



Settings toolkit

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To create a setting that the reader can imagine, which sounds real and has an atmosphere you might want to:

N/R	Y1/2 As in N/R plus:	Y3/4 As in Y1/2 plus:	Y5/6 As in Y3/4 plus:
• Draw maps showing different settings • Create a simple story that starts and ends in the same place • Create a simple story in which a main character goes from setting to setting on a journey • Write a story with a local setting • Select from a bank of photos or images of settings to help you • Choose a scary setting where something might happen, e.g. <i>bridge, forest, old house;</i> • Use adjectives (<i>dark, gloomy, sunny</i>) and similes to describe settings (<i>it was dark as coal</i>)	• Choose a name for the setting • Try to 'see' it in your mind and use all senses to describe • Use sentences of 3 to describe • Take your character home to end the story • Include some detail to bring a setting alive • Choose adjectives with care; use 'like' and 'as' similes • Include time of day and weather (<i>it was a hot night</i>) • Select scary settings for dilemmas	• Choose an interesting name for the setting • Select the time of day and weather to create an effect, e.g. <i>thunder rumbled through the darkness</i> • Show how a character reacts to the setting: <i>Jo shivered.</i> • Show the setting through the character's eyes, e.g. <i>Jo looked round the room.</i> • Use prepositions – <i>below the hill; near the cave; on top of the table</i> • Use a change of setting, weather or time to create a new atmosphere.	• Choose a name that suggests something about the setting, e.g. <i>Hangman's Wood</i> • Show the scene through the character's eyes – <i>Jill peered round the shop.</i> • Use a detailed sentence of 3 to describe what can be seen, heard or touched, e.g. <i>Old carpets, dusty sheets and broken chairs littered the floor.</i> • Pick out unusual details to bring the setting alive, e.g. <i>On the piano, stood a large cage containing a yellow snake.</i> • Introduce something unusual to hook the reader and lead the story forwards, e.g. <i>There was a letter on the doormat.</i> • Change atmosphere by altering weather, place or time and use metaphor and personification, e.g. <i>the wind moaned</i> • Reflect a character's feelings in the setting, e.g. <i>The rain poured and Gary sniffed.</i>

Useful ideas for teaching settings – always co-construct the toolkit with the class

Model all aspects of the toolkit and display word banks, sentences and ideas on prompt cards, washing lines or learning walls

N/R	Y1/2 As in N/R plus:	Y3/4 As in Y1/2 plus:	Y5/6 As in Y3/4 plus:
- Collect, display and use images of settings, e.g. <i>castle, forest, lake</i>; - raid picture books & fairy tales - Collect scary settings where something might happen, e.g. <i>bridge, forest, old house</i> - Use images of places and describe these, imagining a story happening. Compose simple captions - Provide maps with different settings drawn or blank spaces for children to draw in settings - Provide story floor mats and settings to choose from during story play, e.g. <i>toy trees, a garage</i> - Dramatise to help children imagine being in different settings and describing them - Re-enact a story with children becoming the scene, e.g. <i>a bridge</i>	- Collect banks of settings, weather & time of the day words for use - Collect banks of adjectives, powerful verbs and similes to build descriptions - Use art work and real places for drawing and collecting descriptions - Use short-burst writing/ spine poems to teach description - Use drama to enter imagined worlds; move through different settings and describe - Use drama/ images to list words or invent sentences – what can you see, touch, smell and hear in the setting?	- Collect language banks for settings, weather and time – sort by mood - Raid novels for images, descriptive passages and write ‘in the style of’ - Compare descriptions and analyse effect created - Use drama to enter settings and mime how a character reacts - Use film and real locations for short-burst writing to develop description - Use ‘tell me’ to develop settings through an imagined character’s eyes - Use ‘in a dark, dark house’ to build settings	- Use images to train observation, brainstorm language and ideas. Shape these into descriptive passages - From novels, collect and compare different settings that create different moods; write similar descriptions, shifting mood - Use film clips to discuss how settings manipulate the reader; write short descriptions of scenes - Use drama to create and describe settings; show an image/film clip and interview ‘eye witnesses’; use guided visualisation to imagine scenes, e.g. <i>The Highwayman</i> - Use physical theatre to build settings or retell tales; create still images and use ‘talking objects’ to describe - Use sound effects, music and voices to create and dramatise settings