even adverts on the Narrative Story Graph. For more examples of videos and texts plotted on the graph, head to [Teacher Hub](#).



NARRATIVE STORY GRAPH

Editable writing graphs for Narrative, Persuasive and Informative writing, as well as dozens of examples for popular stories and videos, are available to members of [Teacher Hub](#).



Step

1

Plan for Success

PERSUASIVE

'I wrote my first book in our dunny down the backyard.
It was the only peaceful place where I could daydream.
Books need more THINKING about than writing!'

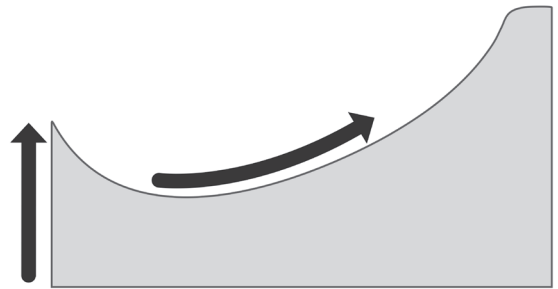
– Jackie French, author of *Diary of a Wombat*

Theory

Engage the reader with a great start that reveals your position/side.
You can be subtle, and allow the reader to infer your position.

Use emotion, dialogue, word pictures, even anecdotes throughout the text, because emotion persuades, not dry facts.

Open-ended topics (e.g. 'My hero') require a double brainstorm. First, you need to brainstorm broadly all sorts of heroes (e.g. Gandhi, football stars, pioneers). Then you need to select one hero (e.g. pioneers in cancer medicine) and brainstorm arguments *why* they are your hero.



Top Techniques – Persuasive texts:

For and against topics

- Brainstorm arguments for and against the topic.
- Pick a side after you have gathered the evidence.
- Select and group your best arguments to form 2–4 body paragraphs.
- Order your body paragraphs to build to a crescendo.
- Top and tail with a Sizzling Start and an Ending with Impact.

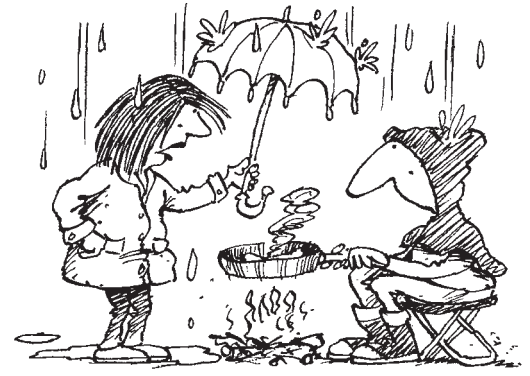
Open-ended topics

- Brainstorm ideas on the topic.
- Select one idea and brainstorm arguments to support it.
- Select and group your best arguments to form 2–4 body paragraphs.
- Order your body paragraphs to build to a crescendo.
- Top and tail with a Sizzling Start and an Ending with Impact.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS: FOR AND AGAINST TOPIC

Learning Intentions could include:

- Be able to generate concepts and ideas for a persuasive text.
- Know how to push through to Alpha for originality (your first idea is not always the best).
- Understand both sides of an argument.



Topic:

- Camping – love it or hate it?

Extra topics:

- Single-use plastic should be banned.
- Should students be allowed to use mobile phones during the school day?

1. Brainstorm 10 or more arguments on both sides of the topic.

Topic:

For

Against

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2. Pick a side and circle the three strongest arguments.

BRAINSTORMING IDEAS: OPEN-ENDED TOPIC

Learning Intentions could include:

- Be able to engage in creative brainstorming.
- Understand the power of group brainstorming.
- Know how to push through to Alpha for originality (your first idea is often one that everyone else will think of).

Topics:

- A movie or book that changed me.
- The bravest person I know.
- What talent would you love to have, and why?

Initial brainstorm

1. In small groups, choose a topic.
2. Brainstorm 10 or more ways to tackle the topic.

EXAMPLE

TOPIC: My hero is inspiring because ...

