

IN Residence

Storied Away



Hello! My name is **Frances Stickley** and I'm a published picture book writer and the 2020 Author in Residence for Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries. I write stories whenever I can. There is nothing I love more than stepping into a whole new world. But even so, I get stuck. All writers – even those who have been writing for years – get stuck in stories sometimes!

We're going on a Quest...

Of all the different types of story, quest stories are my favourite. In a quest, our main character sets off on a journey; a journey they know will change their life forever but often, not in the way that they expect. One thing remains the same in all quest stories, our main character – our hero – returns back to the start at the end. However, they may not be quite the same person they were when they left.

Here are some quests that you might have already been on...

The Hobbit

Moana

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

The Bear and the Piano



Can you think of any more?



The Story Circle

We call the quest a circle narrative because the hero of our story starts and ends in the same place, it's a bit like a story circle.

Here are the 5 stages of a **circle narrative**:

- 1 The call to adventure:** This is where our main character makes the choice to start on an adventure; something pushes our hero out of their normal, everyday life. They might fight that choice, at first, but eventually, they head out into the unknown!
- 2 The crossing of the threshold:** This is just a fancy way of saying that your hero is going from their normal world to the unknown. This is when our character reaches a point where they can't go home.
- 3 Road of trials:** Often our hero will meet obstacles that try to force them back home, but our hero journeys on, often making new friends and foes along the way.
- 4 Transformation:** Our hero makes a crucial decision or learns something they didn't know before. They are changed – inside. I like to think of this as the highest level of a computer game.
- 5 The return home:** The hero returns to the same place they started, but things might look a little different. Our character is wiser. They see things in a new way. They are not quite the character they used to be and what they know, want and need is changed.

So you want to be a Storyteller?

If you're feeling a bit story stuck, I've created this game to help you. You can use this to develop your ideas and maybe even add some of your own. Don't worry if it's ridiculous. Lots of stories are ridiculous to start with it's how the best ideas get going. There will be lots of gaps in the plot – that's where you come in!



Here I've split the quest into its 5 different sections. In each section, I've come up with 6 different ideas of characters, settings and plots you could use to build your own story. Remember, this is just the scaffolding and the building blocks!

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Activity

You will need: A 6-sided dice.

Roll your dice 5 times to discover what your quest story will be. Start with *The Call to Adventure* column.



	The Call to Adventure	The Crossing of the Threshold	Road of Trials	Transformation	The Return Home
	<i>Your hero sets out because...</i>	<i>The point of no return is when...</i>	<i>The journey is difficult because...</i>	<i>To become a true hero...</i>	<i>When they get home...</i>
roll a 1	They hear a mysterious voice calling them.	They get in a boat and sail out beyond the reef.	An evil owl has booby-trapped the forest with a series of impossible riddles.	They must decide who to trust and who to leave behind.	They find that no time has passed at all.
roll a 2	They fall down a hole in the woods.	They are enshrouded in a mysterious mist that will not release them.	Somebody they thought they could trust turns against them.	They must make a stand for what they believe in, no matter what.	They are greeted as a hero. There is a party in their village.
roll a 3	They unfurl the mainsail and unfold their treasure map.	They are transported through time.	They are met with a band of space pirates, hell bent on revenge.	They must take a leap of faith and risk their safety.	They use their magic only for good.
roll a 4	The find a mirrored sword in a lake.	They zoom into space, only to realise they don't know how to control a rocket.	An ogre won't let anybody cross the bridge.	They have to give up something precious, or fail.	They realise that home is where the heart is and it was all along.
roll a 5	The diamond is stolen and they suspect the train driver.	They are completely lost in what appears to be a maze.	A landslide blocks the escape hatch.	They must discover their hidden superpowers.	They wake up and realise it was all a dream and one that they must learn from.
roll a 6	They wake up to find that the sun is gone.	It is too dark to see.	There are vampires rampaging in the supermarkets.	They must save a friend and give away all that they have.	They have learnt the true meaning of friendship.

If you enjoyed learning about quest stories, you can find out more at www.inspireculture.org.uk/inresidence