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EVERY SENTENCE COUNTS

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CRIME SCENE DO NOT



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Today you are going to write a
mini saga for young writers'
unsolved competition!

**Grab a pen or open Word etc to
make any notes...**

Let's get started!



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You're going to watch a short video to introduce you to the activity



<https://youtu.be/ZYi8sWNYUsk>



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What is a mini saga?

A mini saga is a story told in 100 words!



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3 golden rules of mini saga writing

- 1. Be original! Your work can be inspired by other stories, but add a twist, make it your own!**
- 2. Keep to the 100-word limit – make every word count!**
- 3. Remember that mini sagas must have a beginning, a middle and an end!**



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To help you write your mini saga there are some resources. These will help you generate ideas, plan and write your mini saga:

THE CASE

Young Writers invites you into the thrilling world of crime and mystery writing with Unsolved... There are 8 fantastic story starters to kick-start your gripping mini saga (a story told in just 100 words) - Whose point of view will you choose to write from?

The Suspect **The Victim** **A Juror?** **A forensic scientist?** **A witness?**

Will you choose to solve the crime, or leave the reader shrouded in mystery? Whether you enjoy a good old mystery, want to make sure justice is served, explore forensics or imagine a death-bed confession, Unsolved helps you plan and write a mini saga, engage with creative writing and create original ideas! Check out the video that introduces the activity to you in just a minute: (add you tube link)

THE SCENE **TOP TIPS**

Get your students inspired by Detective fiction - from Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie to Crime Scene. Use Callers and news cameras get students the challenge to read and learn without writing tips from these literary masters!

THE FACTS
It's Easy To Take Part!

1. Your teacher will either give you a worksheet to write your mini saga on.
OR
A login link to your school's Online Writing Portal where you type your mini saga up.

2. Write your entry and your teacher will submit it
Closing Date: Friday 12th February 2021

FOR SCHOOLS
1ST PRIZE:
The Young Writers' Award of Excellence and a digital book-bus!

2 X RUNNERS-UP:
Each receive a framed certificate and an awesome selection of books!

FOR STUDENTS
5 x £100 and a trophy!

Winners will be chosen from entries received in the Spring Term 2020

PLUS
Every entrant receives an Unsolved bookmark
A certificate of merit for all young writers chosen for publication
You can view our most recent winners here: www.youngwriters.co.uk/competitions/winners

Every participating school receives a free copy of the book that the students feature in!

Student Information Sheet

UNSOLVED WRITING ACTIVITIES (OPTIONAL)

These fun activities have been designed to get your students thinking about creating suspense and atmosphere, as well as considering their content and style when faced with a 100-word limit!

You can use them in various ways, such as choose one crime and complete all the activities, do each activity focusing on a different type of crime, or split your students into a group and try each do one activity! (The story starter postcards can also be used!)

Exhibit A - Setting The Scene

Pick one of the 8 story starters (provided below) and do the plan for the activity. Read it out to your students then ask them:

- Who is this happening? (The setting)
- Who is their main character? (The protagonist)
- What has happened so far? (The plot)
- Why? (The motive)

Two-minute challenge:
Your students can be inspired by the story starter or follow on from it.

- Write a short paragraph on the right or using side of the card using:
- Write the opening sentence to their mini saga using dialogue.
- Which opening line do they prefer? (Justify!)

Exhibit B - Crime Scene Investigation

Your students need to imagine their character is at a crime scene.

- Who is this happening? (The setting)
- Who is their main character? (The protagonist)
- What has happened so far? (The plot)
- Why? (The motive)

Two-minute challenge:
Discover a clue found at the crime scene.

- Write a short paragraph describing how their character feels.
- Write a sentence about where the crime has been committed using imagery to create atmosphere.
- Write a newspaper headline for the crime and a short paragraph to explain what has happened.

Exhibit C - Classroom Drama

This exhibition has lots of character and plot potential! Will students be the judge or juror? A witness? The defendant? Or have they even committed fault?

- Who is their main character? (The protagonist)
- What has happened so far? (The plot)
- Why? (The motive)

Two-minute challenge:
Write a short paragraph from your character's point of view that challenges the defendant's alibi for the crime.

- Give students the same story starter - ask them to write two opening sentences - one from the defendant's point of view and one from a witness.

Exhibit D - Evade Or Serve Justice?

Justice isn't always served, your students could use this opportunity to explore different points of view and tackle the themes of social injustice.