Many students will probably grab the first person they think of: 'My dad' or 'my football hero'. Hopefully, Seven Steps students would have taken a few minutes to brainstorm more original ideas, such as:

- Kids or adults living with a disability
- Authors – Andy Griffiths, Jackie French
- Entrepreneurs – Elon Musk, Sir Richard Branson
- Social activists – Malala Yousafzai, Nelson Mandela, Greenpeace activists.

Topic:

1.

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Deeper brainstorm

1. Pick one idea from your initial brainstorm.
2. Come up with 5-10 arguments to support it.

Selected idea:

.....

Supporting arguments:

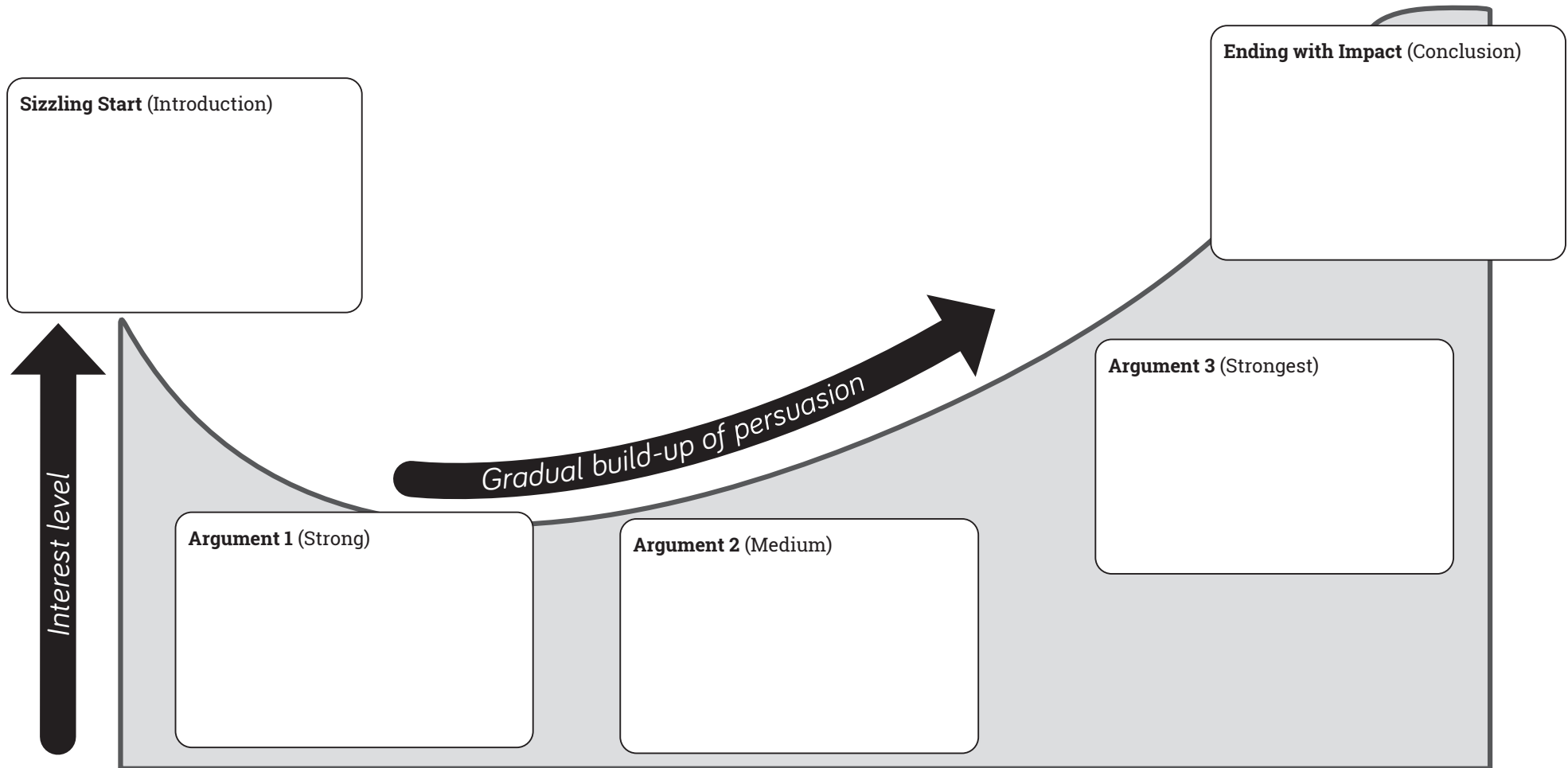
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3. Select and order your three strongest arguments:

