

A ROBOT ATE MY GRANDMA!

A good title will grab a reader's attention, tell them what type of story they are about to read, and set the mood (will it be scary, funny, sci-fi, romance, or a mixture?) The title can even give some clues about what is going to happen.

WRITE THE STORY THAT **YOU** WANT TO READ

The best thing about writing your own stories is that you're in charge. It's up to you what kind of story it is. If you like stuff that makes you laugh, write something funny. Maybe you're a horror fan who will write a tale so terrifying your readers will be scared to turn off the light! Perhaps talking unicorns in space is your thing? Great – write about that! Whatever you want – remember: **YOU'RE IN CHARGE!**

WHAT!? HOW? WHEN? **WHY?**

Start your story with a question – a mystery or a crime that needs solving. This will **HOOK** your reader's interest so they have no choice but to read on to find out the answers!

There are lots of ways to start a story with a question: A **DISAPPEARANCE** – something is stolen or someone goes missing. An **ARRIVAL** – a mysterious package in the post, a strange message, a new neighbour or kid at school. Don't forget – there's always the crime mystery classic – the **discovery of a DEAD BODY!**

STORIES GET GOOD WHEN THINGS GO **BAD** FOR YOUR CHARACTERS

It shouldn't be too easy for your detectives to solve the mystery. If your heroes get what they want too easily it makes for a dull story. Stories are much more exciting when things go wrong.

Find your hero's weakness and use it against them! This will give your story **DRAMA** and **CONFLICT** and make your readers want to read on. When we see characters try and fail, or get stuck in a situation that makes us think **HOW ARE THEY GOING TO GET OUT OF THAT?** we start to care about them more and have to read on to find out how they are going to survive!

STORY COMES FROM **CHARACTER**

Get to know your characters and they will give you ideas for your story. Drawing your cast will force you to think about them and spark ideas for things that could happen in the story. Ask your characters some key questions – what do they **WANT**, what scares them? What are they good at and what is their fatal flaw/weakness? (see above) Knowing what your hero wants will help you identify their main enemy – the person who will do the most to stop them from getting what they want: **THE VILLAIN!**

PLAY THE **WHAT IF?** GAME

To spark some ideas, get a blank sheet of paper and play the **WHAT IF?** game. For example if your story starts with a **DISAPPEARANCE** – *What if* your dog disappeared? *What if* your nan went missing? *What if* someone stole your bike?! Try not to judge – just write down whatever comes into your head in five minutes, then look at what you've got and pick the best ones to develop further.

FOLLOW THE **CLUES** TO WRITE THE STORY

Take your detectives to the crime scene and give them a clue to follow. Write down what happens when they investigate that clue. Maybe it leads them to the next clue, or a witness, or an encounter with the villain in the story!?