- Who is their main character? (The protagonist)
- Where is the character? (The setting)
- What has happened so far? (The plot)
- Why? (The motive)

Two-minute challenge:
Write a short paragraph from a prisoner's point of view who has been wrongly accused.

- You are a juror seeing crime scene evidence for the first time, write a short paragraph about how you feel.
- You're a witness in a 20-year-old cold case, there's been a new lead which shows the wrong person has been convicted of the crime. Write a short paragraph about what you would do.

STORY STARTER IDEAS

YOUR STUDENTS COULD USE ONE OF THESE TO START OR INSPIRE THEIR WORK! (THEY NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THEIR 100-WORD LIMITS)

- People think the dead can't talk...
- I'd found a clue...
- A shadow at the door...
- The suspect was gone...
- "Guilty!"...
- The lie detector results were back...
- It just didn't add up...
- I had an alibi...

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Activity sheet


You also have different ways to enter, your teacher will let you know which way:

- Student entry form (printed and completed in pen)
- Word doc entry form (typed entry into and save file as your name)
- Online writing portal (you will be given a login link by your teacher and then follow the instructions on screen)



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Here are some ideas to write about:



CYBERCRIME
FRAMING SOMEONE
FBI'S MOST WANTED
MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE
MORAL DILEMMA

CORRUPTION
SOLVING A CRIME
PLANTED EVIDENCE
A HEIST
SOMETHING IS MISSING

**DISCOVER
A CRIME SCENE**
KIDNAPPING
FUGITIVE ON THE RUN
IN PRISON
ARRESTING SOMEONE

BE AN ACCOMPLICE
YOU'RE A DETECTIVE
YOUR CRIME HAUNTS YOU
ON DEATH ROW
A POISONING

FIND A MESSAGE
MULTIPLE CONFESSIONS
SUPERNATURAL INFLUENCE
A RIOT OR PROTEST
A MYSTERY IS SOLVED

COLD CASE
YOU'RE A BOUNTY HUNTER
CRIMINAL GANGS
COURTROOM DRAMA
HIJACKING



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Optional Activity 1 – write or type notes

EXHIBIT A - SETTING THE SCENE

Your teacher will pick one of the 8 story starters for this activity. You need to decide:

- Where is this happening? (The setting)
- What has happened/will happen next? (The plot)
 - Why? (The motive)

Then complete these two-minute challenges: (You can be inspired by the story starter or follow on from it):

- Is your character on the right or wrong side of the law? Why?
- Write the opening sentence to your mini saga using action.
- Write the opening sentence to your mini saga using dialogue.
 - Which opening style do you prefer? Why?



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Optional Activity 2 – write or type notes

Exhibit B - Crime Scene Investigation

You need to imagine your character is at a crime scene:

- Where is this happening? (The setting)
- Who is their main character? (The protagonist)
- What has happened/will happen next? (The plot)
 - Why? (The motive)

Then complete these two-minute challenges:

- Describe a clue found at the crime scene.
- Write a short paragraph describing how their character feels.
- Write a sentence about where the crime has been committed using imagery to create atmosphere.
- Write a newspaper headline for the crime and a short paragraph to explain what has happened.



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Optional Activity 3 – write or type notes

Exhibit C - Courtroom Drama

The courtroom has lots of character and plot potential! Will you be the judge? A juror? A witness? A lawyer? (The defendant has been purposely missed out!)

- Why? (The motive)

Then complete these two-minute challenges:

- Write a short paragraph from your character's point of view that challenges the defendant's alibi for the crime.
- Write a short paragraph from the defendant convincing the reader of their innocence.
- Your teacher will give your class all the same story starter – now you write two opening sentences – one from the defendant's point of view and one from a witness'.



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Optional Activity 4 – write or type notes

Exhibit D – Evade Or Serve Justice?

Justice isn't always served... you could use this opportunity to explore different points of view and tackle the themes of justice / injustice:

- Who is your main character? (The protagonist)
 - Where is the character? (The setting)
- What has happened/will happen next? (The plot)
 - Why? (The motive)

Then complete these two-minute challenges:

- Write a short paragraph from a prisoner's point of view who has been wrongly accused.
- You are a juror seeing crime scene evidence for the first time, write a short paragraph about how you feel.
- You're a witness in a 30-year-old cold case, there's been a new lead which shows the wrong criminal has been convicted of the crime.
Write a short paragraph about what you would do.