- Strong argument:
-
- Medium argument:
-
- Strongest argument:
-

PERSUASIVE WRITING GRAPH

Editable writing graphs for Narrative, Persuasive and Informative writing, as well as dozens of examples for popular stories and videos, are available to members of [Teacher Hub](#).



Step

1

Plan for Success

INFORMATIVE

'You've got to work. It's about structure. It's about discipline. It's all these deadly things that your schoolteacher told you you needed ... You need it.'

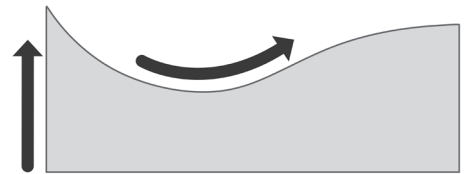
- JK Rowling

Theory

Informative writing doesn't need to be boring! Any text that seeks to inform, by conveying facts and explanations that are true and accurate, is an informative text.

From documentaries to news, recounts and reports, informative writing can and should engage the reader from beginning to end.

Informative writing relies just as much on brainstorming and thinking, but we also have to research the topic. That's why you brainstorm and research before planning the shape of your informative text.



Top Techniques – Informative texts:

Brainstorming and researching

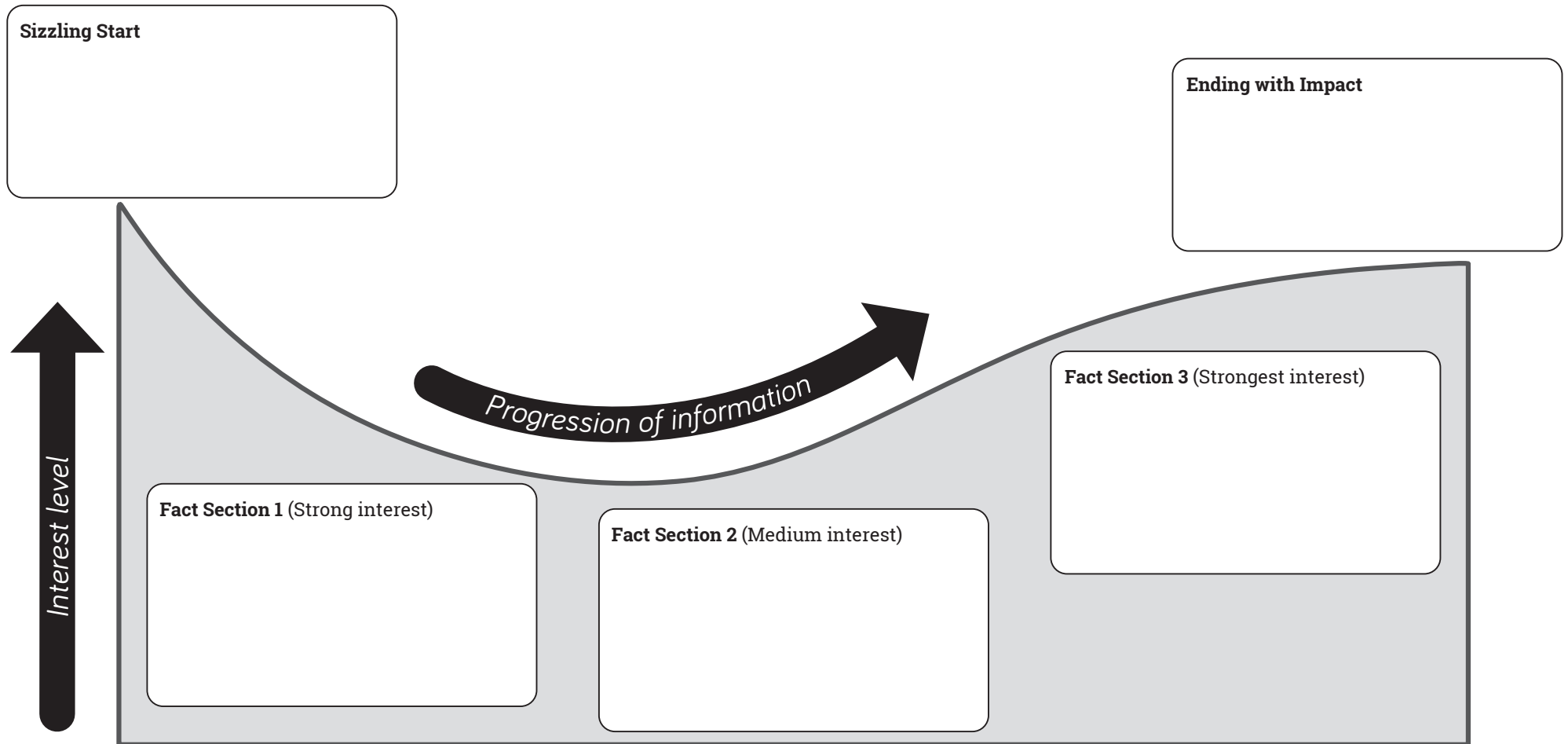
- Record and confirm what you already know about the topic.
- Brainstorm any questions you have about the topic.
- Pick one question and do a deeper brainstorm to generate clusters of related questions.
- Research using multiple sources.