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Planning – how your mini saga starts

Story starter ideas!

You could use one of these to start or inspire your work! It does need to be included in your 100-word limit!

Story starters help you choose a plot and setting, but it's up to you whether you use one in your work, be inspired by it or create your own story plot.

- **People think the dead can't talk...**
- **A shadow at the door...**
- **"Guilty!"...**
- **It just didn't add up...**
- **I'd found a clue...**
- **The suspect was gone...**
- **The lie detector results were back...**
- **I had an alibi...**

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Planning – the middle of your mini saga

The next part of your story might be to describe how the character felt or who the shadow was and why there were there.



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Planning – the end of your mini saga

It's time to think about how to conclude your story. With only 100 words it might seem tricky, but it's not, you just have to be selective with your word choices!

Now, the ending follows on from what happened in the middle – was the dilemma solved?

Will the ending be neat and simple? Will it have a surprise twist?



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Example Mini Saga 1 (using a story starter)

Afterlife On Speed Dial

People say the dead can't talk but when you have the afterlife on speed dial sometimes it's hard to get them to stop talking!

My boss watched me, annoyed. He disapproved of my method but couldn't argue with the results.

This time I cut to the chase, "Who murdered you?" I nodded pensively as they detailed what happened to them last night. I offered my condolences, thanked them and pressed 'end call'.

You'd think my boss would be happy I'd solved another murder, but in this case not so much. After all, it was his name I'd have to give.



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Example Mini Saga 2 (no story starter)

Daylight Robbery

A daring robbery, thousands stolen from the bank. A sketch artist worked with the shaken bank teller to produce an image of the thief and after a manhunt, he was found and arrested. Another witness identified him from a line-up. It was an open-and-shut case. Except for the CCTV. The CCTV that showed him sitting in a restaurant for an hour at the exact time of the robbery. The waiter confirmed it too. They had no choice but to let him go

—

his alibi was watertight. As he left the station he smirked, pleased that they hadn't found his twin brother.



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Example Mini Saga 3 (using a story starter)

Justice

“Guilty!” I collapsed to my knees. It couldn’t be true. I’d been convicted of my wife’s murder! Her body hadn’t been found, just traces of blood and signs of a struggle in our home. I mean, sure,

I’d lost my temper with her a couple of times, but I wouldn’t...

I looked up to the gallery and a woman wearing large sunglasses caught my eye. As the guard led me back to the cells, she lowered the sunglasses slightly and winked, the greenish tinge of a fading black eye still visible. She set me up! I’m gonna kill her!





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Differentiation ideas

Bronze Activity

Your teacher will give you a story starter and a narrative technique to write your mini saga about. You can have an adult's assistance.



Silver Activity

Read the student information sheet and complete one of the optional activities. Your teacher will give you a story starter to use and you'll work with a partner to help generate ideas and vocabulary that you could use in your work.

Gold Activity

You work alone to create your own mini saga inspired by one of the 8 story starters.
You work through at least 2 of the activities and complete the two-minute challenges. You plan, write and edit your own work.

Platinum Activity

You choose whether to use a story starter or not. You work through all 4 of the activities and complete the two-minute challenges. You plan, write and edit your own work. You use a dictionary / thesaurus to access and use higher level vocabulary as well as edit your own work.

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Glossary

Here are some crime-themed words you may want to use in your writing:

Motive: a reason for doing something

Suspect: a person thought to be guilty of a crime

Juror: a member of a jury

Jury: a group of 12 people chosen to give a verdict on a case based on the evidence shown in court

Forensic: scientific methods and techniques used in the investigation of crime

Culprit: a person who is responsible for a crime

Justice: the fair treatment of people based on laws



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It's time to get writing!

- You can choose an optional story starter – include it in your work or be inspired by it
- Your mini saga must be 100-words or less
- Your mini saga must be inspired by the crime & mystery genre

If you have any questions, please ask your teacher now!



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Review your mini saga:

- Is it 100 words or less? If not, edit it down
 - Does it make sense?
- Does it have a beginning, middle and end?
- If you have used speech, is it clear who is speaking and when?

If you are able to share your story with a classmate to provide feedback to you please do! Ask them to tell you why they like it and one thing you could do to improve it.



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It's time to submit your work to your teacher.

- Hand in the form if you've written your mini saga out.
- Email or upload your work to your teacher if completed for homework or remote learning
 - Click on 'finish' if using the online writing portal

Make sure your name and age are on your work!



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