Selecting and ordering information

- After researching, plan the sequence of your text.
- Group your facts to form 2–4 sections.
- Order the sections to build momentum and interest.
- Top and tail with a Sizzling Start and an Ending with Impact.

INFORMATIVE WRITING GRAPH

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GETTING STARTED

The best place to start is our Narrative Writing Course on *Teacher Hub*. Work your way through the following modules to start implementing what you have learnt in your narrative writing lessons: Step 7: Exciting Endings and Step 1: Plan for Success. Add the resources you love to the Classroom Planner to create your personalised implementation plan.

	Learn	Teach	Apply	Assess
Step 7: Exciting Endings	Watch the theory video in the Learn tab of the Step 7: Exciting Endings module.	Use the Classroom Powerpoint, Exemplars, Lesson Plan and Expert Insights in the Teach tab of the Step 7: Exciting Endings module.	Use the Action Activities and the Writing Challenges in the Apply tab of the Step 7: Exciting Endings module.	Use the Self-Assessment Rubric in the Assess tab of the Step 7: Exciting Endings module.
Step 1: Plan for Success	Watch the theory video in the Learn tab of the Step 1: Plan for Success module.	Use the Classroom Powerpoint, Exemplars, Lesson Plan and Expert Insights in the Teach tab of the Step 1: Plan for Success module.	Use the Action Activities and the Writing Challenges in the Apply tab of the Step 1: Plan for Success module.	Use the Self-Assessment Rubric in the Assess tab of the Step 1: Plan for Success module.

There are many more Step 1 and 7 resources on *Teacher Hub*. Go to the [Resource Library](#) to search for great resources and add them to your planner.

What's Next?

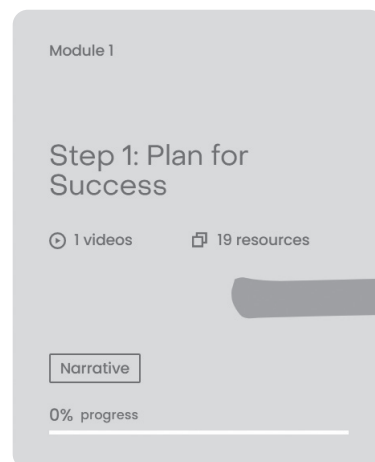
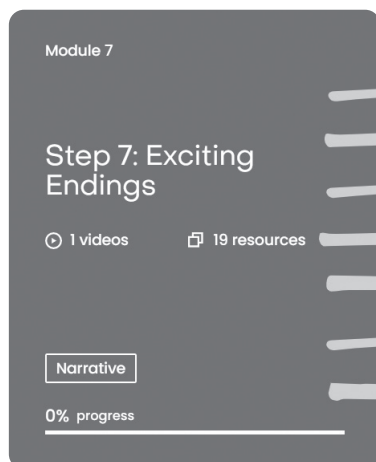
After Session Two

- Introduce endings (Step 7) and planning (Step 1) in your classroom by teaching students the techniques that you've learnt.
- Take a look at the suggestions on how to get started on [page 19](#) and try some of the activities with your students.
- We cherish your feedback: it's how we get better! If you haven't already, please fill out the short feedback survey.

Using Teacher Hub

[Teacher Hub](#) is the key to taking what you've learnt so far and adapting it for your class. You can watch the short theory videos to refresh your memory on the key concepts behind each Step, then use our hand-picked resources to teach, apply and assess the Steps with your students.

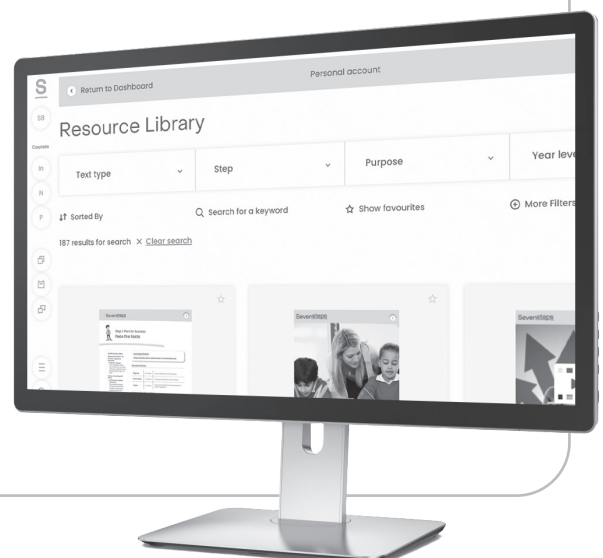
Once you've completed the [Step 2](#) and [Step 3](#) modules in the [Narrative Writing Course](#), you can get started rolling out the Steps you've just learnt in Session Two with the [Step 7](#) and [Step 1](#) modules.



Don't forget to add your favourite resources to the Classroom Planner to create your own customised implementation plan.

Resource Library

Browse our extensive [Resource Library](#) to find even more resources for your writing lessons.

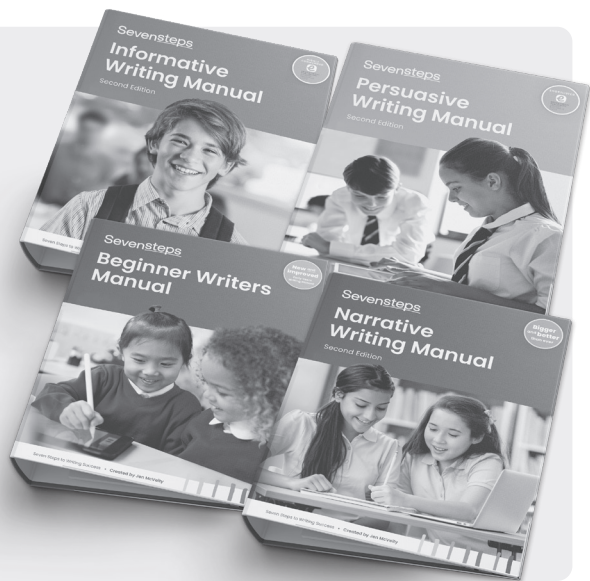


Looking for more?

Seven Steps Tool Kit

These comprehensive teaching manuals are filled with theory, writing samples and exemplars, Action Activities, writing templates, and so much more. Use the discount code **OWSTK20** to save up to 40%.

[Learn More](#)



What's coming up in Session Three

Session Three is about teaching students to add richness and expression to their writing, with:

- Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue
- Step 5: Show, Don't Tell
- Step 6: Ban the Boring

Before your nominated date for Session Three, we'll send you a PDF handout with all the theory, activities and resources you'll need.

TIP

Email us if you
have any enquiries.
We love to help!



office@sevenstepswriting.com